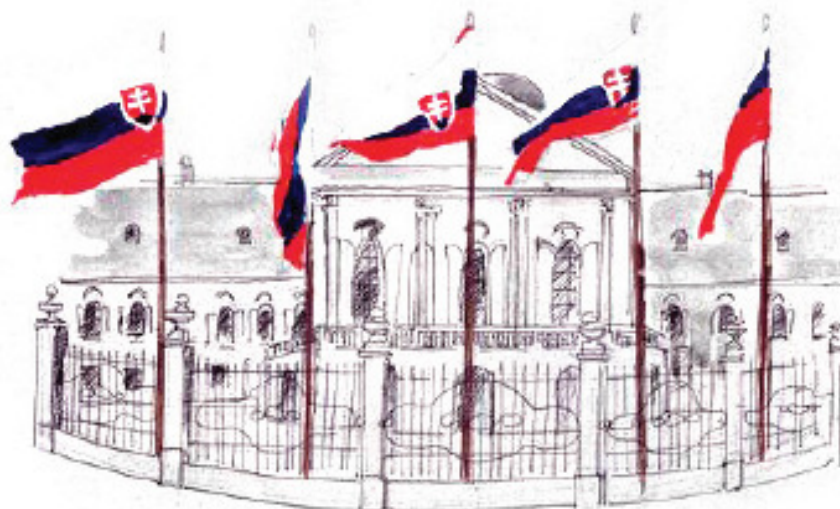

BM54 SEMINAR EQUITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

“NOW FOR REAL”



GENERAL REPORT

Brusno, 6th-8th May 2008



General Report from the seminar “Equity in Higher Education”

By General Rapporteur, **Anita Līce**.

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Introduction

A three day seminar took place from the 6th to the 8th of May in Brusno, Slovakia. The seminar was attended by more than 150 participants from various national student organisations across 38 European

countries. The seminar focused on equity in higher education issues and in particular on ways how to measure equity and inequities in higher education, the links between financing of education and equity in higher education as well as the future challenges in improving equity in higher education.

Welcoming Words

Koen Geven, ESU chairperson, welcomed all participants to the ESU Board Meeting 54 and to the seminar on equity “Now for real”. He introduced the concept of equity and how it has originated in the history of the development of the higher education. The Equity in higher education started to be important issue for discussion in 60ties, at the time when higher education has faced the most rapid massification and democratization and at the time when student movement appeared. “We wanted higher education to grow and equity to increase. However, growing of higher education doesn’t mean that equity is growing at the same time and at the same speed. There are still very many minorities excluded from the opportunities to obtain the degree of higher education, there are different higher education tracks in which different people are not mixing equally. Despite the number of people who are starting higher education, very many of them are finishing before graduation, some at already at a bachelor level, some others at masters, others with different achievements and opportunities.” Koen Geven introduced the concept of equity in the Bologna Process: as reflection of diversity of the population in the higher education. He also expressed his concerns that in the policy of the European Union there are not so definite discussions. However, the positive sign is that this project on Equity of the ESU has been approved and financed by the European Union, which definitely shows the signals that there is a will to deal with the issue. The project aims at developing research materials on Equity in higher education and strategies for improving it.

He concluded that on European level we can set goals and organize discussions, but the real implementation is going on the national level, so in these discussions we should ensure that issues tackled and analyzed in these discussions should be relevant to the national actors, including students and other stakeholders in higher education. Finally, he expressed hope that all participants will have interesting 3 days of the seminar, and thanked the organizational team, speakers and the secretariat for their great contribution in preparing the event. This board meeting will be the biggest that ESU has ever organized (150 delegates!).

Peter Schlosser, the head of the minister’s office (*veduci pracovneho uradu*) of the Ministry of Education in Slovakia welcomed all participants of the conference in the name of the minister and wished a good seminar.

Veronika Pazmanyova, the Chairperson of the SRVS, the national union of students in Slovakia, welcomed all participants and thanked for coming so far way to this seminar. She expressed a hope

that contribution of the organizers and SRVS volunteers as well as the hotel will help to have an effective and relaxing meeting. When it comes to the topic of the seminar, she mentioned that in the universities people very frequently do not recognize and notice that there is any discrimination. She asked, if the existing policies addressing the issue of equity and current action to improve equity in higher education are actually enough? She expressed hope that this seminar will be of help to students in European countries to fight for the answers for these questions.

KEYNOTE SPEECHES

Equity – Today for Tomorrow: Stocktaking and Foresight

Speakers

Paulo Santiago

Paulo Santiago, a Portuguese national, is a Senior Analyst in the OECD Directorate for Education, where he has been since 2000. He is the project manager for the Thematic Review of Tertiary Education, and has led reviews of tertiary education policy in several countries. Previously he assumed responsibility for a major cross-country review in the area of teacher policy. He holds a PhD in Economics from Northwestern University where he also lectured. With a background in the economics of education, he specialises in education policy analysis.

Dominic Orr

Dr. Orr is Senior Research at the Higher Education Information System (HIS), Germany and Head of the International Coordination Team for EUROSTUDENT III. Following completion of his first degree at Southbank University in London, he obtained a PhD in Comparative Education at the Technical University of Dresden. He has also worked at the International Centre for Higher Education Management (ICHEM) at the University of Bath. Current topics of interest are steering and governance in German and international higher education, comparative studies on higher education, funding and quality assurance, and the social dimension in European higher education reform.

Gerard Madill

Gerard Madill works as Policy Adviser for Universities Scotland, which is the representative body of Scotland's Principals and Vice-Chancellors. He covers the broad field of learning and teaching policy and has particular expertise on quality assurance, the Bologna Process, qualifications frameworks, learning outcomes and credit. He has presented widely at national and international conferences and seminars on these policy areas.

Mr Madill represents Universities Scotland on a wide range of external committees and advisory groups at Scottish, UK and European levels. He is an expert member of the Council of Europe Coordinating Group on Qualifications Frameworks. He was a member of the group which oversaw the certification of the Framework for Qualifications of HEIs in Scotland against the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area.

Mr Madill previously worked for the Principal of Queen Margaret University College, Edinburgh, for the Scottish Higher Education Funding Council and for the National Union of Students Scotland.

The panel was chaired by **Maris Malzer**, ESU Gender Equality Committee.

Introduction to Panel

Although increasing equity within higher education has been recognized as one of the top priority for the development of European higher education post 2010 and commitment to this goal has been stated through Bologna Process and Lisbon agenda, a great number of groups is still not fairly represented within the student body and are not able to achieve their highest potential in education.

This panel intended to give an introduction on the concept of equity in higher education, its significance and substantiation in the national and international policy of higher education.

The panel was organized in a form of key note speeches by three speakers, distinguished experts in their field, and followed by the discussion. Paulo Santiago, one of the authors of OECD's Thematic Review of Tertiary Education report (2008), Dominic Orr, head of the International Coordination Team for EUROSTUDENT III report (2008) and Gerard Madill, Policy Adviser for Universities Scotland, who has been a key player in the development and implementation of the Scotland's lifelong learning framework, will give a presentation on their work in the context of the current situation regarding equity in higher education.

At the discussion the following questions were investigated:

- Which are the priority areas for changes in achieving equity in higher education?
- What should be the role of stocktaking in achieving equity in higher education?
- Which are opportunities and which – threats for equity in higher education in the higher education policy, promoted by the EU, Bologna Process and the OECD? Are these different policies coherent?
- How have various researches and statistical reports done on the topic influenced policies intended to increase equity?

Summary of the presentations and discussions

Paulo Santiago introduced the main outcomes of the 3 year project "Thematic Review of Tertiary Education". OECD has just started dissemination phase of this project and he was delighted about the opportunity to discuss the results with the students.

The aim of the project was to provide policy recommendations for the countries on equity issues. It was done by analyzing country cases and practical evidences and according to them producing the recommendations.

He explained the definition of equitable education systems:

"Equitable tertiary systems are those that ensure that access to, participation in and outcomes of tertiary education are based only on individuals' innate ability and study effort. They ensure that educational potential at tertiary level is not the result of personal and social circumstances, including of factors such as socio-economic status, gender, ethnic origin, immigrant status, place of residence, age, or disability."

He mentioned that the main inequities arise in proceeding levels of education and that countries have actually a very little knowledge about the situation in their countries. Among the main recommendations he mentioned that there is a need to collect more data on inequities in higher education, that policies have to target early level education, that information (guidance) as well as positive action and discrimination have a very big role in increasing equity, that to address various groups in higher education also supply of higher education has to be diversified and that cost sharing is the principle in financing higher education, though which equity issues could be successfully addressed.

Dominic Orr thanked for invitation and expressed that this conference is an opportunity also for Eurostudent project – to show what they want to do with the data collected for the Eurostudent III report and to disseminate preliminary results of the report as the final report will be published in September 2008.

He explained that for international comparative studies is really hard to gain trust of countries, and thus is important to develop information in a way in which it is relevant for them.

For the project Eurostudent III the definition of the Social dimension in the Bologna Process was used. When it comes to the “participative equity”, they were looking at 3 moments of higher education: who enters it, the study framework (based on individual decisions or circumstances) as well as graduation. The final report will be ready for the ministers meeting in 2009 – as a support for data in the Bologna Process.

He concluded that, if we really want to improve the social and equity participation – we have to make sure that conditions of different students are as similar as possible, achieved by effective state funding allocation.

Gerard Madill was presenting a Scottish example of how equity in higher education can be improved through the national qualifications framework and flexible curriculum. He explained that the main goal of Scottish qualification frameworks is to achieve greater recognition. In general higher education policy in Scotland is committed to increasing equity, which is also reflected in designing qualifications framework. There are no tuition fees in Scotland. There were fees, but they were abolished and grants introduced instead. He stressed that it is possible to find and grant money for such initiatives, if the government supports the policy in principle.

He explained that the link between equity and Scottish qualifications frameworks can be seen in a way how progression routes, transfer opportunities in higher education are supported. Scottish qualifications framework can help every learner to reach their potential: focused not only on economic development but also on the development of people socially and on social justice. He presented shortly the system of the framework of qualifications and how it is compatible with the qualifications framework of the Bologna Process.

Main gains from the Scottish national qualifications framework:

- Transparency (learning outcomes “de mystify” learning for learners and employers). It’s important that a learner himself/herself has a confidence in his/her learning outcomes to prevent different prejudices.
- Prior learning recognition (outcomes – neutral language, you can take into account and compare different outcomes gained in different environments, helps in transitions of education, recognize learning outcomes of different nationalities and immigrants as well as workers to make best use of their skills)
- Flexible entries into degrees and transition between programmes and institutions.

He concluded that the national QF can support and explain the diversity. They are not only the tools, but there has to be a will by the authorities to use them. Common language for understanding the qualifications can ensure flexibility and employability as well as can support equity and social inclusion in higher education.

Presentations of the speakers are available in the attachments 1 – 3.

All speakers were asked about necessary changes in higher education to ensure more equitable systems.

Paulo Santiago explained that it is very country specific and this question can't be answered on the European level. The priority is to raise awareness about equity issues: (1) Data is needed to be collected. (2) Awareness issue – in some countries (E-Europe) equity is simply not on the political agenda of the countries. There are different systems (e.g. dual payment) – which raise a lot of equity questions which are not discussed well enough. Dominic Orr answered that the new member states of the EU are very keen to take part in very many different European initiatives to promote themselves. But in reality nothing is being done to really increase equity. Opening higher education systems to even more diverse student population doesn't solve the problem of existing inequalities. To make the right decisions, data are needed but again – it's also hard to get politicians to look at this data. Gerard Madill proposed positive action, providing different incentives for participation in higher education and removing disincentives, providing flexible provisions in universities as possible solutions for increasing equity in higher education.

On the question, whether policies to increase equity are coherent, Paulo Santiago answered, that this question is again country specific. He congratulated ESU for the work on raising awareness on equity issues. Treatment during studies is generally not taken care about in policies. Regular students are not really aware of the fairness of the system. Dominic Orr answered that ministers are frequently afraid to discuss the Bologna Process because of the very open style it is being discussed. At the same time the Lisbon strategy of the European Union has to do a lot with the competition issues. There are many different dimensions that make equity important and it is not only about being nice to students, but it is also about taking into account many societal challenges such as demography issues, etc.). Gerald Madill expressed his concern that the danger is that financial contribution is expected from the students who do not have resources, who are lacking information and who are having a belief that a danger of a debt being accumulated can arise. It is very important to implement all reforms in coherent approach and taking into account all possible dangers.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Panel 2: How can Equity in Higher Education Systems be Ensured?

Speakers

Voldemar Tomusk

Voldemar Tomusk holds an MA in European Studies from the Central European University Prague campus in the Czech Republic and a doctoral degree in Social Sciences with specialization in Sociology of Education from the University of Turku, Finland. His recent works include “The Open World and Closed Societies: Essays on Higher Education Policies ‘in Transition’”, New York: Palgrave Macmillan 2004, and an edited volume “Creating the European Area of Higher Education: Voices from the Periphery”, Dordrecht: Springer 2006. His articles have appeared in journals such as “Higher Education Policy”, “International Studies in Sociology of Education”, “British Journal of Sociology of Education”, “European Journal of Education”, “Cahiers de la recherche sur l’éducation et les saviors” and many others. His current research interests fall in the area of political sociology of knowledge – the role and functions of knowledge in the late modern societies and the early Bolshevik reforms of the knowledge institutions in Russia. He lives with his family in Mitcham, Surrey in England.

Slavko Gaber

Occupation: Assistant Professor

Institution: Faculty of Education - University of Ljubljana

Fields of expertise: systems of education, educational legislation , governance and management , curriculum development , teachers training , quality assurance, general education , education and human (children) rights,

Education:

- 1992, PhD in Sociology, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Arts
- 1991, Westminster University, London.
- 1987, MA in Sociology, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences
- 1982, degree in Sociology, University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Sciences

Positions:

- 1983-1989, Teacher of Sociology in Gymnasium Škofja Loka
- 1989-1992, Lecturer of Sociology of Education at Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana
- 1992 (May) - 1999 (July), Minister of Education
- 1999 (October) - date, Lecturer (Docent) Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana.
- 2000-2002 (december) MP – National Assembly of Slovenia
- 2002-2004 (december), Minister of Education and Science
- 2004 (december – date, MP – National Assembly of Slovenia

Relevant experience and projects:

- Management of Educational Reform in The Republic of Slovenia. (1992-1999); 2002-2004.
- Expert collaboration in preparation of Electoral Legislation (1999-date)

- Management and expert collaboration in preparation of Quality Assessment and Assurance Model in Education in Slovenia. (1999-2002)
- Collaboration with European Training Foundation in designing VET policy in relation to SEE.
- Collaboration in expert group for external examination in primary education.
- Expert collaboration in preparation of educational reforms in Montenegro and Serbia.

Membership in Professional Bodies:

- Member of Slovene Sociological Association.
- Member of Slovene Politological Association.
- Member of National Council of Experts for Education (1989-1992)
- Member of Editorial Board of Theory and research in education, Sage Publications
- Member of Editorial Board of Šolsko polje (School Field), Pedagogical Institute, Ljubljana

Research topics:

Sociology of Education (values and education, systems of education in different countries, external examination, quality assurance, equity and efficiency in education, scaling up in education)

Political theory (representative democracy, limits of democracy, electoral systems, concepts of citizenship)

Experience in EU:

- Active co-elaboration of pre-accession strategy of the Republic of Slovenia - in particular at the field of Education.
- Active participation at the conferences of European ministers of Education and Science (formulation of different proposals - electronic conferences of ministers etc.)
- Expert collaboration in SEE Stability Pact process - Graz Process (From Sofia Conference (1999 -key note) to Graz Conference (2005 – key note)
- Expert collaboration with European Training Foundation in designing VET policy in relation to SEE.
- Key note – Helsinki (Finish EU presidency) Conference on Equity and Efficiency in Education (2006)
- Expert collaboration with ERI SEE – expertise: From assistance to cooperation in the age and in the region of EU -mania! Ideas and questions for discussion (CEPS – University of Ljubljana) (2006-2007)
- Scaling up and change in education – desegregation in particular (REF and Brookings) (2007-2008)

Ingrid Gogl

Ingrid Gogl is an executive member of the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions OBESSU.

The panel was chaired by **Anne Mikkola**, the member of ESU Bologna Process Committee.

Introduction to Panel

The main attention in terms of ensuring equal opportunities in education for all has shifted to the levels of education, being prior to higher education. It has been motivated by different evidences

that the main inequalities arise at lower levels of education and are usually reproduced at following levels. Designing an appropriate policy for each level of education requires a proper understanding of existing inequalities taking place throughout entire education systems.

In both, the Bologna framework and in the European Commission's framework, equity in higher education has been in the agenda for quite some time. In order to make higher education more accessible, we need to ensure that the education structures in place serve the political goal of enhancing participation. A number of tools, such as qualification frameworks, have been introduced to open the higher education to a larger public, but the reality for underrepresented groups to participate in higher education is still scarce. How can we make better use of the tools we have now and what measures do we need to take in the future to ensure that higher education will be available for all?

This panel intended to look at equity considerations, linking all education levels in the frame of lifelong learning, with a special attention to the role of higher education in ensuring equity, as well as – importance of equity in higher education in the overall frame of educational system. Additionally, it was looking at existing tools in the frame of education reform to promote equity in higher education.

The panel was organized in a form of short presentation by each of the speakers on their experience, current work and research conclusions about equity in education, and followed by the discussion. All speakers have had a very different and unique experience in relation to their work with education: Voldemar Tomusk is internationally very active researcher, Slavko Gaber, former minister of Education in Slovenia, has a great experience in management of education on the national and international level, and Ingrid Gogl is an executive member of the Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions OBESSU.

The following questions were discussed at this panel:

- Equity in higher education: for whom and how?
- What is the role of education reform to promote equity in higher education?
- Which measures are adequate and successful to improve equity in education?
- What is the role of ensuring equity in higher education from perspective of Lifelong learning?
- Anne introduced that discussions are going on but there is no implementation. Is it rather a window-dressing or actual policy implementation?

Voldemar Tomusk started his presentation with saying that he doesn't know how equity in higher education has to be ensured. There are no "7 secrets" for that. He continued with a story from life: "In Russia an argument was used that disabled students are having their own universities, by that meaning that the system is equitable. That means that they have their own "getos" and this is fine? They will graduate and will have no possibilities. There is an issue of diversification: where are you coming from, there are you going to. The moral – equity is not content neutral. The content and provision depends on "who's knowledge matters".

He gave an example of one Roma girl graduating in law – with a lot of effort. Wanted to work in nonprofit sphere, but couldn't find a job. She found a job in a hotel at reception and even there was discriminated. Issue of racism. Moral: one thing is what we declare but sometimes behaviors go beyond your own declarations. "Do you want your child to go to the gipsy school, do you?"

What do we do about behavior and antidiscrimination of minorities? The argument about "we have to include so that talent is not wasted". We have to stand for society independently from its economic costs even if you don't see the immediate profit out of it. And public money has to go in because it pays off in a long term.

Voldemar Tomusk concluded, that when we are talking about how to achieve equity in higher education, we have to talk about what kind of society as we want and, we have to talk about politically.

Presentations of Slavko Gaber is available in the attachments 4.

Ingrid Googl in her presentation analyzed the concept of equity from different angles. Equality is what we want to achieve, equity is how we get there. Equity in dictionary - related to fairness. Education is a tool to achieve a greater equality in society, still it's not accessible, and higher quality education is not achieved.

Here's a system where students have to adjust to the system and not the system adjusted to students. (What about students in the wheelchairs! They are forced to go to special schools. In other schools there are "integration classes" – good way of achieving equality but it is not a goal in a lot of countries. She mentioned that the European Commission in its policies is addressing equity and efficiency, but still focuses on efficiency. And it is limiting equity.

Panel 3: Return of Education and Financial Responsibility

Speakers

Liliana Simionescu

Liliana Simionescu has been a member of the UNESCO Division of Higher Education since 1992. She was involved in the preparation and the follow-up to the UNESCO 1998 World Conference on Higher Education. She has been working on various projects and activities run by the Section for Reform, Innovation and Quality Assurance, notably the Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and the Recognition of Qualifications; the UNESCO/Hewlett-Packard project “Piloting solutions for reversing brain-drain to brain gain for Africa”; and the monitoring of the “UNESCO/OECD Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education”. She is a member of the GIQAC (Global Initiative for Quality Assurance Capacity) Secretariat, and is involved in the preparation of the 2009 World Conference: “The New Dynamics of Higher Education”. She graduated in 1985 in Philology at the University of Bucharest, Romania.

Astrid Schwarzenberger

Astrid Schwarzenberger, born in 1973, has graduated from the University of Osnabrück in “European Studies” and the Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences in “European Business Studies”; she has also studied in England and France and has spent internships in England, Canada, France, Belgium and Egypt. She has been working for HIS Higher Education Information System in Hanover, Germany, since 2002, where the steering and funding of higher education institutions is her main focus. In 2006, she took on the role of consortium leader for the EU project “Public/private funding of higher education: a social balance”, the results of which are presented here.

Stef Beek

Stef Beek comes from Holland and is a current member of ESU’s Committee on Commodification, a position he was elected to at BM51 in Paris. Prior to this, he was first an EC member of his local union, LSBo, from 2002-2003 before becoming Vice-President of ESU member, LSVb, the Dutch National Union. He is currently studying for Masters in Political Science at the Universteit van Leiden.

Introduction to Panel

Stagnating higher education funding has led all to and increased focus on alternative mechanisms for financing higher education, particularly private sources, as well as efficient and effective investments and spending in higher education. At the same time education has been considered to be of key importance for the economic competitiveness of the countries.

This panel discussion we looking at the balance of private – public financing of education as well as efficiency policies in relation to equity in higher education.

Among speakers, in this panel discussion will participate Liliana Simionescu, representing UNESCO, where she is involved in preparation of the UNESO 2009 World Conference: “The New Dynamics of Higher Education”, Astrid Schwarzenberger, the leader for the EU project “Public/private funding of higher education: a social balance” and Stef Beek, the member of the Committee on Commodification of Education of ESU, where he is responsible for financing of higher education and the Lisbon Strategy.

Concretely, the following questions will be discussed at this panel:

- What is the balance between public and private contributions in respect to equity?
- What is return to education and how is it taken into account in financial as well as equity policies in higher education?
- Who should be contributing privately to the education?
- What effects could efficiency and competition policies have on equity in higher education?

The panel was chaired by **Rossella Iraci Capucinello**, the member of ESU Executive Committee.

WORKSHOPS

Workshop 1: HOW CAN EQUITY BE ENSURED IN AN INTEGRATIVE SYSTEM OF LIFELONG LEARNING?

Workshop Chair/s

Maris Mälzer is a member of the Gender Equality Committee (GEC) of ESU since November 2007. She comes from Estonia, where she has been active in the national union of students, EÜL.

Marko Stojanovic is a member of the Committee on Commodification of Education (CoCo) of ESU since January 2008. He comes from Serbia, where he has been active in the national union of students, SUS.

Aim

This workshop aims to examine education systems from a lifelong learning perspective and analyze inequalities and good practice in combating these inequalities.

Issues to be dealt with /Points of Discussion / Learning Outcomes

Points of Discussion

- Lifelong learning
- Where inequalities arise from
- Consequences of existing inequalities in lifelong learning

Learning outcomes:

- Understanding of basis of lifelong learning
- Understanding of how inequalities are generated
- Tools to combat inequalities in lifelong learning

Workshop Plan

Tuesday, May 6

- Introduction to the workshop
- Lifelong learning
- About inequalities

Wednesday, May 7

- Tools how to combat inequalities
- Role plays

Thursday, May 8

- Presentation of the work shop results

Working Methods

- Group work
- Role plays

Introduction to the Workshop

Inequalities in higher education are for the most part a continuation of inequalities at lower levels of education. Therefore ensuring equity in education systems requires a proper understanding of discrimination and exclusion taking place throughout the entire systems. For this reason this workshop will examine education systems from a lifelong learning perspective and analyze inequalities and good practice in combating these.

Further Reading

ESU Life long learning statement

Workshop report

Profile of participants

The total of 9 participants took part in the workshop. Out of this number, 6 are females (70%) and 3 are males (30%). Approximately 50% of participants (4 of them) are international officers of their NUSes. Overwhelming majority are the english fluent speakers.

Chronology of the Workshop

Day 1:

0 min Introduction of Participants

10 min Introduction of workshop outcomes desired and methods to be used

17 min Raised discussion point 1 – How do we understand concept of LLL?

What is the state of affairs regarding LLL in our countries?

40 min Raised discussion point 2 – Is LLL a reality or just an abstract phenomena?

60 min Raised discussion point 3 – Where inequalities arise from and how are they being generated?

Day 2:

0 min Continuation of the discussion point 3, raised a day before

40 min Discussion point 4 – What are the consequences of existing inequalities in LLL?

60 min Raised discussion point 5 – Tools to combat inequalities in LLL.

Subpoint 1 – Who are the stakeholders in this process?

Subpoint 2 – What is a role of NUSes in this process?

105 min Participants divided in two groups. Their task was to develop a kind of desired or the most ideal educational path of a person, taking into account equality.

135 min Presentation of results of the groups

Day 3:
Knowledge cafe took place.

Discussion Points

Discussion point 1: How do we understand concept of LLL?

Participants said:

- Education through whole life
- Opportunity one to get education regardless his/ her age, occupation etc.
- Way of earning new required competences every time you change your job
- Opportunity for those who didn't afford to go to university when they were supposed to

Discussion point 2: Is LLL a reality or just an abstract phenomena?

Participants said:

- As a concept LLL is reality but not enough implemented
- It is not reality because most if people concerned are not aware of it at all
- As information dissemination increase, and as opportunities for LLL-ers increase, LLL becomes reality more and more
- In France, LLL is reality, not only as a concept, but also in implementation. Every employee has a right to take 6 hours off per a year which are paid by a company, in order to take additional courses and education. Since they have every year 6 hrs off, they can accumulate this time and than use it one day when enough hours accumulated to take a course.
- In Norway and Belgium there are official governmental programs and state funds for LLL-ers.
- In Slovenia, there are lots of programs for LLL-ers but most of people are still not familiar with LLL

Discussion point 3: Where inequalities arise from and how being generated?

Participants said:

- There are four dimensions:
 - Socio-economic
 - Financial
 - Cultural
 - Lack of information
- Socio-economic
- Family background
- Different social responsibilities of different sexes (for example, a female in her 35 is very likely to be occupied by raising a child in comparison with a male who doesn't have that responsibility and is free to take additional courses and education)
- Financial
- Lack of funds for education and specialisation
- Cultural
- Tradition not favouring education in later stages of ones life
- Prejudices towards middle generation gaining education that late
- Inequalities based on any kind of discrimination

Discussion point 4: What are the consequences of existing inequalities in LLL?

Participants said:

- Inequalities produce new inequalities
- LLL is a tool for combating unemployment. For those who are out of LLL as a consequence of existing inequalities, it is likely to take more time to find a job
- Most of immigrants are a target group for LLL. If they are prevented from having LLL as a consequence of inequalities, it is likely that more time and effort will be required to integrate them into society

Discussion point 5: Tools to combat inequalities in LLL; Who are the stakeholders in this process? What is a role of NUSes in this process?

Participants said:

- NUSes should cooperate with other stakeholders such as trade unions, school unions, local / regional / state government to combat inequalities in LLL and promote this concept. Students are also potential LLL-ers so there is a large interest of NUSes to take part in this process.
- The main role of NUSes should be to promote LLL and disseminate information. NUSes should also press governments to focus more on the problems that LLL-ers are facing
- Public debates are also very important and NUSes should initiate them and take part in them.

Learning Outcomes

In your reader article you outlined a number of learning outcomes. For each learning outcome, address how your workshop dealt with it.

Example:

Learning Outcome 1 – Understanding of basis of LLL: the participants should be able to define LLL, and recognize necessity of LLL. During first two discussions on ‘What LLL is’ and ‘Is LLL reality’, participants were able to brainstorm among themselves on this and hear different perceptions of LLL.

Learning Outcome 2 – Understanding of how inequalities are generated: the participants should be able to recognize inequalities among people in LLL. During discussion on inequalities and consequences, participants were able to brainstorm among themselves on this and hear different knowledge of participants on inequalities and consequences.

Learning Outcome 3 – Tools to combat inequalities in LLL: the participants should be familiar with the tools to combat inequalities in LLL, from a perspective of student and students’ union.

Learning Pedagogy: after the long discussions on LLL, inequalities and potential tools, participants were divided into guided groups to produce a preferred educational path which would be equitable for all.

Reflections from the Facilitators

Please write a short overview (150 words) of the workshop including:

- Your opinion on whether the workshop aims were reached or not and why
- Any example of good or bad practice from the methodology (e.g. I tried the thinking-hats technique – failed miserably for a discussion on tuition fees)
- The level of participation in the workshop and reasons (e.g. people had difficulty communicating because of radically different national scenarios)

General Conclusions from the Workshop

The general conclusions of the workshop. 200-500 words

Feedback

The general points that came from the aural or 'post-its' feedback at the end of the session. The general rapporteur will also integrate feedback from the general feedback form into this.

Workshop 2: DO REFORMS OF STRUCTURES LIKE FLEXIBILISATION AND STUDENT CENTERED LEARNING INCREASE EQUITY?

Workshop Chair/s

Bruno Carapinha is a graduate in History from the University of Lisbon and is furthering his studies in Political Science. He has been a students' representative since 2000 on the institutional, regional and national level. Bruno has been Portuguese student representative in the Bologna Process Ministerial Conference in Bergen, in May 2005 and in London, in May 2007. Since November 2006, Bruno has been a member of the Bologna Process Committee of ESU, being responsible for a number of topics from recognition of prior learning, qualification frameworks, ECTS, external dimension and the Bologna Process after 2010.

Anne Mikkola is a member of the Bologna Process Committee of ESU since November 2006. She comes from Finland.

Aim

This workshop aims at evaluating, which measures in the context of higher education reform exists to improve equity in higher education, which of them are adequate and successful in their actual implementation in respect to promoting equity in higher education.

Issues to be dealt with /Points of Discussion / Learning Outcomes

Points of Discussion

- Higher education reform and measures to improve equity
- Flexibilisation of higher education
- student centered learning
- policies and their implementation: good and bad practices

Learning outcomes:

- awareness on the existing measures and tools to improve equity in higher education
- awareness on opportunities and threats in implementation of higher education reforms in relation to ensuring equity in higher education reforms

Workshop Plan

Tuesday, May 6

- Introduction to the workshop
- Identification of measures and tools in the frame of higher education reform to improve equity in higher education

Wednesday, May 7

- Aims and existing practices of the reforms related to flexibilisation and student centered learning in the context of equity
- Evaluation of identified tools and measures in improving equity in higher education
- Developing students' suggestions to improve equity in higher education through higher education reform

Thursday, May 8

- Presentation of the work shop results

Working Methods

- Open discussion
- Group work and presentation

Introduction to the Workshop

Existing inequalities in higher education are visible in individuals failing to enter, progress and complete their studies. Attempts especially in the Bologna Process are aimed at addressing possible obstacles and widening participation and retention through structural reforms and a learner—centered approach. Also the implementation of Information and Communication technologies in the education process and e—learning are seen as measures to increase flexibilisation. This workshop is aimed at evaluating, which measures are adequate and successful to improve equity in education. In this respect both existing concepts and their actual implementation shall be considered.

Further Reading

ESU Policy Paper on Student Centered Learning
ESU Policy Paper on Recognition of Prior Learning
OECD Thematic Review of Higher Education (Chapter 3)
OECD Thematic Review of Higher Education (Chapter 4)

Workshop report

Profile of participants

The workshop had participants from a wide range of European countries, although Western Europe was slightly overrepresented. The participants were mostly student representatives that were international officers of national unions of student. The group contained a representative from the OECD and a representative from Eurostudent.

Chronology of the Workshop

Day 1:

- 0 min Introduction of Participants (icebreaker game)
- 10 min Presentation on the idea behind student centred learning
- 60 min Discussion on presentation

Day 2:

- 0 min Introduction to debate
- 10 min Roleplay about the interpretation of flexibility between employers, students, average Joe's and academics

Day 3:

- 0 min Intoduction to dimensions of equity
- 10 min Debates on the tools to use to increase flexibility and equity

90 min Wrap up of the workshops

Discussion Points

You elucidated your discussion points in your 'aims/discussion points section in the reader'. Minute-type reporting should be done for discussion points. It is not important who said what in response to who.

Example:

Discussion Point: How can we improve the organisation of events.

Points raised:

- Readers should be sent out earlier
- Better practical info needed
- Social events shouldn't only include alcohol
- Social events should include alcohol (if there are conflicting opinions list them both)
- Etc

Learning Outcomes

In your reader article you outlined a number of learning outcomes. For each learning outcome, address how your workshop dealt with it.

Example:

Learning Outcome: the participants should be able to define strategies for empowering different categories of students at different levels (local/national/international)

Learning Pedagogy: after presentations on best practice in empowerment strategies, participants were divided into guided groups to produce a 5 point action plan on the topic

Feedback on Outcome: the method met with mixed success. Two groups drafted detailed action plans, however a third group developed a weak action plan due to lack of understanding of the presentations.

Reflections from the Facilitators

Please write a short overview (150 words) of the workshop including:

- Your opinion on whether the workshop aims were reached or not and why
- Any example of good or bad practice from the methodology (e.g. I tried the thinking-hats technique – failed miserably for a discussion on tuition fees)
- The level of participation in the workshop and reasons (e.g. people had difficulty communicating because of radically different national scenarios)

General Conclusions from the Workshop

The Bologna Process has sparked a reform of structures, but has also provided for a catalyst of educational reform more generally. The use of learning outcomes within all aspects of the Process has sparked a change in the philosophy of education from a teacher centred to a student centred approach. The realisation of this change in philosophy is however not as smooth as it is portrayed. ESU's Bologna With Student Eyes shows that while formally these systems are changing, the classrooms themselves are still relatively conservative. Qualifications Frameworks spark another

debate about the development of student centred learning as they break down qualifications into clear descriptors. They are a useful tool to develop this approach, when implemented properly. Student centred learning has many advantages, both academically and socially. Academically, it provides an impetus in quality, as student become more aware of what they learn and what they want to learn. Socially, they will learn in different contexts, with more motivation, taking into account the individual's social context.

Flexibilisation has many different meanings, although from a student perspective the issues is relatively straightforward. Flexibilisation of higher education is interpreted as given a space for individuals to develop themselves, taking into account their social situation when they are accessing, participating in and completing higher education. Flexibility includes the approach in which courses have to be provided at flexible hours, through flexible modules, with different entry routes, etc. There are however very different interpretations of different stakeholders. The fear of many actors that flexiblisation means lowering quality standards should be adressed and put into context.

As already stated, flexibilisation can lead to a strong increase in equity. With regards to access, free recognition of prior learning, multiple entry routes, counselling towards underrepresented groups and other modes of education, flexible financial support and outreach (e.g. for students with disabilities or minorities) officers are concrete measures that are associated with flexibilisation and equity. Regarding participation in higher education, the workshop recommended that financial support, modes of delivery, modularisation, social and academic counselling and teacher-student ratio are issues to be looked at. Finally, with regards to completion, the workshop looked at career counselling, apprenticeships, labour market days and academic careers as issues for development.

Feedback

The general points that came from the aural or 'post-its' feedback at the end of the session. The general rapporteur will also integrate feedback from the general feedback form into this.

Workshop 3: EMPOWERMENT POLICIES AS A TOOL TO FIGHT INEQUALITIES

Workshop Chair/s

Alma Joensen is a member of the Gender Equality Committee (GEC) of ESU. She is studying Political Science and Gender Studies in the University of Iceland. In GEC she is mainly responsible for the Gender Mainstreaming Strategy.

Pascal Hartmann is a member of the Gender Equality Committee of ESU. He is studying Law and Economics in Vienna. In GEC he is focusing on topics related to commodification of HE, statistics and research.

Aim

Apart from focusing on combating inequalities at lower levels of education and reforming higher education, empowerment of underrepresented and marginalized groups and affirmative action may be measures to improve equity in education systems. This workshop looks at good practices to foster inclusion of discriminated and marginalized groups in all levels of the education system, raises awareness of these groups and aims at developing ways to empower them.

Issues to be dealt with /Points of Discussion / Learning Outcomes

Points of Discussion

- Identify marginalized and underrepresented groups and consider the obstacles they face
- Evaluate practices to empower them in the education system, regarding their effectiveness to support discriminated and marginalized groups
- Consider whether these practices may

Learning outcomes:

- Raised knowledge on marginalised groups and empowerment strategies
- Knowledge of best practice examples
- Ability to argue empowerment Issues In different contexts

Workshop Plan

Tuesday, May 6

- Identify marginalized and underrepresented groups and the obstacles they face

Wednesday, May 7

- Evaluate practices to empower them in the education system, regarding their effectiveness to support discriminated and marginalized groups

Thursday, May 8

- EP-simulation considering practices In different national and political context

Working Methods

- Group work
- EP-simulations
- Questionnaire
- Knowledge Café

Introduction to the Workshop

This workshop focuses on marginalized and underrepresented groups, the obstacles they face, and come up with ideas for affirmative actions in order to empower these groups.

Further Reading

- Article "Relationship between the regulation of education and training systems and equity in higher education" in this reader.
- Draft ESU Policy Paper on Gender Equality in Higher Education

Workshop report

Profile of participants

15 people from 15 european countries. Surprisingly both the gender and regional balance was very good, and the knowledge background of the participants as well.

Chronology of the Workshop

Session 1:

Ws starts 14:40

20 min Introduction of Participants (icebreaker game)

30 min (stand up game)

30 min Identify discriminated groups and obstacles

Session 2:

Ws starts (10 min too late)

? min Participants were divided into three groups to evaluate practices to empower one discriminated group.

? min Groups presented the results from their group discussions

Session 3:

? min EP simulations

? min Participants discussed and shared best practice examples

Discussion Points

Identify marginalized and underrepresented groups and consider the obstacles they face

- We identified groups and obstacles, not only in the higher education system but in the society in general
- Numerous groups were identified

Evaluate practices to empower them in the education system, regarding their effectiveness to support discriminated and marginalized groups

- Participants were divided in three groups, each one chose one group mentioned before
- Part-time students –
- People with disabilities –
- Black people – we need to change attitudes, of both authorities and people. Raise awareness of racism amongst children, through the educational system. We need to acknowledge that people have different backgrounds

Learning Outcomes

Raised knowledge on marginalised groups and empowerment strategies

- Participants were all standing on the floor and the ws chairs asked yes/ no questions about discrimination and equality work in their countries or student unions. When the answer was yes the participants moved to the right side of the room, but to the left side if the answer was no. In the end participants came up with their own questions to ask the group.
- We made a round where every participant came up with one group, which is discriminated, and an example of obstacles it faces. They wrote their suggestion on a post-it and we put them all on the board.

Knowledge of best practice examples

- At the end of the workshop all participants shared best practice examples from their student

unions, concerning fighting discrimination.

Ability to argue empowerment Issues In different contexts

- EP simulation. Participants were divided in three groups discussing three points on the agenda. Each group was given a stand to fight for in each discussion, for – against – partly for/ against. Points that were discussed:
 - Should governments improve facilities for the physically disabled in public institutions, and take measures to encourage private companies to do the same?
 - Should we pass a policy paper to equal the rights and status of foreigners and natives, concerning education and health care?
 - Should there be gender quotas in the leading positions and committees in both private and public institutions and companies?

Reflections from the Facilitators

The workshop aims were reached, due to active participation of people included, and their different regional backgrounds, we got a variety of ideas and best practices.

All the methodologies worked out as expected, except for the EP simulation. It struck us how many arguments we have against these points that were discussed, and how few we really have in favour of them, so after the session we all felt a bit overwhelmed by the shocking arguments brought up. This still wasn't a failure, since we discussed it afterwards and realised how necessary it is to raise awareness, and collect arguments.

General Conclusions from the Workshop

The participants seemed to have already some knowledge on which groups were underrepresented and even some ideas and best practices on how to empower them and include. The situation in their national unions varies a lot, when it comes to strategies or policies to work on these issues, and also when it comes to legislation by the state or university policies. There was a general agreement on that student unions play a vital role when it comes to implementing equity policies in HEI's and represent underrepresented groups, and there were also shared best practices and ideas on how to improve this and press for changes. These examples included campaigns, public meeting and articles, handbooks and arguments to put forward to the university board.

The EP simulation turned out to be very interesting. After we had gone through it, and had arguments for/ against/ both for and against these three points, we realised how easy it was to speak against these points, showing us that the lack of awareness is a huge problem, and that that it was obvious that we were lacking arguments in favour of representing, including and empowering underrepresented groups.

The general conclusion is therefore that there is will and ideas in place for pressing for equity in higher education, but in order to do so successfully, trainings and awareness raising is necessary.

Workshop 4: HOW CAN COMPETING INTERESTS OF EQUITY, EFFICIENCY AND QUALITY BE COMBINED?

Workshop Chair/s

Marja-Liisa Alop: former EC-member

Angelika Striedinger: former CoCo-member

Aim

The aim of this workshop is to identify and discuss the dilemmas and contradictions between the concepts of equity, efficiency and quality in higher education.

Issues to be dealt with /Points of Discussion / Learning Outcomes

Leading questions:

- What are the points of orientation for political decisions?
- What do we want higher education to be?
- What are our criteria for equity, efficiency and quality?
- Where do we see competing aims, contradictions and dilemmas?
- What is the role of financing models?
- Where could we find solutions for those dilemmas?

Learning Outcomes

- understanding the transfer of political ideas into policy
- analyzing the complex field of higher education development
- getting to know the role of financing models

Workshop Plan

Tuesday, May 6, 14:30-16:00

- political decisions: principles versus rationalization
- aims for higher education

Wednesday, May 7, 10:00-11:00

- criteria for equity, efficiency and quality
- competing aims, contradictions and dilemmas

Wednesday, May 7, 14:30-16:00

- discussing dilemmas (with special focus on financing models)

Working Methods

The workshop is mainly based on discussions. Those will – according to the size of the group and the knowledge levels – partly take place in the whole group, partly in working groups, role plays and negotiations.

Introduction to the Workshop

In the past decade funding of higher education has in many countries stagnated or even decreased. At the same time higher education is considered to be of key importance for the economic competitiveness of countries. These developments have led to a stronger focus on the effective and efficient investment of public resources. This workshop looks into what effectiveness and efficiency in funding of higher education really means and what effects changes in funding models have on the concept and quality of higher education. This refers especially to tendencies interpreting high quality education as to be exclusive or elitist.

Further Reading

ESU, May 2007: Policy Paper “The Future of Higher Education”

ESU, September 2006: Statement “Efficiency and Equity in HE Institutions”

EU Commission, September 2006: Communication “Efficiency and Equity in European Education and Training Systems”

Workshop report

WS Session 1: Tuesday, 14:30-16:00

1. introduction

The workshop started with an introduction round: who are you, what do you do, and what is the most interesting takeaway from this morning’s panel in the light of the workshop title?

- merit is never pure
- the future is already here, it’s just not distributed yet (resp. unequally distributed)
- what is quality really? what do we want higher education to be?
- efficiency for what? to bring equity into society
- most HE-systems don’t fulfil all three purposes - how does it all come together? (equity, efficiency and quality)
- equity is not only important at the entrance to, but also during education
- some higher education institutions are there for equity (to take all students in), others for efficiency (to have efficient higher education)
- let’s talk politics: policy isn’t just based on data, but on ideology

2. definitions

The meaning of efficiency, quality, and equity depend on the thinking patterns and experiences that people have in their minds. Therefore, the first step of the workshop was a definition of those concepts. They were asked to write down their thoughts on post-it’s and put them on three flipcharts (one per concept). The task was not only to write down what efficiency/ quality/ equity is, but also what it is not.

Understanding Efficiency

Efficiency means investing what it takes to reach the aims of HE

Some people define efficiency as relationship between investment and outcome

What efficiency is not:

- value for money
- Measurable by »academic statistics«

Understanding Quality

Quality is more about culture than a procedure or a combination of control systems

Quality is there if the aims of HE both on individual and societal level are reached

Quality is continuous improvement

Quality is not numbers and data without principles

Quality is not research papers

Quality is not external control

Quality is not elitism – it's not just about what other people think (it is not under the ownership of someone outside the process)

Understanding Equity

Equity is fair opportunity

Equity is social justice

Equity is balance

Equity is not social exclusion

Equity is not setting limits

3. role and purpose of HE

In order to broaden the picture and create a point of reference, the participants were asked to name what in their opinion is the role and purpose of higher education:

- creating conditions for a real democracy
- social and cultural emancipation
- Encourage critical thinking
- Not about getting a job
- Broadening the mind and keeping it broad
- Creating and spreading the knowledge
- HE is serving the whole society

4. where to equity/ efficiency/ quality support and contradict the role of HE

As a next step, the participants divided into three groups (one per concept) and find out where the concepts of equity/ efficiency/ quality support and contradict the role and purpose of education.

- a. »Efficiency is: Aspects of education that contribute to our idea of society as we want it to be«
thus »An efficient HE system brings equity and quality* within the system.«
 * Quality (in our understanding) to be defined as the points mentioned in the discussion, as:
 - Critical thinking, broadening horizon
 - Not (only) education for a job
 - Social and Individual emancipation
 - Good Education
 -
- b. The purpose of HE is to create and support equity and social justice
- c. Quality is there if HE system fills the purposes of HE including promoting equity in the best (most effective) way

WS Session 2: Wednesday, 10:00-11:15

5. quotes on equity-efficiency-quality

In order to broaden our view, the participants collected interesting quotes on the concepts of efficiency, equity and quality from other participants, hacks and speakers. Here's what they came up with:

- There can be no quality without equity and efficiency. Equity and efficiency are based on values and quality should provide that these values are actually supported through the system
- Those are terms used by the commission if you look it from a discourse perspective.
- You should start with equity. That's a basis for all
- Quality equals equality.
- Together they mean a balanced and comprehensive education system
- Quality cannot exist outside efficiency but also it would not be fair if you don't have equity in the equation.
- If your goal is to make HE more important in society then to be efficient you have to start with equity. If you think of equity as a goal you will get quality
- All of the 3 goals have been reached separately. Sadly as soon as you find a way to spread efficiently quality education people don't want it to be spread anymore.
- Efficiency is more important than quality
- Quality and equity are inherent to HE. Efficiency is an external concept
- When there is learning there is no waste

6. take a stand

After a very harmonic first workshop session, the aim was to focus more clearly on the problems and contradictions that come up when trying to combine the concepts of equity, efficiency and quality. The workshop chairs therefore prepared some statements, the participants had to decide whether they agree or disagree with those statements and argue why they take their stand:

- a. "Elite universities don't contradict the idea of equity."
 arguments in favour:

- Equitable universities can produce good results (and thus call themselves elite universities), simply because of their way of thinking and their efficient organisation.
- Equity does not mean flat equalisation, but can also allow differentiation.

arguments against:

- If you have elite universities, what happens to other universities? (concerning their image, their finances etc.)
- Elite universities are attractive to students. But who can overcome obstacles to enter those institutions easier? Those who are more privileged anyway.
- As soon as you have a selection process, the socio-economic background becomes relevant.

b. "Letting everyone study is a waste of resources."

arguments in favour:

- At least you have to provide counselling, so that the students don't just go to university to hang around, but have to declare their motivation as to why they want to study.
- You need a goal when you study.
- Why should ambitious students have to share the limited resources with lazy, uninterested students?

arguments against:

- There's never a waste where learning takes place.
- You have to give everyone the opportunity to study: That's not a question of resources, but of principle.
- The glass ceiling exists anyway (symbols etc.), so no need to make it worse.
- The problem of lazy, unmotivated, uninterested students is an invented dilemma: Everyone has their interests and motivations and strives somewhere.
- Those who are really not interested don't go to their classes anyway and therefore don't waste money.
- Who are you to judge who should study and who not?
- Life planning must not be a matter of social barriers.
- Even if it's a waste, you have to make that sacrifice in order to ensure equality. Not allowing people to study is even more of a waste.

c. "Quality is defined by results."

arguments in favour:

- In order to measure quality, you need to look at the results (e.g. student numbers).
- In the framework of the Bologna Process, the results to be measured are student-oriented.

arguments against:

- Not all results are measurable. Focussing on measurable results is a danger to the purpose of education.
- More important than numbers is a quality culture and quality enhancement: what's going on in the classrooms.

- d. "To be efficient, higher education institutions have to bring their students through their studies quickly."

arguments in favour:

- At least you need some sort of rules in order to bring a realistic view into idealistic concepts.

arguments against:

- Do people really want to stay students forever? No, they also have the interest to work and be independent.
- You need time to develop critical thinking.

WS Session 3: Wednesday, 14:30-16:00

7. Find the gap

After the rather abstract and theoretical discussions, the next step of the workshop was to concentrate on the reality and the problems that exist in the higher education systems of the participants' countries. They were therefore divided into three groups (equity, efficiency, quality) and given the task to define the difference between their education systems and the ideal situations as we defined them at the beginning of the workshop. This list of problems was the basis for the last element of the workshop:

8. Vote for me!

Each group became the campaign group for their candidate for the next minister of higher education. The profile, and main election promise of those candidates was equity/ efficiency/ quality, and they were asked to give a 5 minute speech on national television right before the election, lining out why their issue was the most important one, and why they were the best person to be elected. Additionally, they had to design a campaign poster that illustrates their work programme.

The main points of the election speeches were:

Efficiency:

- Education is there for society: Students should develop a critical mind, and be able to create and distribute knowledge.
- For massification and democratisation of education, investments need to be made. We are going to ensure that the finances and resources necessary to achieve the main goals of education are available.
- We want to make sure, that we get the maximum out of the resources we put into education. In order to ensure this, we will set up a controlling system to monitor the use of resources: We will set goals and assess them.
- Furthermore, we will make the outcomes of education visible to the society: The outcomes of the education system have to be defined and discussed in a societal context.

Equity:

- Our aim is to ensure non-discriminatory routes of access to education for all people.
- That means that education will be free of charge (the answer to tuition fees is: NO) and students will be able to be full time students who don't need to work.
- We will furthermore make sure that education becomes a unique self-development experience for every student. Students should not be stressed by exams, but proud about their achievements.

Quality:

- Our aim is not to focus only on measurable results, but on a quality culture.
- Quality in our understanding means consciousness of your actions. Everyone has to understand what the aims of education are.
- Therefore we are going to launch the WHY-campaign! All around the country, people will discuss: What is the purpose of education? This will increase awareness. Amongst other, we will produce guidebooks like “how to think ... for beginners”, T-shirts saying “what are you thinking ... and WHY?” etc.

Workshop 5: HOW TO INCREASE EQUITY THROUGH DIFFERENT METHODS OF FUNDING

Workshop Chair/s

Stef Beek is a student in Political Science. He is a Member of the Committee on Commodification of Education since 2007. Before he was elected in CoCo he was a member of the executive committee of his local union in 2002-2003 and vice-chair of the LSVb in 2005-2006. In CoCo Stef is mainly responsible for the Lisbon Strategy, Entrepreneurship, Financing and future of Higher Education.

Ligia Deca is a student in Maritime and Port Management, after finishing a Bachelor degree in Maritime Engineering. She is a Member of Gender Equality Committee. Her previous experience in the student movement started in her local union from 2001-2005 and continued at national level with being General Secretary of the National Alliance of Students' Organisations in Romania (ANOSR) from 2005-2006 and President of ANOSR between 2006-2007. Her professional experience includes working in the Quality Assurance field by working in the development of quality management systems in various institutions (HEI, public institutions, private companies). She is also a part of ESU "Lets' Go" - mobility project team, as well as the coordinator of the Coalition for Clean Universities - a Romanian project aimed at fostering academic integrity.

Aim

- Identify the real contributions from public and private sources in the current systems and discusses the public and private benefits from education.
- Identify the different sources of private funds and the possible effects they have on HE and students
- Explore the different position of European stakeholders in the discussion on private funds

Issues to be dealt with /Points of Discussion / Learning Outcomes

- The participants should have a higher awareness of the different types of private funds
- The participants should have an idea of the challenges and opportunities in the discussion of private vs. public funds.
- The participants should be able to recognize the different position of stakeholders in the debate about financing.

- The participants should be able to define strategies against competitions between different social sectors for adequate financial support.

Workshop Plan

Tuesday, May 6

- Presentation of the relevant Policy papers of ESU
- Presentation of the policy positions of other European stakeholders
- Discussion on the financing debate in Europe

Wednesday, May 7

- Participants work in small groups on assignments..
- Presentation and discussion of the work.

Thursday, May 8

- Simulation of a parliamentary session on financing
- Questions
- Feedback on the WS

Working Methods

In the Workshop we will try to combine knowledge transfer with active participation of the participants. The workshop will start with a presentation of the positions of the different European stakeholders in the debate on financing and equity. Furthermore we will ask the participants to create their own strategies by using the information which was given to them. We will end the workshop with a simulation of a parliamentary debate about financing in Higher Education.

Introduction to the Workshop

Stagnating and decreasing funding for higher education has not only lead to an increased focus on effective and efficient spending, but also to a call for a stronger private responsibility for higher education. The latter includes both contributions from students and their families in form of fees and other forms of private funding, such as private grants, funding from NGOs, etc. This workshop examines the real contributions from public and private sources and discusses the public and private benefits from education. The aim of this workshop is to strengthen students' argumentation in favour of adequate public support for higher education vis-à-vis fierce tendencies arguing in favour of prioritizing lower levels of education. The workshop will also discuss possible strategies against competitions between different social sectors for adequate financial support.

Further Reading

- OECD Thematic Review of Higher Education (chapter 4)
- Lisbon With Student Eyes
- Policy paper on financing
- COMMUNICATION FROM THE COMMISSION TO THE COUNCIL on Efficiency and equity in European education and training systems

Workshop report

Chronology of the Workshop

A description of events in the workshop and techniques used. DO NOT give an account of everything everyone said. These are not minutes! Example:

Day 1 (14:30-16:00):

- 10 min Introduction of Participants
- 25 min Presentation of Stakeholders' View on Financing of HE (see attached powerpoint)
- 35 min Discussion on points raised by the ppt presentation
- 20 min Describing latest national debates on alternative methods of financing in HE

Day 2 (10:00- 11:15)

- 5 min Short presentation on group assignments – building lobby strategies
- 35 min Group preparation of the lobby strategies (one group discussed a lobby strategy related to building a common stand with the teachers' unions regarding the alternative methods of financing, the other group discussed the general argumentation against the competition of different social sectors for public funds);
- 25 min Presentation of the lobby strategies
- 10 min Questions regarding the two presentations

Day 2 (14:30-16:00)

- 10 min Presentation of the assignments for the simulation of the parliamentary debate on financing (two groups – one supporting tuition fees and the other one asking for increased public funding)
- 20 min Preparation of the argumentation
- 30 min Task division and strategy
- 30 min Opening speeches by each group and individual speeches by the supposed MPs

Discussion Points

You elucidated your discussion points in your 'aims/discussion points section in the reader'. Minute-type reporting should be done for discussion points. It is not important who said what in response to who.

Discussion Point: Real contributions from public and private sources in the current systems

Points raised:

- Public financing is better
- Private sources are increasingly used, often without an equity perspective
- Private sources of funding pose a real threat when talking about research results that are not published due to commercial reasons
- There is a real threat for the democratic governance of HEI when private donors are increasingly involved in the decision-making process
- Tuition fees can bring equity – those who benefit from HE must pay, not the society as a whole

- Education – public good, everyone benefits, not only the students
- Increasing workload on the teachers in research – low quality of the teaching process

Discussion Point: Different sources of private funds and the possible effects that they have on HE and students

Points raised:

- Applied research co-funded by private enterprises can be damaging if the results are transformed into commercial secrets and if the research workload has an impact on the teaching process
- Commercialisation of user tailored programmes is regarded as a good opportunity to gather funds, but only if it doesn't impact on the HEI capacity of providing quality programmes
- Renting out university infrastructure was regarded as a useful way of gaining new funds, but only if it doesn't have an impact on the capacity of the institution to provide adequate study conditions for its students
- Donations seem to be a very good alternative way of funding, as long as it doesn't have attached a condition of including this donors into the governance of the HEI.

Learning Outcomes

In your reader article you outlined a number of learning outcomes. For each learning outcome, address how your workshop dealt with it.

Example:

Learning Outcome: the participants should have a higher awareness of the different types of private funds

Learning Pedagogy: after ppt presentation on different types of private funds, participants were asked to consider choose the ones that they think will not have a negative impact on equity in HE and to motivate their decision

Feedback on Outcome: the method had succeeded. Most participants gave examples of their national situations in order to motivate their preferences.

Learning Outcome: the participants should have an idea of the challenges and opportunities in the discussion of private vs. public fund

Learning Pedagogy: after ppt presentation on different types of private funds, participants were asked in the third session of the workshop to act as MPs and to argue their position on introducing certain types of private funds

Feedback on Outcome: the method wasn't very good. The discussion resulted in an argument or pro against tuition fees.

Learning Outcome: the participants should be able to recognize the different position of stakeholders in the debate about financing

Learning Pedagogy: the introductory ppt presentation gave an overview of the different stakeholders view on financing, both on national and European level. They used some of the information provided to elaborate a strategy regarding how to approach different types of stakeholders for the second session of the WS.

Feedback on Outcome: the method was not entirely appropriate. They seemed to not fully understand the European perspective on the matter. The participants related better to the national stakeholders views.

Learning Outcome: the participants should be able to define strategies against competitions between different social sectors for adequate financial support

Learning Pedagogy: the second session of the workshop was designed to give a group of participants a chance to build a general strategy on avoiding competitions between different social sectors for adequate financial support. They had a brief introduction by Stef and then built their own approach, which was presented.(see attached file)

Feedback on Outcome: the method was good. They seemed to have understood the approach methods.

Reflections from the Facilitators

The workshop's aims were generally reached. The participants have a better understanding of different stakeholders' view on financing and have explored different types of alternative sources of funding through the equity perspective. Due to the risk of concentrating the discussion on tuition fees and also knowing that there are a few "usual suspects" that tend to speak more in finance oriented workshops, we "forced" every participant to have interventions in the 2nd and 3rd session. In this way we made sure that every participant had the chance to voice their beliefs and filter the information provided in the 1st session of the WS. Some people had difficulties in communicating because they joined the workshop in the second day and missed the introduction session.

General Conclusions from the Workshop

The workshop "How to increase equity through different methods of funding" combined knowledge transfer with active participation. The participants explored various alternative sources of funding, like:

- Tuition fees
- Commercialisation of user tailored programmes
- Applied research co-funded by private enterprises
- Sponsorships for facilities (computers, labs, equipment...)
- Cooperation in service provision through public-private partnership
- Renting out university infrastructure
- Commercialising research results (spin offs)
- Cross border supply of higher education
- Investments in stock market
- Gifts/donations (enterprises, alumni,...).

When analyzing the effects of these sources of funding, the participants reached a general agreement that they should not be affecting the HEI's capacity to fulfill their basic aims:

1. Give high quality teaching/education
2. Independent research rooted in pure academic values
3. To contribute to the development of society

Equity is seen as a major concern when it comes to diversifying financing means. It has also been concluded that public support should be increased, as most participants underlined the negative effects of tuition fees on the students' access to, progression in and completion of higher education.

Also, some alternative sources of funding have been proved to be negative in terms of academic freedom and democratic governance of HEIs: the over involvement of private companies in the governing boards, the increased research workload of teachers that has a negative impact on teaching capacities, keeping research results from the public for commercial reasons etc. A general conclusion of the workshop is the need for a stronger private responsibility in the education sector, but not without strong principles in preserving equity as a core value of the educational system.

Feedback

We collected feedback with the classic “post-it” method. The general impression was good. The participants appreciated the pedagogical methods used. There were one or two opinions asking for a more “expert” approach. Nevertheless, it seems like the quantity of further reading was a little bit too large, as the participants expressed in the first session of the workshop.

OTHER

The workshop results were presented in a form of a “Knowledge cafe”: participants were invited to discuss their findings in an open and relaxed environment around tables with coffee/ tea. In this way they accumulated deeper understanding of problems raised in the workshop discussions and were able to develop more ideas in wider group of people.

Also, a Seminar’s time of almost 2 hours was allocated for a Female Network meeting and well as for Male gender training. Female Network meeting aimed at helping female student activists, participating in ESU seminar, to get to know each other better and to encourage each other to active participation in both, the seminar and the students movement as well as to encourage them to the achievements. Male training aimed at educating male student activists about gender stereotypes and gender equality issues. Both activities were very welcomed and positively perceived by the participants of the seminar.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The presentation of the General report was started by outlining the main activities of ESU in the field of ensuring equal opportunities in higher education. ESU involvement in dealing with equity issues and main policy principles can be characterised by the quote from the main document – the statutes:

“ESU has the following goals:

- *to promote equal opportunities for all students regardless of their political belief, religion; ethnic or cultural origin, gender, sexual orientation, social standing or any disability they may have.*
- *to promote equal chances of access to higher education for all people.”*

Also almost all ESU Policy papers reflect issues related to equality and equal opportunities in higher education. Currently, ESU is carrying out the Equity project, which encompasses a range of activities for development of understanding of problems related to inequalities in higher education, looking into possible solutions and to raising awareness about these issues.

When it comes to the interpretation of equity in higher education, there are different interpretations. The one proposed by the OECD is the following:

“Equitable tertiary systems are those that ensure that access to, participation in and outcomes of tertiary education are based only on individuals’ innate ability and study effort. They ensure that educational potential at tertiary level is not the result of personal and social circumstances, including of factors such as socio-economic status, gender, ethnic origin, immigrant status, place of residence, age, or disability.” (Tertiary Review of education, 2008)

It addresses inequities arise in preceding levels and proposes cost sharing and funding reform as a solution. The European Commission proposes the following definition:

“Equity is viewed as the extent to which individuals can take advantage of education and training, in terms of opportunities, access, treatment and outcomes. Equitable systems ensure that the outcomes of education and training are independent of socio-economic background and other factors that lead to educational disadvantage and that treatment reflects individuals’ specific learning needs. Inequity in relation to gender, ethnic minority status, disability and regional disparities etc. is not the prime focus here, but is relevant as far as it contributes to overall socio-economic disadvantage” (Communication on equity and efficiency, 2006).

As Ingrid Gogl (OBESSU) on the panel in this seminar explained her view, Equality is what we want to achieve, equity is how we get there. Equity - fairness. Education is a tool to achieve a greater equality in society.

There are many questions associated to the ways how to ensure equity in higher education, e.g., which educational level to prioritize? Primary and secondary education are very important in building basis for ensuring equity in further education, however as all participants agreed, higher education is also very important to have addressed. Higher education reproduces inequalities and as well as generate new ones. Also, inequalities do not disappear with even with the graduation, and they continue to appear in different opportunities and social consequences (demographic). That’s why discussion about equity in higher education is not only about being nice to students but also long term sustainability).

There are many interesting examples on how to ensure equity in higher education. Scottish qualifications framework is one of them. Other actions, needed to be started and continued, are:

- Data on equity (to collect, to realize existing problems and correlations);
- Awareness (in some countries it is simply not on the agenda, a lot of systems that raises equity issues are not evaluated);
- Get politicians to look at the data to ensure that decision making is connected to real problems;
- Positive action, provide incentives or remove disincentives to provide flexible provisions in universities;
- performance indicators and real commitment to equity.

After discussion of 3 days about equity issues, participants of the seminar agreed on some general conclusions:

- It's not about potential which is different for different groups of societies: Human ability is so flexible that anybody can actually do anything at highest level;

- it's not about only previous inequities. A lot can be done to reduce inequalities and increase opportunities;

- It's not only about wasted talent in economic terms, but about what kind of society we want

Even if we don't see the immediate profit out of it, we have to stand for society independently from its economic costs. We have to develop a long term vision and talk about it politically;

- It's not about limited resources, but rather about political will

(It's not so simple in life, there is no one right formula to find, there are no "7 secrets on how equity should be achieved", and mainly it is up to the political situation of the country).

At the same time, everyone agreed that an action and responsibility of all – The European Students' Union as well as all nation unions of students is needed in order to facilitate the process of achieving equity in higher education.

ANNEXES: presentations of the speakers

Annex 1: Paulo Santiago "The OECD policy directions to achieve equity in tertiary education: Results from the OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education"

Annex 2: Domic Orr "Equity – today for tomorrow – EUROSTUDENT's foreseen contribution"

Annex 3: Gerard Madill "Equity and qualifications frameworks"

Annex 4: Slavko Gaber "Equity in Higher Education? For Cultural and Social Capital in the Times of Work an the Farewell of the Work Based Societies"

Annex 5: General Conclusions from the Conference by the General Rapporteur.

Presentations are available also on [ESU webpage](#).