

University of Bucharest

Convenors:

Bogdan MURGESCU, Vice-Rector, University of Bucharest
Romiță IUCU, President of the Board of Trustees, University of Bucharest



ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE 21ST CENTURY – POLICIES AND OUTCOMES

19-20 October 2023, Bucharest

CONFERENCE PROGRAM

This event is supported by a grant from the Romanian National Authority for Scientific Research (CNCS – UEFISCDI), for the project

"Access to Higher Education in Post-Communist Romania" (PN-III-P4-PCE2021-0981)

Conference concept

Enlarging access to higher education is both a global trend and a requirement of public policies in many countries. While there is an obvious relationship between this trend and the shift towards a knowledge-based society, significant differences persist across countries and inside societies. The global higher education gross enrollment ratio (GER) has doubled in the last two decades and converges to about 40%; in some parts of the world, it is significantly below this global average, in others, it exceeds it, as in North America where it is above 70% already since 2010. Such differences generate different challenges for various stakeholders and policymakers. While in developed economies, demographic constraints impact higher education institutions, enlarging tertiary education access is directly linked to economic and social modernization in other parts of the world. Transnational cooperation helps alleviate some of the existing imbalances while enhancing the quality and outcomes of higher education. The formidable challenge of the COVID-19 pandemic has forced universities to adjust to virtual teaching and learning. It is still an open debate, which adjustments will persist and which will be abandoned, have yet to be settled.

All these evolutions raise several academic questions and practical challenges for universities and various authorities governing the higher education systems. How does the massification of higher education change the prospects for would-be graduates and/or for those who do not attend higher education programs? Despite the well-ascertained benefits of higher education in the long term, is it still a factor fostering upward social mobility? In what measure are the higher education systems equitable? How did the higher education institutions adapt their mission while unprecedented changes occurred in the labour market? Do universities adapt to provide skill updates or professional conversion programs through adult education in the context of lifelong learning? What is the relationship between enlarging access to higher education and the sustainability of democratic societies in the 21st century?

This list of questions and challenges is far from complete. At the same time, it is evident that policies regulating access to higher education in the 21st century must consider national, regional, and global phenomena. The tasks ahead are formidable. Taking stock of various experiences and reflecting on them can help us tackle these challenges.

Schedule Overview

Time (EEST)	Session
Day 1: Thursday, 19 October 2023	
09:00-10:00	Registration & Welcoming Coffee
10:00-10:30	Conference Opening
10:30-11:30	<i>Keynote speech – Strategies for Widening Participation to Higher Education</i> Sir Peter Scott – University College London
11:30-11:45	Coffee break
11:45-13:30	<i>Presentations Session (I)- The Big Picture</i> Session Chair: Alin Gavreliuc <i>5 presentations per session, 15 minutes each, followed by discussions</i>
13:30-14:30	Lunch break
14:30-16:30	<i>Presentations Session (II)- Social Dimensions of Access and Academic Outcomes</i> Session Chair: Mihai Păunescu <i>7 presentations per session, 15 minutes each, followed by discussions</i>
16:30-16:45	Coffee break
16:45-18:00	<i>Presentations Session (III)- Access to Study Opportunities Abroad</i> Session Chair: Liviu Matei - King's College London <i>4 presentations per session, 15 minutes each, followed by discussions</i>
Day 2: Friday, 20 October 2023	
09:30-10:30	<i>Keynote speech - Changing public policy narratives' impact on the participation rates in higher education: for a de-massification of higher education?</i> Liviu Matei – King's College London
10:30-12:15	<i>Presentations Session (IV)- Innovative Approaches in Higher Education</i> Session Chair: Peter Scott <i>5 presentations per session, 15 minutes each, followed by discussions</i>
12:15-12:30	Coffee break
12:30-13:30	Roundtable Session Access to Higher Education in the 21st Century – Policies and Outcomes
13:30-14:00	Conference Statement & Wrap-up
14:00-15:00	Lunch & Departure

Detailed program

Time (EEST)	Session
Day 1: Thursday, 19 October 2023	
09:00-10:00	Registration & Welcoming Coffee
10:00-10:30	<p>Conference Opening Chair: Bogdan Murgescu - University of Bucharest</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Marian Preda - Rector of the University of Bucharest ▪ Invanka Popović - Vice-President of the European University Association ▪ Sorin Costreie – President of the UNICA Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe
10:30-11:30	<p><i>Keynote speech - Strategies for Widening Participation to Higher Education</i> Sir Peter Scott - University College London</p>
11:30-11:45	Coffee break
11:45-13:30	<p><i>Presentations Session (I)- The big picture</i> Session Chair: Alin Gavreliuc- West University Timișoara</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Cezar Hâj, Mihai Păunescu (SNSPA) - <i>Transition to and Graduation from Higher Education. A Human Capital Approach</i> ▪ Adrian Hatos (University of Oradea) - <i>Access to Higher Education During Socialism in Romania. An Assessment Using the Logistic Response Model</i> ▪ Iulian Costin Matache (SNSPA) - <i>The Expansion of Romanian Higher Education after 2000. Access, Incentives, and Institutional Changes</i> ▪ Valentin Maier, Ionut Marcu (University of Bucharest) - <i>The Stock of Higher Education Graduates In Post-Communist Romania</i> ▪ Bogdan Murgescu (University of Bucharest) - <i>Theoretical and Practical Limits to the Upward Trend in Access to Higher Education</i>
13:30-14:30	Lunch break
14:30-16:30	<p><i>Presentations Session (II) - Social dimensions of access and academic outcomes</i> Session Chair: Mihai Păunescu (SNSPA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Răzvan Bădău (University of Bucharest) - <i>Demographic Constraints and the Contraction of the Higher Education System in Post-Communist Romania</i> ▪ Ștefan-Marius Deaconu (University of Bucharest) - <i>Bridging the Gap in Universities? An Evaluation of Social Scholarships in the Context of Romanian Economic Indicators, 2011-2023</i> ▪ Andreea Stancea (SNSPA) - <i>Scanning the Integrity of Higher Education Institutions In Romania</i> ▪ Matei Gheboianu (University of Bucharest) - <i>Inclusion Programmes for the Roma Minority in Romanian Higher Education</i>

- **Melania Pausan** (“Babeş-Bolyai” University of Cluj-Napoca) - *Access to Higher Education for Police Officers in Post-Communist Countries. Case Study - Romania*
- **Maci Mihai** (University of Oradea) - *Attention to the Knowledge that Students Bring to University, a Condition for Studies that Offer them Real Opportunities in the Job Market*

16:30-16:45 Coffee break

Presentations Session (III)- Access to study opportunities abroad

Session Chair: **Liviu Matei** (King’s College London)

16:45-18:00

- **Javier Manuel Valle, Tania Alonso Sainz** (Universidad Autonoma de Madrid) - *The development of the European Higher Education Area and its Implications Regarding Access to Higher Education*
- **Gabriela Biliga-Nisipeanu** (University of Bucharest) - *The Access of ERASMUS Students to a Genuinely Academic Experience: Assessing Academic Integration*
- **Wesley Felipe Da Silva Siqueira** (University of Bucharest) - *Policy Analysis and Recommendations for Improving the Access of Foreign Students to Romanian Universities*
- **Elena Mandaji** (Cahul State University “Bogdan Petriceicu Hasdeu”, Republic of Moldova) - *Prospects of Higher Education Integration of the Republic of Moldova in the EHEA (ONLINE)*

Day 2: Friday, 20 October 2023

09:30-10:30

Keynote speech - Changing public policy narratives' impact on the participation rates in higher education: for a de-massification of higher education?

Liviu Matei - King’s College London

10:30-12:15

Presentations Session (IV)- Innovative approaches in higher education

Session Chair: **Sir Peter Scott** (University College London)

- **Luciano Saso** (Sapienza University of Rome) - *Innovating Higher Education in the Digital Era (ONLINE)*
- **Alin Gavreliuc** (West University Timisoara) *The Romanian Educational Environment Lectured Through the Lens of Dominant Social Cognitions and Cultural Dimensions - A Brief Report*
- **Elena Marin** (University of Bucharest) - *University , Teachers' Attitude, Ability, and Concerns in Order to Facilitate Active Learning Activities in Courses with Diverse Audiences*
- **Simona Iftimescu, Mihaela Stîngu** (University of Bucharest) - *From the Iron Curtain to the Ivory Tower: Access to Doctoral Studies in Romania*
- **Romiță Iucu, Alexandru Carțiș** (University of Bucharest) - *New Entry Pathways for Higher Education. Micro-Credentials And The New Curricular Philosophy*

- **Sergiu Lucian Raiu, Oana Lăcrămioara Bădărău** (Ștefan cel Mare University of Suceava; Petre Andrei University of Iași) - *Success versus Failure of Institutionalized Youth in Accessing Higher Education*

12:15-12:30 Coffee break

12:30-13:30 Roundtable Session

Access to higher education in the 21st century – policies and outcomes

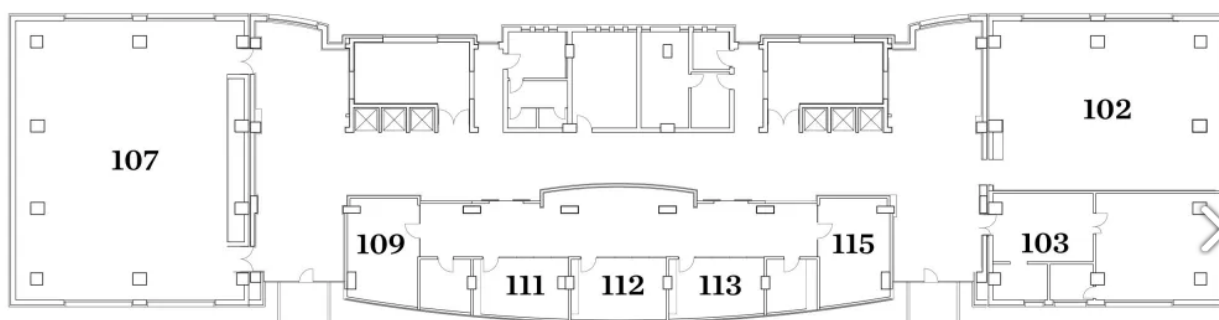
13:30-14:00 Conference Statement & Wrap-up

14:00-15:00 Lunch & Departure

Practical details

Conference Venue	Rectorate of the University of Bucharest (90 Panduri Street, 050663, sector 5, Bucharest, Romania) Board Room (et. 1)
Coffee breaks	Coffee will be served in front of the Board Room, according to the schedule.
Lunch & dinner	Lunch is served on both conference days in front of the amphitheater and will be an open buffet. Diner will be provided on the first day.
Language	The working language throughout the event will be English.
Online participation	Available using the ZOOM platform. Participants will be provided the link following their registration.
Listener registration	Available at: https://forms.office.com/e/QVBDEQbtYY
Contact	Regular updates about the Conference, and practical information for the participants are available at ahe-ro.unibuc.ro . You can also write us at: ahe-ro@unibuc.ro .

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Room 102 corresponds to the Board Room