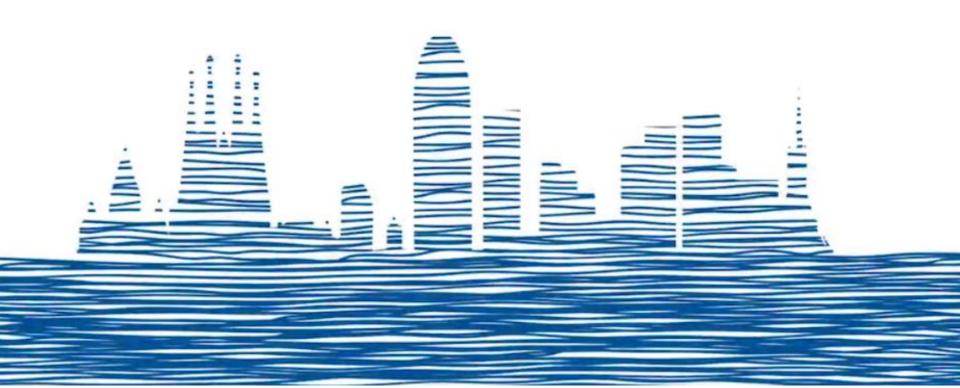
4th EUA FUNDING FORUM

BARCELONA







EUA Funding Forum: Frameworks that empower, universities that deliver

Forum report

Liviu Matei –General rapporteur Barcelona, 18-19 October 2019

Structure of the report

EUA Funding Forum: niche and functions

Main findings from the Barcelona Forum (new developments)

Lessons and recommendations

EUA Funding Forum

4th edition of the Funding Forum

± 230 Participants:

- university leaders (25%)
- administrators/managers (37%)
- sector representatives (13%)
- public authorities (11%)
- researchers (10%)
- 2/3 new; 1/3 returning

30 Countries, not only from the EHEA

Focused on: frameworks that empower, universities that deliver.

Niche and (continuing) function of the Fundng Forum:

provide a European platform for reflection and action in the area of funding

- •FF fills a gap in the EHEA: funding is not an official 'action line' or 'dimension' in the European space for dialogue and practice in HE; it is, however, a European challenge
- FF provides a platform for exchange of information and experience, stimulates reflection on funding (learning!)
- FF helps incubate for new initiatives (e.g. Public Funding Observatory, Efficiency Hub)

4th Funding Forum: Findings (new developments within the scope of the Forum)

EUA Funding Forum: milestones for a historical perspective on funding of higher education in Europe

Salzburg 2012, Bergamo 2014

- Universities were dealing with the (aftermath) of the economic crisis and great recession
- Significant historical changes: "times will never be the same again" for universities, including in the area of funding.

Porto 2016

 Slow and uncertain economic recovery; fractures in Europe (Brexit) and uncertainties about how they will affect the future of Europe and universities; changing policy narratives; uncertainty about funding.

Barcelona 2018

- Recovery, but crisis still looming large as a reference (psychologically, operationally, financially, policy-wise). New era not settled? Attempts to repair the damages incurred during after the crisis or move beyond? Economic growth not reflected in increased finding.
- Accentuated divergence of paths of development and policies. PFO indicates specific patterns in different countries, based on two variables: funding and enrollment

New EUA contributions: policy analysis and tools, for a space for reflection and action in the area of funding

- Public Funding Observatory (since 2009)
 - Presents trends in the funding of universities
- University Autonomy Tool (science 2012)
 - Measures and compares systems and trends;
 Autonomy scorecard
- Efficiency Hub (2018)
 - Discussed what is efficiency, approaches to efficiency; challenges and best practices. Allows self-assessment with regard to efficiency in HEIs.

State of the play

(Should the crisis/recession remain a reference?)

- Some countries are moving beyond the crisis (more) energetically
- "Policy hesitation" in other countries
 - replacing newer with older funding policies and models in some countries
 - "immature" new policies/experimentation; induce negative perverse effects (gaming the system, disincentives for cooperation at the national level); efficiency altogether an immature area?
- Continuing difficulties in the are of funding: e.g. complexity (and inefficiency) of EU funding mechanisms; too many KPIs at national level; inconsistent lists of KPIs, etc.

New funding initiatives

- Are not only about funding
 - E.g. European University Networks

But very few new funding initiatives altogher?

Changing narratives; need to make the case for universities

 Societal value of universities/university work not taken for granted anymore or even contested. This is reflected in the discussions about efficiency.

How to make the case for universities? Argue about "investment" rather than subsidy.

Public vs. private; expanding the space for reflection and action in funding

- Important to include private HEIs (not-for-profit) in the discussion (happening at the 4th Funding Forum) as well as private funding.
- Public-private partnership "is the future"?
- Private (foundation-)funding for research larger than ERC funding?
- Friend-raising

Conclusion: Funding of higher education should remain primarily a public responsibility

Institutional attitudes about, and responses to, efficiency drivers

- Universities accept that concerns for efficiency are justified, even though conceptual and policy frameworks for efficiency are inconsistent (efficiency for who?). They are ready to work for efficiency and effectiveness.
- USTREAM project inventors good new institutional practices to increase efficiency (e.g.: university "owning" the curriculum to increase efficiency in teaching; hiring administrators for the administrative work instead of academics). What is the role of governance/autonomy in the discussion bout autonomy?
- Universities remain "chronically pro-European", even when national governments would like to move away from Europe.
 Universities perceive "Europe" as a solution, not a problem.

Recommendations

Long list of concrete recommendations, at different levels

- Communicate! The virtue of external and internal and communication when promoting efficiency measures (listen, reward, repeat..)
- Seek/promote partnerships. There are good examples to learn from.
- Universities to engage collectively with the government, not just individually, in the discussions (negotiations) about funding
- Consider the social impact of funding (methods), not just operational efficiency indicators.
- Need for stable/lasting funding frameworks.

Some very final conclusions:

- A very useful Funding Forum once again.
- 4th FF provided new information/knowledge, new avenues for reflection and action. New friends.
- More interactive than previous editions (takes work, but it pays off!).
- Made possible by a great host!

- Gràcies, Barcelona!
- Gràcies, amics de Ramon Llull!

And see you in...?