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Institute on Comparative Regional Integration Studies



Future Trends Series - GR:REEN Project

Title of the report

Higher Education to 2030 (vol. 1): Demography

Area

Demography

Reporter

OECD

Type of the Reporter

International Organisation

Periodically updated?

No

First issued year

2008

Latest update

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Official website

<http://www.oecd.org/edu/skills-beyond-school/highereducationto2030vol1demography.htm>

Language available

English

Short summary

In this report, trends and prospects are discussed 'regarding changes in the population of students, academic teaching staff and graduates in higher education in OECD countries, from both a quantitative and qualitative standpoint. It examines in particular the link between these developments, demographic changes and higher education policy.'

The findings of the report suggest that 'the central future issues for many countries will be of a qualitative nature, such as inequalities in access and participation, the diversity of paths, provision and institutions in higher education, the possible social marginalisation of those persons least educated, and the need to rethink the role of the academic profession.'

Key trends

'Trends as they relate to students:

- student participation will continue to expand and will in most cases be evident from growth in the size of higher education systems. Contraction will affect only a small number of countries;
- women will be in the majority in the student population;
- the mix of the student population will be more varied, with greater numbers of international students,

older students and those studying part-time, etc.

- the social base in higher education will probably continue to broaden, along with uncertainty about how this will affect inequalities of educational opportunity between social groups;
- novel attitudes and assumptions regarding access to higher education will emerge and be more concerned with real student attainment, reflecting trends in access policies for students with disabilities;

Trends as they relate to teachers:

- the academic profession will be more internationally oriented and mobile, but still structured in accordance with national circumstances;
- the activities of the profession will be more diversified and specialised, and subject to varied employment contracts;
- the profession will move gradually away from the traditional conception of a self-regulated community of professionals, and towards a model and consensus to be based on fresh principles.

Trends as they relate to society:

- the population will contain a greater proportion of graduates with positive implications for social well-being and economic growth;
- women graduates will be in the majority, while the inequalities they experience in remunerative terms will be reduced but still present;
- half or almost half of all people in the youngest age cohorts in many countries will be graduates;
- the gap between the absolute number of graduates (but not the relative number) in the OECD area and in the major emerging countries, in particular China and India, will become smaller;
- demographic trends seem likely to have little effect on higher education expenditure as a percentage of national wealth;
- challenges will arise linked to the possible social exclusion of groups not involved in higher education.'

Suggestions

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Methodology

Survey, research from primary sources and research from secondary sources

Reference to other trends reports? If yes, which reports?

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