



**OECD**

**IMHE ACTIVITIES REPORT**

**Institutional  
Management in  
Higher Education**

Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education



**2008-2010**

# A few words from Richard Yelland



Richard Yelland

**I**n mid-August 2008, when I was drafting the 2006-08 IMHE activities report, the Dow Jones Industrial Average was hovering around 12000 points. In mid-September, just a few days after the closing session of our 2008 IMHE General Conference, Lehmann Brothers collapsed, and by March 2009 the index was down to 6600.

The financial and economic crises that have dominated political and social discourse over the past two years have questioned some of the fundamental assumptions on which our economies and our societies are based. Even though education, skills and research are essential for growth and success in the knowledge economy, higher education was hard hit early on in some countries. Notable examples include Iceland, Ireland and the United States – and more recently the United Kingdom as well as many countries in Central and Eastern Europe and now the Baltic States. Others have been able to maintain or even increase their investment. However, as I write these words, governments in many OECD countries are implementing budgetary decisions that will significantly reduce public expenditure, and institutions will have to adjust to a difficult future.

Whatever the fiscal situation, those who govern higher education systems continue to seek the optimum balance between quality, equity and efficiency. Our 2008 conference focused on the quality, relevance and impact of higher education institutions and programmes. In 2010 the emphasis is on doing more with less. During the intervening period we have continued to help our members address the challenges of managing institutions and systems in challenging circumstances.

*Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose...*  
[Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr]

Key issues have been:

- assessing learning outcomes in higher education (AHELO)
- supporting quality teaching
- reviewing the role of higher education in the development of cities and regions
- understanding the changing policy environment in which institutions operate.

This report provides details of some of the work that we have undertaken on these issues, with your support.

Over the past two years, our membership has grown gratifyingly and it is now at a record level. Our increased membership reflects the increasingly global nature of higher education. We have members in more countries than ever before. We welcome all those who have joined IMHE in the past two years and invite you all to take every opportunity to keep in active contact with us.

At the same time, too many members have left, and while this may be in part due to economic circumstances, we have been conducting a review of how we respond to the needs and expectations of our members. In the coming two years we expect to further improve the way in which we relate to you so that we can be more useful and more relevant without being importunate.



# How we work

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) is an international organisation bringing together 32 national governments committed to democracy and the market economy. For more information, visit [www.oecd.org](http://www.oecd.org).

The Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) is part of the OECD. IMHE is the only OECD forum open to higher education institutions (HEIs).

Established in 1969, IMHE now has 250 members from 50 different countries. IMHE research areas and activities are

determined by the IMHE Governing Board. The Governing Board is made up of elected representatives of IMHE members in each country. The role of the Governing Board is to develop and monitor the IMHE programme of work, implemented by the Secretariat.

## IMHE in figures

- More than 250 members
- Representing 50 countries
- Governing Board with approx. 45 members
- Annual budget: c. EUR 1 000 000
- Around 10 staff members

## Joining IMHE

Membership is open (subject to the Governing Board approval) to HEIs in any OECD member country and certain non-member countries. Government departments, agencies and other non-profit organisations dealing with issues relating to higher education are also welcome to join. Institutions willing to join can become members at [www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/join](http://www.oecd.org/edu/imhe/join). HEIs have access to this forum as soon as their request for membership has been approved and their membership fee has been paid.

# Key activities

## Higher Education in cities and regions

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

Higher education institutions (HEIs) can play a key role in human capital development and innovation systems in their cities and regions. Through the Reviews of Higher Education in Regional and City Development the OECD contributes to higher education for the economic, social and cultural development of cities and regions. The reviews analyse how the HE system impacts local and regional development and ways to improve these effects. They also examine higher education's contribution to social, cultural and environmental development and regional capacity building as well as human capital and skills development, technology transfer and business innovation. The review process facilitates partnership building by drawing together HEIs and public and private agencies to identify strategic goals to work jointly towards.

These reviews are part of a wider multi-annual work of higher education in cities and regions co-ordinated by the IMHE. From 2004 to 2007, the OECD/IMHE carried out 14 regional reviews within 12 countries. This work is compiled in the OECD flagship publication *Higher Education and Regions: Globally Competitive, Locally Engaged* (OECD, 2007) with recommendations to benefit both HEIs and national and regional governments.

### 2008-2010 • Regions in spotlight

- Australia: State of Victoria
- Brazil: State of Paraná
- Chile: Bío Bío Region
- Germany: City of Berlin
- Israel: The Galilee
- Italy: Region of Lombardy
- Malaysia: State of Penang
- Mexico: State of Veracruz
- Netherlands: City-Regions of Amsterdam and Rotterdam
- Spain: Autonomous Regions of Andalusia and Catalonia
- United States: Southern Arizona
- United-States –Mexico: Paso del Norte Region

In 2008, IMHE launched a second round of reviews to address the demand by national and regional governments for more responsive and active higher education institutions. As a result, between 2008 and 2010 the OECD reviewed 14 regions in 8 OECD countries and 3 non-member economies.

The reviews are carried out by IMHE in collaboration with international organisations and associations and other OECD programmes and directorates. This work also supports the OECD Innovation Strategy and OECD Green Growth Strategy.

► More information:  
[www.oecd.org/imhe/regionaldevelopment](http://www.oecd.org/imhe/regionaldevelopment)

## OECD feasibility study for the international assessment of higher education learning outcomes (AHELO)

► For more information, contact: [ahelo@oecd.org](mailto:ahelo@oecd.org); [www.oecd.org/edu/ahelo](http://www.oecd.org/edu/ahelo)

Some 135 million students are now studying at more than 17 000 universities and other institutions throughout the world and the numbers are still increasing. However, there are currently no international tools with which to measure students' knowledge, their abilities at the end of their tertiary education and whether they have acquired the skills needed for the emerging job market.

*Following several meetings with ministries and higher education stakeholders, and with the support of both governments and institutions, IMHE launched a feasibility study to explore the scope for developing an international Assessment of Higher Education Learning Outcomes (AHELO). The AHELO project will test students nearing the end of their bachelor degree so that results are comparable internationally regardless of language or cultural background.*

*The OECD is working with a consortium of world experts and teams in 15 participating countries to develop and administer the test. The assessment looks both at the skills students in all fields should be acquiring (the generic skills) and skills which are specific to each discipline (with a focus on engineering and economics for the feasibility study). A contextual questionnaire will accompany each of these tests linking the test results with information on universities and students. If the feasibility*

*study proves successful, at a later stage the project will also seek to determine the learning gain or “value added” during the students' time at university.*

*In 2012, the feasibility study should conclude whether such a test can indeed be developed and effectively administered to students.*

What	A test of university and college students comparable internationally
Why	No international tools for the direct evaluation of students are available
Who	The OECD, an international consortium of experts and 15 countries from all over the world
How	An evaluation of generic skills and discipline specific skills (engineering and economics)
Results	Anonymous comparable data at the institutional level
	A methodology for implementing a full-scale test.
When	The feasibility study: tests administered 2011-2012
	Final conference end 2012

## The quality and relevance of teaching in higher education

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

The quality teaching in higher education project highlights effective quality practices and mechanisms. It promotes strategic thinking or practices that may in turn help other institutions improve the quality of their teaching and ultimately the quality of their graduates.

The first phase of the project provided an overview of how and why higher education institutions or organisations identify, implement, sustain, reward and disseminate the quality of teaching. It also highlighted some drivers and difficulties to overcome. The report “Learning our Lesson” was published in spring 2010 with executive summaries in French, English and Spanish. In October 2009 the findings were discussed in Istanbul during a conference co-organised with the Istanbul Technical University.

The second phase of the project aims to help institutions explore their commitment to quality teaching through individual reviews using a cost-effective model. A review team of two experts discusses, with institutional leaders, faculty and students, a range of actions to support the quality of teaching. An issues paper is provided to the institutions and is the basis for a cross-analysis that will become an OECD report. The results of the analysis will be discussed during an international conference in 2011.





#### Reviews accomplished:

- ▶ Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa
- ▶ Catholic University of Portugal
- ▶ UNICAMP, Brazil
- ▶ Laurea University of Applied Sciences, Finland

#### Reviews in the pipeline:

- ▶ HSE, Russia,
- ▶ La Trobe University, Australia
- ▶ ELTE, Hungary
- ▶ Université Laval, Canada
- ▶ University Vera Cruz, Mexico
- ▶ UOC, Spain
- ▶ La Laguna University, Spain
- ▶ Charles Darwin University, Australia
- ▶ UNAM, Mexico
- ▶ Universidad Baja California, Mexico
- ▶ CBS, Denmark

#### First impressions of the method and perceived impact of the reviews:

- Visits enabled free and open discussions with all staff at all levels who understood the improvement-based purpose of the visits.
- Visits often anticipated or complemented a national accreditation or audit, enabling unexplored areas to be examined.
- Students at all levels, including undergraduates, demonstrated a high level of maturity.
- Observations of hands-on situations (students in class, role

play, presentation of work-based learning) facilitated frank discussions concerning hands-on practices.

- Participation of stakeholders (like companies providing internships) brought added value and a new vision.

### Review of governance arrangements and quality guidelines

The review was a continuation of the strategic thinking process following the 2006 General Conference on challenges of managing issues involving ethics and values in higher education.

IMHE carried out a review of available literature exploring the diversity and common features of existing principles, codes and other guidelines of institutional governance and quality assurance at national and international levels. The review looked at the various types and goals of governance arrangements and quality guidelines, and underscored the binding nature of quality assurance guidelines while most governance arrangements are advisory in nature. Within the framework of institutional autonomy, the review discussed the opportunity to define appropriate guidance for institutions as well as to develop quality assurance frameworks. Eleven governance arrangements and 25 quality guidelines were examined.

### Biennial General Conference

- For more information, contact: [imhe@oecd.org](mailto:imhe@oecd.org)

For over 30 years, the General Conference has provided IMHE members the platform to meet, share good practices and exchange ideas on issues of interest. Highlighting *Outcomes of higher education – quality, relevance and impact*, the 2008 drew

more than 300 members and generated much interest and many interesting debates. The 2010 General Conference, *Higher Education in a World Changed Utterly: Doing More with Less* is looking at the impacts of the global financial crisis on higher education. It is bringing together 450 participants.

### Partnership

Active internationally for more than 40 years, IMHE works with a wide range of international associations concerned with higher education. IMHE strategy is about pooling resources, promoting exchanges of information, and working in co-operation with its partners. IMHE and the World Bank work together on various projects including reviews of higher education institutions and regional development. IMHE is involved in the European Commission's work on higher education. UNESCO and IAU (International Association of Universities) conduct joint projects with IMHE on issues relating to university governance and other themes of interest. A wide-ranging partnership has also been established with CONAHEC (Consortium for North American Higher Education Collaboration) to boost progress on both common research areas (such as regional development) and affiliate benefits. IMHE members may now benefit from a reduced fee when signing up for CONAHEC membership and reductions to attend CONAHEC conferences. The European Association for international Education is an IMHE member and shares an interest in the strategic management of internationalisation. Many more organisations have established links with IMHE, such as Fundación CYD and the European Students Union.

# Publications

All publications by the OECD Directorate for Education are available online free of charge for IMHE members.

► For more information, contact IMHE Contact: [imhe@oecd.org](mailto:imhe@oecd.org).

## Journal Higher Education Management and Policy

► For more information, contact: [imhe@oecd.org](mailto:imhe@oecd.org)

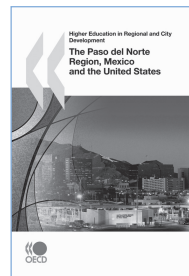


Every year, IMHE publishes three issues of its journal, *Higher Education Management and Policy*, which covers practice and policy in the field of institutional management. The English and French versions are produced in electronic format, while the English continues to be printed. In 2009, the IMHE journal was the fourth-most downloaded periodical from the Organisation's online library, SourceOECD. IMHE members receive three printed copies of each issue

and have free access to the journal's articles in pdf format at [www.SourceOECD.org](http://www.SourceOECD.org). A special edition on "Higher Education and Regional Development" was prepared in 2008 (Vol. 20, No. 2). Articles for this peer-reviewed journal are carefully selected by the editor, Vin Massaro, with the help of the Editorial Advisory Group chaired by Elaine El-Khawas.

## Higher Education in Regional and City Development series

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



### Paso del Norte, Mexico and the United States 2010

The Paso del Norte Region is the largest metropolitan area on the US-Mexican border with Ciudad Juárez as a major manufacturing centre. Yet the region's long-term competitiveness is being threatened by ongoing violence, brain drain and environmental degradation. Paso del Norte's future depends on fuelling local growth by cultivating relevant skills.

The region must improve educational attainment levels on both sides of the border to break out of the low skill/low wage economy. How can the universities use challenge-driven research to transform social, environmental and health-related challenges into assets and opportunities?

### Berlin, 2010

Developing innovation has become a pillar of Berlin's economy. With challenges such as long-term unemployment, a low absorptive capacity in small and medium-size enterprises and a large migrant population lagging behind in educational and labour market outcomes, how can Berlin's higher education institutions capitalise on their long tradition of professionally relevant learning and research to transform social, economic and environmental challenges into assets and opportunities?

### Bío Bío Region, Chile (The full report is due in 2010).

The Bío Bío Region has pioneered regional development in Chile. But the Bío Bío Region continues to suffer from brain drain as well as higher than average unemployment and poverty rates. How can the Bío Bío Region promote new business creation and the development of existing small and medium-sized companies? This joint OECD-World Bank review explores a range of helpful policy measures and institutional reforms to mobilise higher education for the Bío Bío Region's development.

### Learning our Lesson: Review of Quality Teaching in Higher Education

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



Based on an OECD review of 46 quality teaching initiatives in 20 countries, the report illustrates the following factors with examples from around the world:

- The aims of institutions when fostering quality teaching, their options and the guiding philosophy behind a quality approach; concrete ways to apply quality teaching initiatives, challenges in implementing them, and key actors in their dissemination;
- Evaluation systems and the impacts of institutional support on teaching, research and quality culture;
- How institution-wide approaches can be combined to enhance quality teaching in a sustainable way.

### Governance and quality guidelines in higher education

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

This report explores why governance and quality have become crucial issues for higher education and traces the historical evolution. It reflects on the major theoretical approaches developed by researchers over the past 10 years, including the main university governance models. The report then examines a selection of nation- or region-wide governance arrangements and quality assurance guides, codes and set of principles designed by ministries, funding authorities, quality assurance agencies, rectors' conferences and associations of institutions. Eleven governance arrangements and 25 quality guidelines issued by authorities (funding councils, ministries, associations) and quality assurance agencies from OECD and non-OECD members (Australia, Canada, China-Hong Kong, Europe, India, Israel Japan, Russia, South Africa and the United States) are under scrutiny, including international guides such as the European quality standards and guidelines. Lastly, the report discusses the distinction between governance arrangements and quality guidelines as well as the possible need to define appropriate guidance for institutions. A selection of governance arrangements and quality guidelines are annexed.

### The IMHE Info newsletter

- For more information, contact: [imhe@oecd.org](mailto:imhe@oecd.org)



Published three times a year, the *IMHE Info* newsletter provides an overview of current issues and research areas of interest to higher education stakeholders. Drawing from OECD educational research as a whole, the articles reflect the various needs and challenges currently faced by higher education institutions. *IMHE Info* is available free of charge from: [imhe@oecd.org](mailto:imhe@oecd.org)

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and check out our content using [#OECDHE](https://twitter.com/OECDHE)

### Note to members

- For more information, contact: [imhe@oecd.org](mailto:imhe@oecd.org)

This note is sent to IMHE members only. It keeps them informed about the latest news and data. It also provides IMHE members with the opportunity to attend OECD events by invitation only.

# Meetings

## ▶ 2008

**15-16 April** • Meeting of the IMHE Governing Board, Vilnius, Lithuania

**21-23 May** • *Spaces and Places for Learning Innovation and Knowledge Transfer* in collaboration with PEB and the Helsinki University of Technology, Helsinki, Finland

**4-7 June** • *The Emerging Global University Market* in collaboration with NUS and NUAS, Reykjavik, Iceland

**8-10 September** • IMHE General Conference, *Outcomes of Higher Education: Quality, Relevance and Impact*, Paris, France

**10-11 September** • Reviews of Higher Education in Regional Development 2008-2010, Paris, France

**6-7 November** • Meeting of the IMHE Governing Board, Paris, France

## ▶ 2009

**3 April** • Meeting of the IMHE Governing Board, Paris, France

**9-11 September** • IMHE Higher Education and Regional and City Development Meeting, Paris, France

**12-13 October** • Istanbul Technical University, Istanbul, Turkey

**5-6 November** • Meeting of the IMHE Governing Board, Paris France

2010

**12 April** • Meeting of the IMHE Governing Board, Paris, France

**13-15 September** • IMHE General Conference, *Higher Education in a World Changed Utterly: Doing More with Less*, Paris France

**15 September** • Meeting of the HEMP Editorial Advisory Group, Paris, France

**15-16 September** • OECD Reviews of Higher Education in Regional and City Development, Paris, France

**29 October** • Meeting of the IMHE Governing Board, Paris, France

# My IMHE

“For a long time both as policy maker and as practitioner I have appreciated the events IMHE organizes. They give me an opportunity to meet colleagues from across the OECD area, and the reports provided by IMHE contribute valuable knowledge about the latest thinking on higher education around the world.”

Karin Röding,  
Universitetsdirektör/University Director PhD  
Karolinska Institutet

“The value added benefits of IMHE is that it provides direct access to latest thinking on higher education from around the world. It enables us to develop good contacts with other policy makers and to track latest developments. We have also found IMHE useful in addressing particular issues e.g. financial management and governance.”

Steve Egan,  
HEFCE, Bristol

“The IMHE provides a valuable forum where the policies and practices underlying vibrant higher education systems can be identified, discussed and widely disseminated. This is of immediate direct benefit to participating agencies, and institutions and their students. In the long run it is of benefit to all humankind.”

Tom Boland,  
Higher Education Authority, Ireland

“For the University of Iceland, the membership of IMHE is very valuable as it makes it possible to follow what innovations are happening in the university world. It also makes it possible to participate in research projects that encourage self-evaluation and provide benchmarks with other universities.”

Ingjaldur Hannibalsson,  
University of Iceland

“For our university, the participation in OECD IMHE stands for operative access to high-class expertise, data and colleagues – experts in the field – all around the world. The University of Latvia considers that being among members of OECD IMHE is a prestigious opportunity.”

Janis Stonis,  
Latvija Universitate, Latvia

“IMHE programmes and publications are some of the most valuable sources of information and research for keeping up the pace with the truly relevant developments of higher education on the global scene. The biennial General Conference is a thought-provoking event and a unique opportunity for networking.”

Dr. Jocelyn Gacel-Ávila,  
Universidad de Guadalajara

“The IMHE provides policy studies and sponsors projects and forums that are invaluable to OECD leaders in higher education who are confronted daily by an ever-changing and often volatile global environment. These services help higher education leaders around the world build a solid foundation for informed decision-making and benchmarking best practice.”

Molly Corbett Broad  
President American Council on Education

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Become an IMHE member

Find more information at

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