



EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES – CRITICAL FUTURES

Keystone Conference

13-15 December 2021

Conference Programme

Venue

Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters,
H. C. Andersens Blvd. 35, Copenhagen

Registrations at

<https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference>

Organisers

Susan Wright, suwr@edu.au.dk and Matej Zitnansky, mpz@edu.au.dk

Assistants

Mille Idehen and Fatima Awad

Timetable

	13 Dec		14 Dec		15 Dec
9.00-10.00	Introduction to each other and to the project*	9.00-10.15	Pandemic study*	9.00-10.45	Research Freedom: Alternative conditions for knowledge production*
10.00-11.45	Refugees' Access to Higher education*	10.15-10.45-	Coffee/Tea Break	10.45-11.15	Coffee/Tea Break
11.45-12.30	Lunch and Coffee/Tea	10.45-12.15	Pandemic study*	11.15-12.45	How to develop new dialogues between researchers and leaders and policy practitioners?*
12.30-14.15	Trust beyond metrics in European higher education	12.15-13.30	Lunch	12.45-13.30	Lunch
14.15-14.45	Coffee/Tea Break	13.30-15.15	Gender inequality and precarity: Making the case for change*	13.30-15.15	Alternative internationalisms and the Omnicrisis*
14.45-16.30	Changing relations between faculty, administrative staff and management*	15.15-15.45	Coffee/Tea Break	15.15-15.30	Break
18.00	Conference Networking Event		Walk in Copenhagen OR Meeting on publications for the pandemic study teams	15.30-16.30	Plenary
19:00-21.00	Dinner	19.00-21.00	Dinner		

* These sessions are open for online participation via Microsoft Teams (in colour)

Refugee access to higher education

Monday 13 Dec, 10.00-11.45

Organizers: Prem Kumar Rajaram (Central European University/Vienna, Austria), Gaële Goastellec (University of Lausanne/Switzerland) and Marie-Agnès Détourbe (INSA Toulouse/France)

Registration: This session is a part of a conference [European Universities - Critical Futures](https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup) that takes place in person in Copenhagen as well as online (13-15 December 2021). The online participation will be via Microsoft Teams (not Zoom). To receive the link, register for as Participant (attending online) here: <https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup>

Background

Over the 2020-21 academic year, the Refugee Access to Higher Education Working Group of the European Universities Critical Futures-Higher Education project organized a webinar series. Our aim was to open a space for students, practitioners and researchers to engage together in issues related to the inclusion of students with a refugee background into higher education structures. Very fruitful discussions helped us to understand further the dynamics at play - not only the obstacles but also the opportunities in widening access from multiple perspectives. Building on these discussions, our Working Group is organizing a roundtable to explore these issues further.

Programme

In line with our webinar series, students, practitioners, researchers and policymakers are invited to join our discussions on the topic of access to higher education for refugees and other displaced people in Europe, with the following sub-topics as specific (but not exclusive) areas of interest:

- questions of recognition and validation of knowledge
- access programs
- questions of pedagogy
- historical, political and sociological investigations of the university in Europe.

Contributors

Prem Kumar Rajaram, Kutaiba al Hussein, Akileo Mangeni, Marie-Agnès Détourbe and Gaële Goastellec

Dialogue partner

Henrietta Stoeber, European Universities Association

Trust beyond metrics in European higher education

Monday 13 December 12.30-14.15

Organisers: Krystian Szadkowski (Adam Mickiewicz University), Tim Seidenschnur (University of Kassel), and Jakub Krzeski (Adam Mickiewicz University)

Abstract

Contemporary universities use metrics not only to govern themselves internally but also to build trust amongst various stakeholders – from students, policymakers to local and international communities. However, reducing relations of trust merely to productivity and efficiency is limiting and has severe effects. Far from being neutral tools providing transparency and accountability to the publicly funded sector, quantification of higher education and governing it by numbers turned out to be a powerful mechanism reshaping the institutional landscape. As has been repeatedly argued, quantification causes negative effects, such as acceleration of academic labour, increasing competition, “publish or perish” pressures, marginalisation of hard to quantify activities, prioritisation of research over teaching, precarization of the academic workforce and even impacting research topics scientists are willing to pursue.

Having recognized those harmful effects, some higher education institutions are pursuing a different route that leads to alternative strategies for generating trust beyond metrics. This panel will discuss the rationale behind these alternatives and the potential for promoting them in the higher education landscape in Europe. Those alternatives will be discussed with reference to three institutional case studies.

Programme

There will be three presentations of 15 minutes each. Three 10-minute interventions will follow and a discussion of 15 minutes will conclude the panel.

Speakers

- On trust - Tim Seidenschnur (University of Kassel)
- Trust & metrics - Jakub Krzeski (Adam Mickiewicz University)
- Cases of non-metric-oriented trust-building practices of European Universities - Krystian Szadkowski (Adam Mickiewicz University)

The session will be off-line with the audience limited to conference participants.

Changing relations between faculty, administrative staff and management

Monday 13 Dec, 14.45-16.30

Organiser: Pusa Nastase (Central European University)

Registration: This session is a part of a conference European Universities - Critical Futures that takes place in person in Copenhagen as well as online (13-15 December 2021). The online participation will be via Microsoft Teams (not Zoom). To receive the link, register for as Participant (attending online) here: <https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup>

This working group is trying to understand how relations between faculty, administrative staff and leaders in the university ecosystem have changed with the introduction of technologies and other organisational reforms. Our work is an attempt to make sense of the impact new technologies and measures have on the university as a whole and try to provide data for understanding and perhaps correcting the course of developments. We collect case studies where there is evidence that power relationships are being reconfigured and see whether they have anything in common or they are relevant solely in the given context.

We ask the following questions:

- Is there added value in certain developments at the university (technical, organisational, etc) and who do these changes serve?
- Have changes altered who effectively runs the institution? How are changes of the new managerialism type penetrating traditional academic cultures?
- What are the arguments supporting that change in the perspective of academics and administrators?
- Could better dialogue lead to everybody understanding their roles better in the larger university picture?

Programme for this session:

Research paper presentations:

- *The introduction of an Enterprise Resource Planning system (ERP) in a university and its impact on the relation between faculty, staff and university leaders* – Pusa Nastase (Central European University, Vienna)

- *Reforms and dynamics of sociality at the University of Helsinki* - Sonja Trifuljesko (University of Helsinki)
- *Leadership and Steering of Danish Universities* – Ole Wæver (Copenhagen University)

Dialogue partner

Gergely Kováts, Corvinus University (to be confirmed)

Pandemic Study

Tuesday 14 Dec 9.00-12.15

Organisers: Amélia Veiga, University of Porto and Tim Seidenschnur, University of Kassel

Registration: This session is a part of a conference [European Universities - Critical Futures](https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup) that takes place in person in Copenhagen as well as online (13-15 December 2021). The online participation will be via Microsoft Teams (not Zoom). To receive the link, register for as Participant (attending online) here: <https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup>

Background

This project 'European Universities - Critical Futures' is coordinating a study with research teams from 9 European countries on how higher education systems have been affected by the pandemic. What 'pre-existing conditions' have been exacerbated, how have individual institutions, national systems and the European field of higher education overall been changing during the pandemic and how are they dealing with current problems?

In addressing the effects of the pandemic on the field of higher education in Europe, we take into account that when the Covid-19 pandemic began shattering social life, Europe was already facing political, economic, and cultural problems.

On the basis of interviews with national leaders and institutional actors, the study has explored the pre-existing conditions and the effects of the pandemic in each country, based on three main issues:

1. The sustainability of higher education systems – this refers to the composition of the higher education sector and the survival of higher education institutions' key priorities during the Covid 19 pandemic
2. The purposes of higher education institutions in society – this refers to how society discusses the role of universities.

3. How higher education institutions see themselves – this refers to how HEIs see their own field, how the pandemic has affected the workings of the university, how it reacts, and how it has changed through COVID-19.

Programme

Overview of the Pandemic Study – Amélia Veiga (University of Porto) and Tim Seidenschnur, (University of Kassel)

Research teams from UK, Portugal, Norway, Ireland, Hungary, Germany, France, Finland and Denmark present their most important findings

Dialogue partner

Chris Newfield, Independent Social Research Council

Gender inequality and precarity: Making the case for change

Tuesday 14 Dec, 13.30-15.15

Organisers: Dr Lotta Snickare (University of Oslo) and Dr Charlotte Morris (Portsmouth University)

Registration: This session is a part of a conference [European Universities - Critical Futures](https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup) that takes place in person in Copenhagen as well as online (13-15 December 2021). The online participation will be via Microsoft Teams (not Zoom). To receive the link, register for as Participant (attending online) here: <https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup>

Background: In recent years, the casualization of labour within academia has increased, even in the richest countries of the Global North (Gupta, Habjan, and Tutek 2016). In the UK, the Universities and College Union (UCU) concluded that as of 2014 'at least 54% of all academic staff and 49% of academics teaching in our universities are on an insecure contract' (Universities and Colleges Union 2016, 4). Women and/or minority ethnic academics are more likely to be on casualised contracts than their white male peers (Equality Challenge Unit [ECU], 2016).

A growing number of studies have focused on the experiences of this group of academics and the effects of such insecurity. These include lack of dependable income and benefits, lack of mentoring, support and capacity building, and an inability to plan for the future. There are also more subtle effects on self-esteem and professional identity of ongoing 'micro' inequities of exclusion and marginalisation in everyday academic life (Ylijoki 2010; Leathwood and Read 2013; Cortois and O'Keefe, 2015; Acker and Haque 2017; Bataille and Le Feuvre, 2017; Read and Leathwood 2018; Murgia and Poggio, 2018; Ivancheva et al., 2019).

Building on such work, the papers in this symposium specifically focus on gender and race in relation to these dynamics, across European contexts in particular. We will contribute new empirical knowledge to international debates on the gendered and racialised impacts of casualization in the sector on academic life and work, thus potentially facilitating challenge and change to what is increasingly becoming the 'new normal' of the casualised university.

Programme: The session will involve six short papers exploring aspects of precarity and inequalities in European contexts followed by a discussion around making the case for change.

- *Non-Citizenship and Precarity in Academia* - Dr Sevil Sümer (The Norwegian University of Science and Technology & University of Bergen)
- *Gendered Trends in the Career Plans and Work-life Balance of Postdocs Working in Europe: Results from the Eurodoc Postdoc Survey* - Dr Filomena Parada (Eurodoc)
- *"We played with two-months long contracts, and this was a constant source of stress ..."* *Precarity among Hungarian Female PhD Students with Teaching Responsibilities in Engineering* - Dr Katalin Tardos (International Business School, Hungary) and Veronika Paksi (Hungarian Academy of Sciences Centre of Excellence)
- *Precarious International* - Aysuda Kölemen (Bard College Berlin)
- *On the gendering of precarity. Perspectives from Switzerland* - Dr Marie Sautier (University of Lausanne)
- *Illegitimate academics? Impermanence in HE and the lecturer-student relationship* - Dr Barbara Read (University of Glasgow)

Academic Freedom

Wednesday 15 Dec, 9.00-10.45

Organisers: Eva Hartmann (University of Cambridge), Sue Wright (Aarhus University) and Amélia Veiga (University of Porto)

Registration: This session is a part of a conference [European Universities - Critical Futures](#) that takes place in person in Copenhagen as well as online (13-15 December 2021). The online participation will be via Microsoft Teams (not Zoom). To receive the link, register for as Participant (attending online) here: <https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup>

Background

Universities have been imbued with the mindset of neoliberal capitalism. The doctrines of efficiency, rate of return, choice, competition, and economic growth have become their organising principles in many respects. These conditions prevent universities from playing a key role in supporting a transition to a future that is sustainable in social, economic and environmental

terms. Thinking about an alternative future therefore requires a reflection on existing power relations and the conditions of (our own) academic knowledge production.

The working group, 'Alternative conditions for knowledge creation: Invitation to an explorative journey' has held a series of webinars to open up space for identifying the conditions that enable envisaging another future. Each event considered 1) the issues at stake in terms of academic knowledge production, and 2) promising ways forward to develop alternative knowledge and ways of knowing. The following issues have been discussed:

- The digital: new wave of privatisation of universities
- Digital sovereignty: the possibility of non-proprietary knowledge production and a new common good?
- Open access publishing: the oligopoly of big publishing firms, or the possibility of alternative models?
- Social impact and value for money: who should universities serve?

Programme

The conference session focuses on academic freedom as an overarching condition for knowledge creation.

Issues at stake:

- Reflection on the issues raised about academic freedom in the previous sessions in the webinar series on alternative knowledge creation - Eva Hartmann (Cambridge University)
- Cases (These cases will show enormous differences between the concepts of freedom and the ways they are being attacked)
 - a. Portugal - Amelia Veiga (University of Porto)
 - b. Poland - Jakub Krzeski (Adam Mickiewicz University)
 - c. UK - Cris Shore (Goldsmiths College London)
 - d. Denmark – Sue Wright (Aarhus University)

Promising ways forward:

- Astrid Söderbergh Widding (President of Stockholm University, Vice-President of Magna Charta Organisation, Council Member of European Universities Association)

Development of new dialogues between researchers and university leaders and policy makers

Wednesday 15 Dec, 11.15-12.45

Organiser: Sue Wright (Aarhus University)

Registration: This session is a part of a conference [European Universities - Critical Futures](https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup) that takes place in person in Copenhagen as well as online (13-15 December 2021). The online participation will be via Microsoft Teams (not Zoom). To receive the link, register for as Participant (attending online) here: <https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup>

Abstract

The aims of this project are not just to develop a new research agenda for critical roles that universities can play in Europe's future, but also to engage in dialogue about that research with university leaders and policy makers. In organising this conference, it became very clear that researchers had hardly any contacts with decision makers, and even less idea how to access them. It is as if researchers and policy makers occupy different worlds with barely any contact between them. In some cases there is also a gulf between researchers and the leaders of their universities. In recent decades, European and national policies have narrowly focused on the reform and role of universities to drive competitiveness in the global knowledge economy. Now, however, universities are gaining a wider mandate – and maybe need other forms of organisation - to address the current crises of massive inequalities, global population movements and threats to democracy, not to mention the restructuring of economies to tackle the climate crisis. In this context, it is important to find conduits for critical researchers to exchange ideas about these issues with university leaders, policy specialists and decision makers.

Programme

The session will take the form of a semi-structured panel discussion, followed by an open discussion and ideas about how to build dialogue into the working groups' activities in the final year of the project.

The panel involves

- Ellen Hazelkorn (professor emerita Technological University Dublin), who has found a way to build a career as a critical researcher highly respected as a policy adviser
- Pavel Zgaga (professor emeritus, Ljubljana University) who has been a Minister of Education, deeply involved in forming the Bologna Process, as well as a Professor of Education, researching higher education policy
- Thomas Jørgensen (European Universities Association) whose organisation represents 800 universities and national rectors' conferences and facilitates their engagement with policy makers.

- Lina Christensen (Senior EU adviser, Central Denmark EU Office) whose role includes linking members of Aarhus University to European policy making at Brussels.
- Bjørn Stensaker (Vice-rector, Oslo University, to be confirmed) who has vast experience as a critical researcher of higher education institutions and policy and now has a leadership role in Circle U European Universities Alliance – do these alliances provide new openings for dialogue between researchers and policy circles?

Alternative Internationalisms and the Omnicrisis

Wednesday 15 Dec, 13.30-15.15

Organisers: Andrew Gibson (Aarhus University) and Taina Saarinen (Jyväskylän University)

Registration: This session is a part of a conference [European Universities - Critical Futures](https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup) that takes place in person in Copenhagen as well as online (13-15 December 2021). The online participation will be via Microsoft Teams (not Zoom). To receive the link, register for as Participant (attending online) here: <https://events.au.dk/keystoneconference/signup>

Background

The Alternative Internationalisms working group has held a series of meetings about rethinking internationalization from alternative (historical, theoretical, geographical, linguistic) perspectives; unpacking internationalisms in different contexts; linking the discussions of internationalisms to higher education policies; and discussing alternate histories and alternate futures of higher education.

Having earlier taken off from the concept of “queering” internationalisation, in this session we will continue to set the scene from the concept of “omnicrisis”, and from there continue our discussions of current and alternative internationalisms. After a scene-setting presentation, the group members will give short presentations on their work, followed by a panel and a question and answers session with researchers and policy makers.

The ‘omnicrisis’ frames concerns for rethinking key concepts at a time when the sphere of the ‘international’ is facing multiple existential challenges. The current crisis invites us to go beyond a ‘normal’ rethinking of higher education in relation to these multiple crises, and to reimagine internationalization with a different topology and through alternative lenses that highlight different geographical imaginaries and collaborations, including forms of civic engagement beyond ‘normal science’.

Programme

- Opening words - Taina Saarinen (Jyväskylän University)
- The “Omnicrisis” and rethinking international higher education - Su-Ming Khoo (NUI Galway)

- Presentations by working group members
 - Virtual Exchange and COIL as an alternative form of internationalization - Anna Lohse (Hertir School, Berlin), Mark Dawson (Coventry University), Matej Žitňanský (Aarhus University)
 - Uzbekistan as a Transnational Education Hub - Natalya Steane (Coventry and Aarhus Universities)
 - Internationalisation as a space of hybridised (pedagogical) perspectives – Vesna Holubek (Tampere University)
- Panel discussion with researchers and dialogue partners on 'Omnicrisis and Alternative internationalism' and Open Q&A

Dialogue partner

- Anna Grönlund (University of Jyväskylä and European Association for International Education)