



EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES – CRITICAL FUTURES

The Roles of Universities in European Integration

Working Groups' Plans

The whole document (points 1-5) is also intended to help working groups and the steering group plan for the last year of the project and think ahead to the design of the final conference. At the next workshop, there will be two lengthy sessions for group work and we would like the form to be completed by the end of the workshop and the results presented in the final plenary.

1. Overall aims (Text for updating the project's website)

What is the title of your working-group? **Trust beyond Metrics.**

Names of people in your working group: Jens Jungblut, Tim Seidenschnur, Jakub Krzeski, Krystian Szadkowski

Lead contact: Krystian Szadkowski

What is the topic you are working on, why is it important, what have you done so far and what are you planning to do and achieve? *(Please specify why it is important for the future roles of universities in Europe)*

The continuous processes of quantification, standardization and metricization constitute a material dimension of the integration of the European university landscape, as governing by numbers could be called a Western modern invention. In the context of the Bologna Process and establishing the European Higher Education Area and European Research Area, at first sight, these tools seem to fit for purpose, as well-known historian of statistics, Theodore M. Porter argued in his *Trust in Numbers: The Pursuit of Objectivity in Science and Public Life*. He argued: “reliance on numbers and quantitative manipulation minimizes the need for intimate knowledge and personal trust” and thus “quantification is well suited for communication that goes beyond the boundaries of locality and community”. For this reason, in the European

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university landscape, as well as globally, we are witnessing a spectacular proliferation of different indicators, metrics and measures that serve the purpose of enabling control over heterogeneous institutions, as well as stimulating competition between them through constant comparisons. Universities start to use metrics and indicators, as well as their status on various rankings not only to govern themselves internally, but to build their credibility and trust amongst their various stakeholders – from students and policymakers to local and international communities. The task of this research group is to look beyond these practices and investigate the rationales behind the alternative approaches that are becoming visible in the European Higher Education landscape.

So far we have

1. Held a series of Skype meetings and exchanged the draft materials.
2. Written 8000 words of a draft that in part can be used as a resource for the development of the full-fledged article but now it is used as a background paper for the working group that helps to understand our research objectives and the shape of the study.
3. Designed the empirical part of the study, with preliminary questionnaire and data collection templates.
4. Planed the empirical stage of our research.

Overall we plan to:

During 2020

1. Conduct the 3 empirical case studies and collect the data.
2. Write up the case reports
3. Write up the article and submit it to an academic journal by the end of 2020

During 2021

1. Potentially present the results at the CHER conference in Rijeka, Croatia.

At Dec 2021 conference

4. Conduct a panel on the topic of Trust beyond metrics with invited stakeholders

Follow up action/research in 2022

5. We haven't planned that far.

2. Plan of work to be completed during 2020 and to bring to the workshop on 14-16 December 2020
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What are you aiming to achieve by June 2020? What are you aiming to complete and bring to the December workshop? <i>(Please specify tangible things e.g., literature review, empirical research, working paper, writing funding application, a policy proposal)</i>

1. Complete fieldwork on cases concerning this topic
2. Continue to have regular Skype meetings to have updates on the progress of empirical and then, analytical work.

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3. If regular travels will become possible (second wave of COVID-19 may interfere), held a in person meeting in Kassel in Fall 2020 to discuss the cases and the write-up process.
4. We will come with a research report plus the pre-submission article manuscript.

3. Interlocutors

Which organisations (EU, EUA, Council of Europe....) policy makers or university leaders should be invited to the December workshop to join the discussion of your working-group? *(They will also be invited to give feedback on future ways for the project to generate dialogue with policy/change makers).*

1. EUA (academic leadership)

4. Plans between December 2020 and the final conference in December 2021

What are your plans for work during 2021 *(Note: There will be one more workshop and then the final conference to bring together the results of the working groups).*

Working on potential policy brief.

Preparing the potential conference presentation.

5. Resources

Do you need any funding to enable you to do this work? Please say what is needed, why and how much it costs. *(The project has a very modest budget to cover small expenses).*

- Modest budget for within Germany travels (if necessary) to conduct the interviews.
- Budget for transcripts (up to 20 interviews in German and English).
- Travel reimbursements for a potential Kassel meeting.

We can ask for a lump sum for all of the research-related activities and then distribute it to cover some, all to a certain point or all the above-mentioned items. It depends on how much could be allocated to the working group.

6. Final conference June 2021

We are thinking of each working group organizing a session at the final conference on the roles that universities can play in the critical issues facing the future of Europe. What is your working-group planning to contribute to the final conference? *(Please specify what you will bring... results, new ideas, alternative systems, new ways to engage with policy-makers).*

Not sure yet.