

Values in higher education policy: freedom, diversity and equality or competition and conflict?

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Abstract: The European higher education area (EHEA) by 2030 vision, that was shared in EHEA 2020 Rome Ministerial conference, guide to inclusive, innovative and interconnected area, where: higher education is a key actor making changes improving knowledge, skills and competences, meeting the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); quality - hallmark of the EHEA; academic and scientific integrity is supported by higher education institutions and public authorities; values, such as institutional autonomy, academic freedom and integrity, participation of students and staff in higher education governance, and public responsibility for and of higher education, in the EHEA are shared through political dialogue and cooperation. For the achievement of EHEA vision, enactment of higher education policies is inevitable as well as implementation of measures in national frameworks, with a broader review of national economic, financial, social strategies. Last decade the governance and funding of higher education is facing challenges in the context of the energy crisis, the economic slowdown, and the refugee crisis in Europe. Governments, through their decisions on the design of higher education policy, intervene through systemic and institutional governance instruments changing the way higher education system actors operate. Different EU countries follow different ideological lines, values, principles, moral attitudes, so the context differences, particularity between the UK, the Nordic countries and Germany, are relevant for this study. This study aims to reveal, from which context are the ideas borrowed to shape the Lithuanian HE policy, what are the values advocated in higher education - freedom, diversity and equality, or competition and conflict? It would be important for the research to know why a particular country has been a source of inspiration for Lithuania, and what has shaped the decisions and choices of politicians.

Literature analysis method was used by analysing the interpretations of value in relationship to higher education; document analysis was used by analysing the European higher education area documents; overview of previous conducted studies was used to analyse higher education reforms ideological backgrounds in different EU countries. Main findings: overall governance and funding of HE is characterised by a shift towards a market-oriented model, there are still national differences in higher education models characteristics.