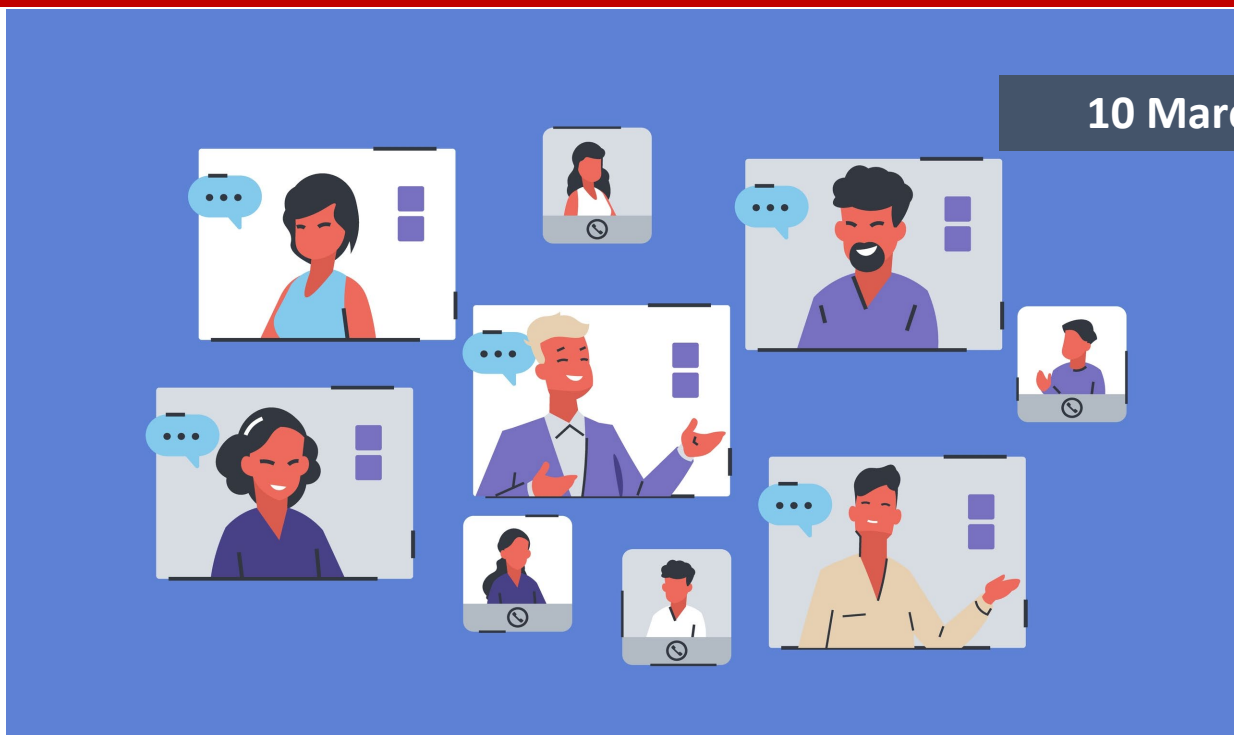


10 March 2022

Date and time: Thursday, 10 March 2022, 14:00 – 15:00 (CET)

Format: Zoom webinar. Prior registration is required.

https://unesco-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_mHoHL3kUTk-LTJyGCaFM5w

Target audience: Policy makers and higher education stakeholders

Languages: English/French, with simultaneous interpretation

Background

Sustainable financing, effective governance and regulatory frameworks are crucial to ensure quality and affordability in higher education. These are key dimensions for the achievement of SDG target 4.3 on tertiary education.

The increased autonomy granted to higher education institutions has driven many to enhance their programmes while striving for cost-effectiveness and global competitiveness. Growing demand for higher education has also led to a diversification of providers. Public, private and distance education institutions have grown in number, size and scope, raising questions of quality and accountability.

The [2021/2 Global Education Monitoring Report](#) on non-state actors in education highlights that financing modalities of non-state institutions, such as their access to public funding and the degree to which they depend on fees, have quality and equity implications. The regulation of non-state higher education also varies, as does the use of quality assurance mechanisms to ensure minimum standards.

Public expenditure for higher education has not kept pace with increased enrollment, which has doubled over the last 15 years and is expected to double again by 2030. The cost of higher education has risen,

with growing tuition fees, student loans and living costs impeding access, participation and completion, particularly for students from low-income backgrounds.

The Covid-19 pandemic has only provided further evidence on how essential it is for system level governance in higher education to be capable of responding to dynamic contexts. The effects of the pandemic continue to weigh heavily on the financing of higher education, with less than 1% of Covid-19 stimulus packages in low- and middle-income countries allocated to education.

Cost-sharing, improved tax systems, innovative financing measures and public-private partnerships may offer a window of opportunity to improve participation, diversity and pluralism in higher education. These must be at the core of the debates, along with institutional autonomy, organizational effectiveness, and accountability.

Objectives and Agenda

This is the fifth in the series of Higher Education Conversations in the leadup to the [3rd World Higher Education Conference](#) (Barcelona, 18 – 20 May 2022). It aims to bring together policy makers and higher education stakeholders to discuss how effective governance and financing can contribute to ensuring quality and affordability in higher education.

Key questions to be examined:

- How is higher education embedded in education sector plans and in their governance and financial frameworks?
- Who should pay for higher education?
- How should higher education financing be transformed in the light of the Covid-19 pandemic?
- What kind of policies are necessary for both governments and higher education institutions to ensure accountable and effective higher education governance?
- What is the status of existing regulations on non-state actors in the higher education sphere, according to the Global Education Monitoring Report?

Thursday, 10 March 2022	
14:00 – 14:05	Opening Mr Francesc Pedró, Director of the International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC)
14:05 – 14:25	Discussion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ms Satoko Yano, Programme Specialist, Section for Education Policy, UNESCO• Mr Kilemi Mwiria, previous Assistant Minister for Education and Higher Education, Science and Technology, Kenya• Mr Damtew Teferra, Professor of Higher Education, University of KwaZulu-Natal, South Africa, and Founding Director of the International Network for Higher Education in Africa• Ms Anna Cristina d’Addio, Senior Policy Analyst, Global Education Monitoring Report Moderator: Ms Hassmik Tortian, Programme Specialist, Section for Higher Education, UNESCO
14:25 – 14:55	Question and Answer session
14:55 – 15:00	Wrap up

For upcoming discussions, please visit: <https://en.unesco.org/news/higher-education-conversations>