

Towards a Socially Responsible Higher Education Institutions, globally and locally engaged¹.

Editorial Team of the 6th GUNi Higher Education in the World (HEIW) Report

Summary

The present document intends to frame the work of the 6th Higher Education in the World Report (HEIW6) around a comprehensive analysis of the global and local engagement of higher education institutions (HEI).

The HEIW6 main objectives are: (1) to analyse the dual responsibilities of universities at local and global scale, (2) to identify best practices and to provide recommendations to both the academic community, policy makers and public officials on how higher education institutions can improve and make compatible cultural, social and economic impacts at local and global levels, and (3) to explore the potential conflict, or intrinsic challenges, in addressing both societal demands based on the race for global competitiveness and to contribute to a more equitable and sustainable society (at local and global level).

The Report aims to provide the academic community, policy makers and decision-takers within higher education and wider society with a comprehensive analysis of the characteristics of global and local engagement and with a set of recommendations about how higher education institutions (HEIs) and HE systems can become more socially responsible globally and locally.

Conceptual approach for HEIW6 Report

Towards a Socially Responsible University: Balancing the Global with the Local.

“...Clearly, the old economic model is breaking down. In too many places, growth has stalled. Jobs are lagging. Gaps are growing between rich and poor, and we see alarming scarcities of food, fuel and the natural resources on which civilization depends. [...] Slowly, we have come to realize that we have entered a new era. Some even call it a new geological epoch, where human activity is fundamentally altering the Earth’s dynamics.

We recognize that we cannot continue to burn and consume our way to prosperity. Yet we have not embraced the obvious solution the only possible solution [...] to set a new course toward a future that balances the economic, social and environmental dimensions of prosperity and human well-being.

¹ Provisional title

To secure our world for future generations we need [...] a transformative agenda for change to set in motion a conceptual revolution in how we think about creating dynamic yet sustainable growth for the 21st century.”

Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General,
New York Times, 2012.

“...All regions and countries can benefit from progress toward a knowledge-based economy, which does not depend heavily on material resources, places less of a burden on ecosystems and is more sustainable than other economic models. By shifting to a knowledge-based economy, societies can move from the age of scarcity to the age of abundance. Knowledge does not deplete with use but rather increases as it is shared among people. Through technological innovation, we can help usher in a more sustainable future.

To generate progress, countries must invest in education, science and technology. I hope that your Conference will explore ways to set the stage for leveraging the value of the knowledge-based economy to promote development in Saudi Arabia, across the region and around the World.”

Ban Ki-Moon, UN Secretary General,
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, 24 April 2014.

These two statements come from the same high dignitary, the highest with world responsibilities, but one could find many similar ones from government, business, and community leaders from around the world. These declarations have been chosen to represent global and local approaches to challenges of identified societies and the world at large. These two approaches are inter-connected and synergistic; Mr. Ban Ki-Moon is not sending contradictory messages. But the resulting action, if driven from only one of these perspectives could, in fact, lead to results that could be at odds with the overall objectives.

Higher education institutions are identified as key players from both perspectives and, thus, have the singular responsibility of helping provide appropriate and adequate responses to both legitimate needs and interests: i) to contribute to overcoming the global challenges of the world, that are very well summarized by the UN Goals for Sustainable Development (SDG), and ii) to contribute to the social, cultural, and economic development and international competitiveness of their societies. This duality is the focus the 6th World Report in Higher Education.

On the occasion of its 650th anniversary, the University of Vienna organised a seminar entitled “Global Universities & their Regional Impact”, which opportunely corresponds with the objectives of HEIW6. The following short report was published in the GUNI Newsletter (Spring, 2015):

“Humans living in the last third of 20th century and the beginning of the 21st are enjoying the privilege of experiencing the definitive globalization of the planet. The university is one of the first global institutions, if not the first, ever since its inception in Asia in the 7th century, the Al Karaouine University in Fez, in AD 859, or Bologna University in AD 1088.

In addition, as was stressed at the EUA Conference in Brno nearly 10 years ago, globalization emphasizes localization, the importance of place, the emergence of regions as platforms for global competition. With a great deal that can be said about it, for which there is no space here, this is also the spirit that inspires the European policy “Research and Innovation, Smart Specialization Strategy” (RIS3).

So, globalization, localization and universities unavoidably had to get together. And this getting together has been the subject of UVIECON 2015 Global Universities & their Regional Impact. Here, though, the word “Global” has been used in a rather particular sense: as an adjective of university; very differently from what we are used to and what we meant in the article “The glocal university”, included in our previous newsletter. There, the global component refers to the responsibilities and expected impact of universities in the global issues and challenges of humanity.

At this conference, the focus was the regional impact of global universities, a somewhat elusive and self-referenced category of universities that is difficult to define. What is a global university? Is it one that has a global impact in generating and disseminating knowledge through research and teaching in higher education? This would be too broad a definition. Are global universities those ranked in THE, ARWU or QS? It is difficult, therefore, to grasp the meaning of “global” in the title of the conference, and the conference has not clarified it. In any case, the conference indeed stressed the other concept, the strong strategic role of universities in regional development and competitiveness, showing that this duality, the global and the local character of universities, is in fact a current issue for universities worldwide. This duality is, precisely, the topic that will be addressed in the next GUNi World Report on Higher Education.”

The issue that GUNi is proposing is both pertinent and opportune. Finding sustainable solutions to global societal challenges requires the active involvement of higher education together with key stakeholders. Nevertheless, institutions and higher education systems are playing around, somewhat cautiously, with concepts of global and local, of impact and engagement, of social innovation and responsible research and innovation. **This reaction arises from different interpretations about what is being asked of higher education, as well as diverse understandings about the ways in which HEIs can and should respond to the changed environment. Context is important, as a difference arises about what the concepts mean and their implications.**

Thus, a group of top ranked universities, sometimes called “world-class” universities has attempted to define “The Ten Characteristics of Contemporary Research Universities”. The HEFEI statement (October, 2013) was drafted by the American Association of Universities (AAU), the European League of Research Universities (LERU), the Group of Eight and Chinese 9 Universities, drawing upon their own experience and position in global rankings. Other highly ranked universities, gathered together in Vienna, to identify themselves as “global universities”, moved by its regional impact.

At the same time, other HEIs associations and networks around the globe have taken up this theme but in a more inclusive way, organizing seminars and conferences or campaigns on, for example: the post-2015 Agenda and the role of universities (The Association of Commonwealth Universities 2014 campaign: The World beyond 2015: is higher education ready?), on Social Innovation (International Association of Universities 6th Global Meeting of Associations, Montreal May 2015: Social innovation: challenges and perspectives for Higher Education), on the civic roles and social responsibilities of higher education, (GUNI2013 Conference: “Let’s build transformative knowledge to drive social change”, or 2014 Talloires Network Leaders Conference, and the subsequent Call to Action) or on regional engagement and doctoral education (European Association of Universities, Council for Doctoral Education Workshop, January 2015), or even the International Seminar that ACUP-GUNi is organizing next June 3 in Barcelona on Regional Competitiveness and the Role of European Universities, to name a few.

Responding to these different developments, HEIW6 will discuss these tensions, and (re)interrogate the characteristics of the contemporary higher education institution. What accounts for the changing role of the university, increasing demands on and for higher education, massification and globalisation, etc.? To what extent is the experience of so-called world class universities casting a shadow internationally on higher education, with positive and perverse implications? To what extent are the demands that HE act as the engine of the economy/social change also reshaping HE? How are these different aspects reconciled and/or are they reconcilable?

Finding sustainable solutions to the problems of health and demographic change, food security, secure and clean water, green and efficient energy sources, climate change, and inclusive and secure communities require the active participation of everyone. Global societal challenges have both a local and a global dimension. Although with strong impact in the so-called Global South, global challenges have also local impact, even in developed countries. On the other hand, developed countries mostly cause the current impact on environment. Moreover, the green economy transition and sustainability is a collective matter, based in new perceptions and practices of production and consumption worldwide. This is the meaning of globality where global forces and trends are reflected in local realities and local activity conform a global interconnected picture that affect the entire world. The nature of this globality is a confluence of economic, ecological, cultural and social forces that manifest themselves in different localities differently. Every HEI, as all other institutions, simultaneously exists in both locally specific cultural, political, organisational contexts but is also affected by

global forces. This impact and growing global consciousness give rise to a consistent demand for a balanced approach to engagement that is both locally relevant and globally responsive. Higher education institutions dilemma is finding a balance between local realities and aspirations understood within a global context calling for a different role for higher education institutions and the strong demands that come from political and economic actors seeking the increase of their own regional/national global competitiveness.

The main premise for the HEIW6 can therefore be broken down into three main elements.

First, there is a need to find a balance in the context of a renewed social contract between HEIs and their respective societies taking into account the dual nature of local and global engagement, and the balance across short, medium, and longer term impacts and benefits. While higher education has multiple roles in society (e.g. educating people, producing codified knowledge, problem-solving and provision of public space), its greatest contribution is “replenishing the intellectual pool every year with new graduate students”.²

Second, higher education institutions are a space of multiple demands from the broader community and civil society, from political jurisdictions and policymakers, from students, from academic staff, and from market interests. As an institution, higher education faces the challenge of establishing a renewed and revitalised strategic framework taking into account this diversity within the context of the global public good. In fact, globalization has strongly emphasized the strategic positioning of HEIs to enhance the competitiveness of nations and regions, an objective that leads to direct pressure from many universities’ stakeholders, while the global responsibility is just raised lightly in international forums and global institutions like UN and its institutions that have little direct influence.

The third component of the premise is that the natural focus of action of HEIs in response to the local demands, to contribute to the competitiveness strategy of nations/regions can lead to a winners-losers scenario (zero-sum competitiveness game), with the possibility of a somehow negative impact on the global issues. And HEIs with a clear vision of their local and global engagements can make explicit this potential conflict and workings with external partners seek to resolve it. The way forward will be found through an integrated vision of the future of all humanity, both locally and elsewhere and not limiting engagement to contributions to economic growth as the major goal of any and all HEIs.

Under these hypotheses, GUNi proposes to explore tensions and experiences, challenges and opportunities, limitations and restrictions, and to analyse the key elements that enable HEIs to adequately fulfil their local and global public good responsibilities. This will involve the identification of relatively independent principal components (decomposition of the issue into a set of themes), and their study from complementary global and local perspectives by experts. This complementarity and, search for, compatibility is intended to constitute one of the main characteristics of this HEIW6. The resulting set of selected experts will also bring a

² Gordon Moore, Chairman Emeritus,

corresponding set of good-practices that should help to establish the concluding recommendations.

HEIW6 will focus on providing practical examples of structures and processes such that higher education leaders and the wider academy, policy-makers and decision-takers, and societal stakeholders will support a process of organizational development in a manner that enables HEIs to better respond to the various challenges and expectations dealing with this dual level of engagement from a policy and institutional perspective. The final objective will be to provide a comprehensive analysis of the characteristics of this global and local engagement and with a set of recommendations strengthening the contribution of higher education institutions and systems to both local and global demands and requirements. To do so, the duality will be decomposed and analyzed from different perspectives and from different actors, to identify the challenges to be overcome and the mechanisms. It will also identify experiences and or good practices that make it possible. The approach will try to reproduce this duality and synergy at all levels, counting on a set of international experts that collaborate from global and local perspectives.

Main Topics

Based on the four building blocks for a locally and globally engaged university proposed in the position paper of GUNI's Director, published in the *GUNI Newsletter* of December 2014, the basic elements that HEIW6 should boost are:

1. **Shared Explicit Mission.** No matter how diverse HEIs from around the world are, they share common elements: They all have faculty and staff which play a central role; they all have students and they all have a network of community, political and societal/economic partners. Governance models differ significantly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction. In some cases the faculty are key drivers, while in other systems, the balance between internal and external accountabilities differs. In all cases, faculty are the real asset of universities. Students are another important voice; since the Prague communiqué in 2001, as part of the evolution of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), "students are [considered] full members of the academic community".¹ Thus, whatever strategic vision and mission the institution adopts; it should involve and be developed by its faculty and students. So, behind it there is essentially a governance and management issue: how faculty assumes, shares and, finally "owns" its institutional mission.
2. **Engaged leadership and engaged academia.** The role of leadership is fundamental to strategically lead the university, and in helping to build bridges between the HEI and civil society. In this respect, leadership has to be proactive, providing strategic direction but doing so with "big ears"², listening, encouraging and supporting the intrinsic characteristics of the whole academic community (faculty and students) to promote, measure, recognize and reward participation in the social role of universities. Related to the previous point, it has to be recognized that the current

selection processes, career promotion, etc. emphasize a particular aspect of the activity of faculty: that of disciplinary research. Without diminishing the importance of disciplinary research in defining the impact of a particular academic, what are the mechanisms that encourage engaged scholarship, and make it possible that academic activity has social impact, both locally and globally? Likewise, the curriculum should support and facilitate a philosophy that embeds active engagement as a core principle in learning and research.³ These mechanisms underpin a distinct institutional mission, strategy and system which allows flexible, multiple ways for individual academics and students to embed social responsibility, in addition to teaching and research activity.

3. **A strategic positioning.** Higher education should participate in helping shape societal objectives as well as responding to the societal/local knowledge demands and challenges where HEIs might be able to help. HEIs should develop their mission, in teaching and research. While they should not be perceived or act simply as service providers, working together with the community, local government and civil society, HEIs can help identify new ways to address critical local issues. Higher education is at the heart of their societies, and mechanisms should be identified to enable them to participate more directly in the definition of these objectives. There are challenges for HEIs also, especially in the way in which they are organised which can lead to miscommunication within the institution and conflicting agendas and priorities. This block addresses questions of governance of societies, at any level – the institutional, local, national and global.
4. **Measurement and Monitoring.** Following the operational approach the HEIW6 should have, it is crucial to devote effort to identifying ways of measuring the extent and quality of the overall local and global impact and benefit of HEIs. Even with all the challenges, institutions and the knowledge community must monitor and demonstrate the evolution of their impact on society, and, even more importantly, to be able to communicate to the general public and to authorities, in a coherent, understandable consistent manner. While research impact has become a requirement in some national jurisdictions and scientific areas and is beginning to influence the measurement of research outputs of HEIs and other knowledge institutions, the impact of teaching is much more elusive as is the social impact of the total activity of a university. Also, there is often a lack of connectivity between teaching, research and engagement; these areas of activity are seen as distinct silos rather than linked.

Following these basic ideas, the large and polyhedral issue of the local and global engagement of HEIs will be decomposed into the following topics:

1. **World context and implications for HE and its institutions.** This point include the following subthemes:

-Globalisation, Trends and Drivers of Change – What are the key issues and basis for changes impacting and affecting higher education and their societies? Given the

criticality of knowledge-intensive economic growth, globalisation has been a driving force but so also has been national pursuit of a greater share of the global market. HE plays a key role in shaping national competitiveness. Today, it is one of the most internationalised sectors. Topics concern geo-political issues, impact on HE, education and research, establishment of priorities are key among others.

-The Synthesis of key recommendations from GUNi HEIW 3, 4, 5 should be part of this Chapter.

-Global pressing problems and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). SDG (to be approved on September 2015 by the UN) will be the global agenda for development and first global framework and specific recommendations for policy makers in all sectors for all countries to guide development and progress paths. This 1st global agenda of the XXI century aims to orient sustainable development in a global scale, proposing concrete objectives at local level and a set of indicators for monitoring and evaluation at local and global levels. It includes all pressing global issues and its local manifestations. Which will be the implication of this global agenda for higher education and its institutions worldwide?

-Rethinking economic progress at the light of social and environmental needs. How the interdependence of economic, environmental and social spheres for real progress should be reflected in HE? Which should be the contribution of HEIs? (This is the global framework demand that have to be included in the analysis of how teaching and research should evolve).

-The strategic position of cities in 21st century challenges: Huge global population shift towards urban centres has particular importance for the HEIs in urban areas. What are the challenges? What new partnerships can be developed to contribute to solutions? As globalisation accelerates, national boundaries are becoming more porous. In many contexts, mega-city regions/metropolises hold the key to sustainable social and economic development. This corresponds to a growing realisation that the most successful innovation-intensive regions are based on a greater diversity of educational and research opportunities and perspectives, preparing people to work in jobs we don't yet know about. HE has a huge role to play in these developments – being the global gateway for nations thus helping to link the global with the local/national.

2. **Changing role of higher education institutions in light of globalization trends and challenges.** Given the above changes, what is the role of HE institutions today? Are those changes and trends challenging a re-focusing of the institution? A re-definition of mission and vision/objectives?

-Balancing global, national, regional and local demands and needs – What are the tensions, and what are the demands? How HEIs should answer to their social missions and responsibility in the light of global-local tensions? How is this managed at the

system and at institutional level? How are institutions and nations seeking to strategically position themselves, what is the role of knowledge hubs/regions of knowledge/knowledge cities, etc? How HEIs could help/answer local development needs/demands in a respectful manner for global/local sustainable development and social justice?

-Going beyond the economic – what are the social and cultural benefits and tensions that arise for institutions and the community?

3. **Reframing the curriculum for the 21st Century:** exploring engaged teaching that emphasises both experiential learning at the local and international levels and a dramatic broadening of the base of theoretical materials taking into account the intellectual contributions of the entire globe. Adopting a knowledge democracy framework including drawing on previously excluded knowledge from other sectors. Looking at the role of service in community sectors, at the use of community scholars in the classroom.

-Changing focus of teaching/learning at the light of globalisation – Beyond curriculum, pedagogy of teaching/learning has become increasingly critical in shaping student experiences and university reputations. Internationalisation is probably one of the most potent drivers of change on the curriculum (along with employability issues); there is also the huge demand for HE primarily in developing country and the counter demand for talent everywhere and especially in developed countries. So, what is the impact on curriculum, student experience, and global citizenship? What are the changes and developments we should be aware of?

4. **Global Knowledge & Responsible Research**– The changing role of HEIs is reflected in the (re)orientation and (changing) purpose of research. There is a shift from Mode 1 to Mode 2 or even Mode 3 (Hazelkorn 2013), adoption of principles of RRI. – Which is arguably a way by which capitalism is seeking to harness HE more firmly to the needs of the economy. There is a trend towards strengthening community research partnership approaches, structures, methods and more. This is both a response to and a driver of change in the research process and practice, etc.

-Mechanisms for HEIs to develop a Responsible Research and Innovation.

-Which could be the role for research in addressing global issues and the advance of the SDG? How could HEIs engage in global networks to move forward the global agenda for sustainable development? It is imperative to take in mind here the lessons of GUNi Report 5 about Community-University Engagement. Community-university research partnerships are increasingly relevant at local and global levels, including civil society actors.

5. **Institutional Governance, organisation and management.** What is the role of leadership, governance and management? Are there organisational and structural

issues to help develop local-global engaged institutions? If this *glocal* represents a genuine change and is embedded within the institution – then what is required to make it work?

Inclusion of external stakeholders is increasingly essential in governance of any public institution, including universities. Thus this analysis should include a focus on multi-stakeholder relations and skilful navigation through competing expectations and demands. It could involve case studies from institutions that are already leading the way.

6. **Ethics and/vs economics** – Are there tensions between ethical/moral pursuit of glocal goals and ambitions and policy and economic reality. We need to take a critical perspective and conduct a reality check – can every institution be a force for social, cultural and economic development/revitalisation? Even in cases where an entire HEI is unable to focus on the public good, individual researchers, instructors, directors of research institutes can make an impact. Universities are public institutions, spaces for learning and re-affirming ethics in life and work. Professional education requires learning and practice of ethics. What are the challenges and limitations? What the keys to success? What is the role of leadership? What is the need for an organisational change? In being a driver of economic growth are there contradictions/conflicts with higher education’s role as a purveyor of knowledge? To what extent does this role constitute the progressive penetration of the “market” into fields of inquiry (as Slaughter says “academic capitalism”) and the undermining of knowledge as a “public good”?

7. **Incentivising Institutions, faculty & students** – Academic pressures drive academic behaviour. There is a huge literature about the academic profession, and the academy is not an innocent victim, but an active part both on driving changes and in opposing them. Academic tribes create their own rules of engagement that are necessarily in consort with the glocal vision.

-Support for engaged scholarship and/or community based research: the nature of organisational frameworks for the strengthening of community university research partnerships as well as increased capacity building for students and faculty in responsible research and innovation.

-Recognizing excellence in local-global engaged teaching and scholarship; Incentives for career progress taking these aspects into account.

8. **Mutual learning and empowering support** - Organisations like ACUP, GUNi, UNESCO Chairs, Talloires and others, national networks such as NCCPE, Community Based Research Canada etc, provide support and communications networks to accelerate the pace of change in the engaged higher education sector. This would include a summary of already existing sources of support for organisational change in these directions.

9. **Resourcing change process, making a difference.** Approaches to multi-lateral investment to strengthen the engagement agenda in those parts of the global South which remain under resourced (Africa, South East Asia, Central America). Nature of tension in public and private investment needs exploration. What are some instructive hybrid models in practice?

-Resourcing renewal for local-global engagement: Creative uses of existing HEI capital pools? Links to CSR or impact investing opportunities, shared use of physical facilities with community?

10. **Impacts, multi-faceted accountabilities & measurements** – There are increasing demands on HE, but how to measure and value impact and relevance? The debates about valorisation and the role of rankings. Examination of international trends at national and supra-national level (OECD, EU, UNESCO, WB, etc.), emergence of new system rankings among others.

-Making a difference at local and global levels: Frameworks for understanding and benchmarking how well HEI's are doing. Measuring Impact.

Editorial Team

HEIW6 will be led by GUNi and the Editorial Team, composed of:

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And led by:

Francesc Xavier Grau, GUNi Non-Executive Director and former rector of the Universitat Rovira I Virgili.

¹ Bologna Process (2011) "Student Participation in Higher Education Governance", Report by Milica Popović, General Rapporteur, Aghveran, Armenia, 8-9 December, <http://www.ehea.info/event-details.aspx?evId=384>; Manja Klemenčič (2011) "The public role of higher education and student participation in higher education governance", in Brennan, J. and Shah, T. (eds.). *Higher education and society in changing times: looking back and looking forward*. London: Center for Higher Education Research and Information, CHERI, pp. 74-83.

² Term used by Bertil Andersson, President, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

³ Coates, H. and McCormick, A.C. (Eds.) (2014) *Engaging University Students. International Insights from System-Wide Studies*, Springer