Increasing Role of Market Forces in HE: is the EUA Institutional Evaluation Programme playing a role?

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Abstract

According to Dill et al. (2004), over the last two decades governments are more and more using market-like mechanisms as instruments of public regulation. In Europe, the Bologna Declaration, by “redefining the nature and content of academic programmes, is transforming what once were state monopolies over academic degrees into competitive international markets” (Dill et al., 2004: 330).

Recent developments in European higher education show an increasing role of markets which are visible in: a movement towards stratification and consolidation of higher education institutions (creation of a small number of research institutions, capable of competing worldwide, and the association of institutions to increase their competitiveness in a global world); changes in institutional governance (decrease of collegiality, increasing concentration of power at the top level of the institution and the presence of external stakeholders in university boards); changes in funding (increasing popularity of performance-based contracts); and changes in quality assurance mechanisms (from quality assessment to accreditation schemes). In this paper we will to try to find out if the EUA institution evaluation programme is also contributing to spreading market forces in European higher education.