

Universities' Strategies
and Approaches towards
**Diversity, Equity and
Inclusion**

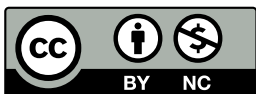
Examples from across Europe

Edited by Anna-Lena Claeys-Kulik
and Thomas Ekman Jørgensen

MAY 2018

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Acknowledgements

The present edited volume is a contribution to a European exchange on the role of higher education in promoting diversity, equity and inclusion and the responses of universities to related issues and challenges. Most of the seven case studies come from EUA member universities that participated in a focus group on the topic hosted by the University of Lille 3 – Human and Social Sciences in France in November 2017 and are particularly engaged in this area. The aim is to show how universities approach the topic from a strategic point of view, bringing together various smaller scale projects focused on different aspects and dimensions into a comprehensive strategy that becomes an integral part of the institution's mission.

On behalf of the European University Association (EUA), we herewith thank all the participants of the focus group, the contributors to this publication, and the colleagues at EUA who helped with their guidance and expertise. We hope that this collection of examples may inspire others on how to take this forward in the context of their own institution and system.

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Introduction

Socio-economic developments and their impact on universities

Our societies are changing and becoming more diverse. Recent data shows that for instance “one in ten persons living today in the OECD is foreign-born; among youth, more than one in five has immigrated or is native-born with immigrant parents. These shares have been rising virtually everywhere.”¹ In Europe, the influx of refugees over the past years has contributed to increased awareness about cultural diversity. Generally, the concept of diversity has expanded as awareness is growing about differences within our societies. Although an old topic, social diversity and inequality has been debated more hotly in the wake of the financial crisis and the following austerity policies, and it is related to a number of global trends from globalisation to changing labour markets,² which have in some cases increased inequality in Europe. Moreover, the last decade has seen an increase in awareness and recognition of sexual and gender diversity, visible in, among other things, increased legal recognition and anti-discrimination laws.³

In order for our societies to benefit from this diversity, social inclusion is not only an important matter of justice, but also a means to ensure social cohesion and long-term prosperity. While inclusion needs to start at an early age and educational level, a number of universities have taken action to be more open and inclusive, and to find new ways to enable people from traditionally less represented backgrounds to participate.

University education continues to be a relative advantage against risks of unemployment as recent OECD data confirms:

*Adults with a tertiary degree are 10 percentage points more likely to be employed and will earn 56% more on average than adults who only completed upper secondary education. [...] They are also the first to recover from economic downturns: employment rates for young adults with tertiary degrees have returned to pre-crisis levels, while rates for those who did not complete upper secondary education are still lagging behind.*⁴

Technological development and rapidly changing labour markets are increasing the need for highly skilled people across Europe⁵, while demographic decline at the same time puts pressure on the economy and social systems. This has an effect on universities and their student population.⁶ While some systems show a steady increase in student numbers, others

1 Gurría, A., 2018, ‘Opening remarks by the OECD Secretary General’ at *COPE International Diversity Forum*, Paris, France, 22 January 2018. Retrieved on 16 April 2018 from <http://www.oecd.org/about/secretary-general/cope-international-diversity-forum-paris-2018.htm>

2 Darvas, Z. & Wolff, G. B., 2016, ‘An Anatomy of Inclusive Growth in Europe’ (Bruegel), p. 14-15. Retrieved on 15 April 2018 from http://bruegel.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/10/BP-26-26_10_16-final-web.pdf

3 See website of ILGA-Europe, the European Region of the International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans & Intersex Association, <https://rainbow-europe.org/>

4 OECD, 2017, *Education at a glance 2017: OECD indicators* (OECD Publishing, Paris), p. 23. Retrieved on 17 April 2018 from <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/eag-2017-en>

5 OECD, 2017, *OECD Employment Outlook 2017* (OECD Publishing, Paris). Retrieved on 17 April 2018 from http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/empl_outlook-2017-en

6 European University Association, 2015, *Trends 2015: Learning and Teaching in European Universities*, by Sursock, A., (EUA, Brussels), p. 61 ff.

suffer from brain drain and young people leaving the country.⁷ Both mean that the student body is becoming more diverse, either due to the larger number of people entering universities or the need for universities to reach out and attract new groups of people.

Diversity, equity and inclusion are not only relevant with regard to students, but also university staff in academia and administration. Most discussed in this regard is the persisting gender gap in research positions. Despite slight improvements over the past few years, on average women in Europe continue to be increasingly underrepresented compared to men as they progress through a typical academic career beyond the doctoral level.⁸ Apart from the obvious moral problem of (intentionally or not) excluding women from research, limiting the pipeline of talented researchers is problematic in a situation where most countries either experience brain-drain or are in a fierce competition for research talent. Moreover, diverse learning and research environments are better at equipping students and researchers for working in an increasingly complex society.⁹

Public policy responses and regulatory frameworks

At the political level, ministers of EU member countries committed in 2015 to promote social inclusion and cultural diversity and to foster education of disadvantaged young people, by ensuring that education systems address their needs.¹⁰ A similar commitment was made by higher education ministers at the 2015 Ministerial Meeting of the Bologna Process in 2015 in Yerevan, where they agreed to make higher education systems more inclusive.¹¹ This was reiterated by the European Commission in its 2017 renewed agenda for higher education. In the framework of the European Research Area, gender equality in research is one of the priority topics, and research institutions such as universities are encouraged to draw up gender equality action plans.

At the global level, the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) adopted in 2015 by 193 countries, aiming at ending poverty, protecting the planet and ensuring prosperity by 2030, provide a broader perspective where social welfare plays a key role in the concept of sustainability.¹² Here, there is a close connection between the specific goals for reducing inequalities and for gender equality, with the broader goal of providing quality education for all – and consequently providing decent work. Education is also facilitating health, civil and cultural participation.

7 European University Association, 2017, *Public Funding Observatory Report 2017*, by Bennetot Pruvot, E., Estermann, T. & Kupriyanova, V., (EUA, Brussels), p. 12. Retrieved on 17 April 2018 from <http://www.eua.be/Libraries/publications-homepage-list/eua-pfo-report-2017>

8 European Commission, 2015, *She Figures: Gender in Research and Innovation* (Brussels).

9 Council of Graduate Schools, 2009, 'Building An Inclusive Graduate Community: A statement of principles' (CGS). Retrieved on 15 April 2018 from http://cgsnet.org/ckfinder/userfiles/files/Inclusiveness_Resolution.pdf

10 Informal Meeting of European Union Education Ministers, 2015, 'Declaration on Promoting citizenship and the common values of freedom, tolerance and non-discrimination through education', Paris, France, 17 March 2015. Retrieved on 17 April 2018 from http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/repository/education/news/2015/documents/citizenship-education-declaration_en.pdf

11 Education Ministers of EHEA member countries, 2015, 'Yerevan Communiqué', *EHEA ministerial meeting 2015*, Yerevan, Armenia, 14-15 May 2015. Retrieved on 17 April 2018 from <http://bologna-yerevan2015.ehea.info/files/YerevanCommuniquéFinal.pdf>

12 See United Nations, 2015, 'Transforming our world: the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda'. Retrieved on 22 April 2018 from *Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform*, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld>

Despite these broad political commitments at European and international levels, only a few countries have followed up with concrete action at the system level to foster social inclusion in higher education. Here are just a few examples to illustrate different approaches:

Ireland developed the third National Access Plan for higher education (2015-2019), which also became part of its Higher Education System Performance Framework (2018-2020). The plan sets out quantitative targets and includes specific measures to increase enrolment, retention and graduation rates of underrepresented groups. It also obliges all Irish higher education institutions to have in place their own comprehensive institutional level strategies and foresees the development of new indicators to facilitate data collection and better measure achievements.¹³

Similarly, equality of opportunities with regard to access and participation in higher education is enshrined in the English law.¹⁴ Higher education institutions in England charging above the basic tuition fee are required to have an access and participation plan that needs to be approved by the Office for Students.¹⁵

In the Netherlands, diversity and equality are stimulated by measures including a national programme supporting female academics, and through the labour law aimed at including more employees with a disability in the work place, which also applies to universities.¹⁶

Sweden has made widening participation a focus of higher education policy in recent years with changes to the admission system, validation of prior learning and experience and student support.¹⁷ Also gender equality is among the main priorities, notably in research policy, for instance through the mainstreaming of gender equality in national research funding programmes.

Austria recently developed a national strategy on strengthening the social dimension of higher education which formulates specific targets for ministries, universities and other relevant actors. Developed in a one-year process involving a large number of stakeholders and experts¹⁸, it foresees social dimension mainstreaming into the performance agreements with universities and the student support system.

13 Irish Higher Education Authority, 2018, *Higher Education System Performance Framework 2018-2020*. Retrieved on 17 April 2018 from <https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/higher-education-system-performance-framework-2018-2020.pdf>

14 Higher Education and Research Act 2017, part I, 2, 1 e. Retrieved on 17 April 2018 from http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2017/29/pdfs/ukpga_20170029_en.pdf

15 Office for Students, 2018, *Regulatory Notice 1, Access and participation plan guidance 2019-2020*. Retrieved on 17 April 2018 from https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1093/ofs2018_03.pdf

16 See contribution from Mariam Neuteboom in this edited volume.

17 Swedish Higher Education Council, 2016, *Can Excellence Be Achieved In Homogeneous Student Groups? A report on the governmental assignment to survey and analyse the work of Swedish higher education institutions on widening access and widening participation*. Retrieved on 19 April 2018 from <https://www.uhr.se/publikationer/Rapporter/can-excellence-be-achieved/>

18 Bundesministerium für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Wirtschaft, 2017, *Nationale Strategie Zur Sozialen Dimension In Der Hochschulbildung, Kurzfassung*. Retrieved on 19 April 2018 from https://www.bmbwf.gv.at/fileadmin/user_upload/Nationale_Strategie/Nationale_Strategie_Kurzfassung_BF.pdf

Universities' responses

Besides system-level reforms, regulations and supporting policies, it is important to identify concrete examples at the institutional level, in order to show how diversity, equity and inclusiveness can be embedded as a distinct feature into higher education, research and university management.

Universities across the globe have, for instance, included the SDGs explicitly as a policy framework for their strategies.¹⁹ In several cases universities have gone ahead themselves in terms of developing diversity and inclusion strategies that correspond to the society they are part of, even when there is no explicit national policy framework for widening participation.

The imperative for broader participation has been made more urgent by the influx of refugees over the past couple of years, which prompted universities across Europe to establish targeted initiatives for integration.²⁰

This raises a number of strategic and practical questions about how institutions can deal with issues of diversity, inclusion, equity and access – questions that need to be addressed differently depending on the national and cultural context. Possible responses include the introduction of institutional strategies for diversity management, policies for equal opportunities, social innovation or widening participation of underrepresented groups, for example those with a lower socio-economic background or ethnic minorities. Responses can be focused on outreach, access and student retention, but also cover staffing policies.

Defining the terms

Diversity, equity and inclusion are the terms that are often used in an interchangeable way in this context, but before looking at examples of universities' approaches and strategies in this area, it is useful to clarify their distinct meaning and links.²¹

Diversity here refers to individual or group-social differences among persons such as gender and gender identity, age, sexual orientation and identity, ethnic origin, cultural, political or religious affiliation, physical or mental condition and health, socio-economic and prior educational background. All those can play a role with regard to access and success in obtaining a higher education degree or pursuing an academic or administrative career in a university.

The student and staff body of a university can be diverse with regard to all these dimensions without necessarily being explicitly inclusive. Inclusiveness refers to diverse backgrounds being valued in a group or by the institution which, as a pre-requisite, needs awareness about differences and privileges.

¹⁹ See International Association of Universities, *Higher Education And Research For Sustainable Development Global Portal*. Retrieved on 17 April 2018 from <http://www.iau-hesd.net/en>

²⁰ See EUA refugee welcome map, <http://www.eua.be/activities-services/eua-campaigns/refugees-welcome-map> and InHERE project <https://www.inhereproject.eu/>

²¹ The definition of terms is inspired by Bolger, M., 2018, 'What's the difference between Diversity, Inclusion and Equity?', (GA Blog). Retrieved on 21 March 2018 from <https://generalassemb.ly/blog/diversity-inclusion-equity-differences-in-meaning/>

Equity is an approach to ensure equality of opportunities for people regardless of their background. It acknowledges that people have different starting points and inclusion does not happen on its own, as there are specific barriers (such as bias, financial barriers, physical barriers, etc.) that have to be overcome.

One issue – various approaches

The selection of case studies in this edited volume shows the variety of different approaches towards the topic, depending not least on the regulatory framework and cultural context in which the universities are operating. While, for instance, collecting data on ethnic origin is accepted and part of the methodology to tackle exclusion and discrimination in Anglo-Saxon countries, this is problematic in other countries. The same applies to accommodating religious diversity and giving students and staff space to practice their religion or belief during breaks. While in countries like France this is against the neutrality of the university as a public institution, due to the fundamental principle of laïcité enshrined in the law, this is part of the measures taken by universities in the UK to ensure freedom of religious practice.

A recurrent feature at several universities is the attempt to move from a focus on a specific issue such as gender equality or refugee integration for instance, towards a more comprehensive approach including other diversity dimensions and developing an overarching diversity management strategy. One of the first steps often is either the enlargement of responsibilities of existing functions or the creation of new functions and structures. For example, diversity becomes attached to the function of vice-rector for internationalisation or equality, and/or the portfolio of the office for gender equality and equal opportunities is enlarged to include diversity, or a diversity team composed of various members from the university community is created.

The selection of case studies is aimed at illustrating how this process can work in various institutional contexts and thus give food for thought and inspiration to university leaders, managers and academics who are confronted with similar questions.

Governing for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at University College Dublin

By Colin Scott, Vice President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Principal, UCD College of Social Sciences and Law, University College Dublin, Ireland

Type of institution: university

Number of students: 33,000

Number of staff: 3,800 (1350 academics, 750 researchers, 1731 professional and support staff)

INTRODUCTION

University College Dublin traces its origins to the establishment of the Catholic University of Ireland in 1854 under first rector John Henry Newman. The establishment of the university was, in itself, an equality measure enabling members of the Catholic majority in Ireland to secure a university education. The ethos informing Newman's university is well known, since his lectures on the topic were published in the book, *The Idea of a University*. Newman emphasised the importance of universal knowledge, the intrinsic value of education, and the importance of scholars living and learning in a community environment. The Catholic University was reformed in 1880 to join the new Royal University of Ireland and was established as University College Dublin in modern form within the new National University of Ireland in 1911, bringing the Catholic University together with a number of other small colleges. At this key moment in its history UCD adopted a new crest with two mottos, one Latin and one Irish, *Ad Astra* and *Comhtrom Féinne*. The Latin motto, translated as 'to the stars,' is about excellence while the Irish motto is translated as 'fair play'.



Figure 1: UCD 2011 Crest

University College Dublin has a long tradition of promoting equality and has recognised that, as a matter of strategic priority, it needs to do more. As the largest university in Ireland, UCD faces challenges which are experienced both by large organisations generally and universities in particular, in delivering on equality commitments. National policy has recently focused on the very poor representation of women in the most senior professor grade, with only just over 20% of such posts being held by women. This government attention has been part of a wider set of changes which have encouraged Irish universities to raise their game with respect to equality matters, while acknowledging the risk that gender equality may crowd out wider issues of equality, diversity and inclusion.

UCD today is an ambitious and successful research-intensive university with strong global engagement. The most recent articulation of UCD's values is found in the 2015-20 Strategy, developed through a university-wide consultation, and expressed as: excellence, integrity, collegiality, engagement, diversity and creativity.²² The commitment to diversity within UCD's strategy is most strongly articulated in Objective 5: 'Attract and retain an excellent and diverse cohort of students, faculty and staff.' It is from this commitment that the reforms to governance and policy around Equality, Diversity and Inclusion derive. This short article reflects on recent experience of addressing the equality, diversity and inclusion agenda at UCD.

CULTURAL AND POLICY ENVIRONMENT

Like many European states, Ireland embraced strong legislative commitments to formal equality in the 1970s, adopting legislation guaranteeing equal pay for men and women as an aspect of entering into the European Community (as it then was) in 1974, and broader employment equality measures in 1977. The gradual extension of equality grounds and of equality protections beyond employment (for example to education, advertising, etc.) created an environment where, by 2000, there were extensive protections from discrimination on nine grounds: gender, family status, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, religion, race, membership of the traveller community (a recognised indigenous ethnic minority). These protections were extended beyond the workplace (for example to include education) and have subsequently been updated and modernised.²³

However, it is clear that formal commitments to equality have been insufficient to address discrimination on gender and other grounds and there is plenty of evidence, most notably in respect of gender, that there is not equality in the workplace. The Central Statistical Office reported in 2017 that women were paid on average 14% less than men, despite women being more highly qualified, and that the gender pay gap had widened by two percentage points over the two years since the previous survey. Women make up only 13% of company boards (though for state boards the figure is 36%). Following the 2016 election only 22% of the representatives in the lower house of the parliament (the Oireachtas) are women (up from 16% in the previous Parliament, following the adoption of a requirement for political parties to field 30% female candidates). With regard to employment, data on the other protected grounds is less readily available. With respect to disability, the National Disability Authority reports that people with disabilities are only half as likely to be in employment as the population

22 University College Dublin, 2015, 'UCD Strategy 2015-20' (Dublin, UCD)

23 Employment Equality Acts, 1998-2015; Equal Status Acts 2000-2015; Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission Act 2014

as a whole. Public sector bodies have a duty to employ a minimum of 3% employees with a disability, and all employers have duties to offer reasonable accommodations to employees with disabilities.

The universities were encouraged to address gender equality issues through signing up for accreditation with the UK Athena Swan programme, accredited by the Equality Challenge Unit, a consortium of UK universities, and started on seeking first institutional and then department level accreditations in 2015. Growing concerns over gender equality in higher education led to a Higher Education Authority report, published in 2016²⁴ and the subsequent appointment of a task force to report in March 2018. The 2016 report suggested that higher education institutions were squandering talent and undermining their objectives through their failures to take appropriate measures to assure gender equality. The report's recommendations to higher education institutions included the appointment of a Vice President for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at each institution and also the adoption of the gender quotas in promotions processes using the cascade model, under which percentages of women promoted should be at least equal to the percentages of women at the grade below.²⁵ The national research funding bodies are also working with equality, diversity and inclusiveness (EDI) commitments, signalling that they will not fund research in institutions which fail to secure Athena Swan accreditation at Bronze level initially and subsequently at Silver level. Bronze accreditation requires demonstration of good understanding of barriers to equality and a credible action plan to address the challenges, while Silver recognition requires stronger demonstration of achievement and Bronze accreditation of at least half the schools/departments in an institution. This significant challenge for higher education institutions is further compounded by the extension of Athena Swan beyond its original concern with gender equality across STEM disciplines to address, additionally, racial equality across the whole organisation.

Similar anti-discrimination principles to those for the workplace apply to education, and the higher education institutions collectively have implemented wide-ranging measures to enhance participation rates of under-represented groups, notably those from lower socio-economic backgrounds, applicants with disabilities and mature applicants. In respect of the first two of these three groups, discounts on entry requirements are applied, and for mature applicants different entry considerations are used from those for school leavers, including entry via an access programme, as part of UCD's Widening Participation measures. Widening access to higher education has been a government priority over many years and is supported with additional funds which are used to develop supports for students from under-represented groups.²⁶ In 2017-18 the UCD student population comprised nearly 30% of students from the under-represented groups.²⁷ We note that students who experience intersectionality (e.g. because they have a disability and are from socio-economically disadvantaged groups) find it particularly challenging to access higher education.

24 Expert Group, 2016, 'HEA National Review of Gender Equality in Irish Higher Education Institutions' (Dublin, Higher Education Authority).

25 Ibid.

26 University College Dublin, 2017, 'Annual Report on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion' (Dublin, UCD).

27 University College Dublin, 2015, 'UCD Strategy 2015-20' (Dublin, UCD).

Employment equality and widening educational participation measures have tended to be thought of quite distinctly, but with the adoption of its 2015-20 UCD Strategy has begun a process of better aligning the policies and actions under the general rubric of equality, diversity and inclusion.²⁸

It feels like we are in a period of quite significant change in policy development for EDI in Higher Education in Ireland. Given that barriers to equality are not a new problem, this prompts the question why change is occurring now. This change can be analysed using the tools of public policy which suggest that it is insufficient simply to identify a policy problem (here, barriers to equality and weaknesses in inclusion). For effective policy change, an identified problem needs to be linked both to viable and attractive policy options and to effective political leadership, and appeal to interests of those affected.²⁹ For the politics to be supportive this requires both the strong commitment of government and also of presidents of higher education institutions.

GOVERNANCE

As noted in the Introduction, the university's 2015 Strategy strongly commits the organisation to equality, diversity and inclusion. Whilst it is important that commitments to equality, diversity and inclusion have high-level commitment and expression in strategic documents, it is important also to recognise that barriers to equality can often be found in organisational cultures which are not readily amenable to a strategic drive for change. Accordingly, it is important for a university to understand and articulate its values, and also for its leadership to undertake the myriad steps which bolster the implementation of strategic plans with supporting culture and governance.

As with each of the objectives and initiatives in the UCD Strategy 2015-2020, the commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion required the adoption of new governance machinery to develop and implement the actions to deliver on the strategy. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Group of the University Management Team (UMT) was established in October 2015. At the first meeting the group scoped the major challenges and key opportunities for action in respect of EDI matters and fairly quickly decided that the scale of issues identified would require it to operate through sub-groups. The university had established an Athena Swan Steering Group chaired by the Vice President for Research, Impact and Innovation (subsequently restyled as the Gender Equality Action Group (GEAG)) to address gender equality issues in 2015, and this group would have a dotted line into the UMT EDI Group. The longer established University Widening Participation Committee (WPC) would also report to the UMT EDI Group alongside the new sub-groups on Data, Mainstreaming, and Events and Communications LGBTI Issues, Disability, Ethnic Diversity and Inclusion. Thus three sub-groups address and are oriented around generic process matters and five (including WPC and GEAG) address matters relating to particular protected classes. These structures address most of the protection aspects within equality legislation and also address socio-economic status.

²⁸ University College Dublin, 2015, 'UCD Strategy 2015-20' (Dublin, UCD).

²⁹ Jones, Michael D. et al., 2016, 'A River Runs Through It: A Multiple Streams Meta-Review', *Policy Studies Journal*, 44, pp.13-36.

Organising EDI Policy at UCD

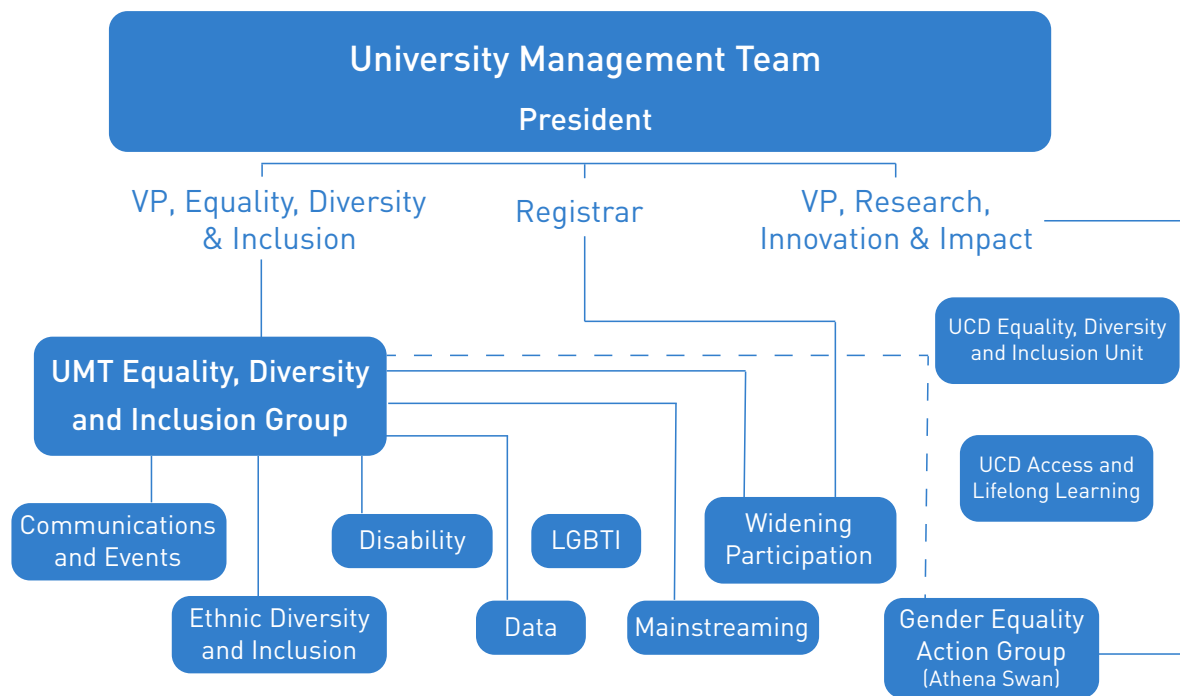


Figure 2: Governance Structure for Equality, Diversity and Inclusion at UCD

The existence of the seven sub-groups, each with their own chairs, has rapidly established a form of distributed governance over EDI issues within the university, with the active engagement of large numbers of employees and also strong representation from the Students' Union. The full EDI Group meets four times a year and the chairs of the sub-groups form an Executive Committee which meets more frequently to discuss policy drafts and to propose actions to the full group. The engagement on EDI issues is wider than the membership of the EDI Group and sub-groups since some issues are addressed through working groups tasked to address such specific issues and then end when they have finished their work, and all members of the University Management Team have EDI responsibilities in their areas of activity, supported by heads of unit and heads of school.

EDI activities within UCD are well supported by a number of professional units. Prior to 2015 UCD had an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Manager sitting within HE. The role was important for ensuring compliance with equality legislation through promulgating and implementing policies, leading both training and also responsiveness to problems which emerged. The role has changed somewhat as traditional roles have been supplemented by a focus on supporting the EDI Group and GEAP activities, and with a growing team of staff within the EDI Unit now located within UCD Culture and Engagement, a division of HR. The Widening Participation Committee is supported by a rather larger unit, UCD Access and Lifelong Learning (UCD ALL) which fulfils key roles in policy on access to higher education, and on implementing measures around entry routes and then supporting students from underrepresented groups through their time at UCD with orientations, scholarships, special accommodations and other supports which enable students to fulfil their potential. Other units with key roles include UCD Finance Office and UCD Registry, and all programmes, schools and units have significant responsibilities around implementation.

POLICIES

Since the establishment of the UMT EDI Group at UCD, a number of new and revised policies have been adopted. The EDI Group has had a leading role in some areas, a coordinating role in others, and more of an oversight role elsewhere. The oversight role has been established through the development of an EDI Self-Assessment Tool which is required to be completed for, and submitted with, all new central university policies, with the assistance of members of the EDI Group. The purpose of the EDI Self-Assessment Tool is to give effect to the ethos of the EDI Group that, to support change, EDI must be mainstreamed and must be regarded as everyone's business. Members of the Mainstreaming Sub-Group have reviewed major new policies such as new promotions policies and revised Academic Regulations and have been involved also in the self-assessment by policy makers of draft policies against EDI criteria. Over time we plan to strengthen the self-assessment so that new policies not only mitigate any negative effects with respect to EDI, but also demonstrate how opportunities to enhance EDI are advanced.

Key new policies in respect of gender have transferred the costs of maternity and sick leave from the budgets of schools and support units, funded by a levy on all salaries in the university, so as to encourage better take up of full maternity leave benefits without penalising the affected units. New policies have been adopted requiring gender balance at a minimum of 40% on all university committees (on a comply or explain basis) and setting core hours (without affecting the working day overall) for university meetings, seminars, etc. as being between 09.30 and 16.00 hours so as to facilitate those with caring responsibilities. Other key new policies include the development of a revised Dignity and Respect policy, which leads with the positive commitment of the university to developing a culture of respect, and also a new policy on Gender Identity and Expression and guidelines on access to the university for refugees, asylum seekers and other displaced persons.

Building on these achievements the EDI Group is currently consulting on a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy for the university accompanied by a Strategy and Action Plan which sets down the broad policy framework and a road map of initiatives for development and implementation over the next three years.

IMPLEMENTATION

We recognise in UCD, as with universities generally, that implementing policies on matters such as equality, diversity and inclusion down the line can be challenging, precisely because line management is frequently not so hierarchical and more collegial, involving rather less reporting and oversight than might be typical of other kinds of organisations. Even if you can rely to a large extent on academic schools to set and achieve appropriate goals around such matters as education and research, implementation of EDI policies requires, at a minimum, good understanding of the rationales and requirements of the policies, which typically involves training, and likely also a degree of reporting. Key aspects of implementation plans include a strong focus on communication with those affected, the development and take up of appropriate training, and building of commitment amongst managers to implement and report on implementation processes. A key requirement for successful implementation is the development of indicators to measure progress and to identify weaknesses in

implementation. Data and indicators are currently best developed nationally and in UCD in respect of gender, with other aspects of equality lagging somewhat.

CONCLUSION

It is too soon to tell whether the renewed energy in Irish higher education around equality, diversity and inclusion will engender a permanent cultural shift in the culture of organisations and in the position of those groups whose characteristics are protected by law on equality grounds. The momentum is positive and there are grounds for optimism. UCD is showing a strong commitment. There is definitely no room for complacency as positive and lasting change will only come about through sustained government and institutional commitment over many years.

Social Responsibility as Part of the Core Mission of the University of Lille 3 Human & Social Sciences

By Philippe Vervaecke, Pro-Vice Chancellor & Emmanuelle Jourdan-Chartier, Vice-President for Student and Campus Life, University of Lille 3 - Human and Social Sciences, France

Type of institution: university

Number of students: 17,000

Number of staff: 1,500

INTRODUCTION

At the University of Lille, Social and Human Sciences, the key objectives are inclusion of all types of public, the active mobilisation of the whole academic community, students and staff included, and the intensification of our partnership with actors from the charitable, public or corporate sector.

Before describing the way inclusiveness materialises into concrete policy in our university, a few words need to be said about the French legal framework concerning inclusiveness. Some forms of diversity may be taken on board by universities when they aim at fostering inclusiveness, such as disabilities, gender inequalities, socio-economic inequalities, but given the legal context, racial and religious inclusiveness is not within the remit of what public, secular institutions like universities can have any leverage upon. There are no racial or religious statistics in France to start with, and there are no policies of racial and religious inclusiveness under way in French universities – given the necessity for universities to remain neutral on confessional issues because of their explicitly secular (laïc in French) legal status.

IMPROVING ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

One of our priorities is to give access to higher education to all, notably those with disabilities. The university had 400 students with a disability in the academic year 2017-18, a figure which has been constantly increasing in the last 12 years after a national law was passed to guarantee the right to adapted exam formats for people with disabilities. Since then, we have gone beyond legal requirements and have developed schemes to welcome those students and their families before the start of the academic year. Students are also accompanied during their studies both by peers (tutors) and a network of teachers and members of the administrative staff in all faculties. In July 2015, we signed an agreement (the Convention Handicap Université Entreprises) with a range of corporate actors (the companies Thalès, Auchan, and Bayer, among other stake-holders to this agreement), who help us reinforce our ability to accompany disabled people towards higher education and employment. The same month, our executive board approved our Strategic Plan for our Policy towards Disability, the drafting of which mobilised numerous colleagues from services beyond Human Resources. And later on that year, we formalised and set aside the money required by our investment agenda for accessibility 2015-2020. This has enabled us since then to improve the accessibility of our premises and to update them to new requirements. Inclusion also means that as

employers, our members of staff with disabilities are duly accompanied too, with members of staff entirely dedicated to address the specific needs of employees with a disability, the number of whom has also increased over the last 10 years, reaching over 4% of our entire staff (the legal requirement is 6%).

SUPPORTING STUDENTS FROM SOCIO-ECONOMICALLY DISADVANTAGED BACKGROUNDS

Our university has also a very active policy in terms of support for students from under-privileged backgrounds, who compose the bulk of our student population (up to 52% of our students benefit from student grants, available to people with parents with low incomes). Our aim is to ease access to graduate and postgraduate studies. To do so, we have devised with the local authorities a scheme which provides financial and pedagogical support to students from disadvantaged backgrounds, notably during their first year of study. We have also devised a procedure to exonerate from the payment of tuition fees (300 euros roughly speaking) students who cannot afford it, together with targeted help for students in situation of economic distress. Social workers employed by the national body in charge of student welfare, the CROUS (Centre Régional des Œuvres Universitaires), and members of our staff in charge of student life, actively respond to students' need for support. They are not the only actors in this university doing their bit in terms of inclusion. Our service in charge of internships and entry into professional life contributes to our policy of inclusiveness in so far as it provides the exact type of support (in terms of access to networks, ability to perform well at job interviews) that people from deprived backgrounds badly need, in particular, when it comes to finding internships or just before or just after graduation. I could also mention the International Relations office, which, in a region in which the population is not known for its mobility, especially among young people, is conceived by us as a tool to ease access to international mobility to all and to the grants that facilitate it for our students from poorer backgrounds.

FIGHTING AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Our attention to the issue of inclusion also integrates institutional tools and policies designed to fight against harassment and discrimination. We set up the first task force within a French university to tackle sexual harassment, and this mission is to remain within the new university of Lille alongside the House of Mediation, the future department in charge of accompanying staff and students in case they face contentious situations either on campus or elsewhere. We have recently made it possible for transgender students to register under their chosen name.

FOSTERING GENDER EQUALITY AND WORK-LIFE BALANCE

Given that the majority of our students and staff are women, we have a particular responsibility when it comes to staging regular campaigns of awareness against gender-based stereotypes. Although we are a Human and Social Sciences university we are very active in the promotion of scientific studies towards women. One concrete way for us to foster inclusion is via our kindergarten, (The Cuddly Kangaroos), which allows us to provide parents, whether they are

students or members of staff, with a service crucial to their work-life balance. We are also committed to easing access to classes and campus life to salaried students, professional sportsmen and women.

INCLUSIVENESS IN RESEARCH AND TEACHING

How does inclusion translate into our research projects and our courses and how does it mobilise a wide spectrum of members of staff? What is quite specific to this university is perhaps to a great extent dictated by the way space is organised here, around a large forum acting as a link between all parts of campus. Services and faculties tend to cooperate here, and mobilise around projects, especially when they are related to the university's ability to reach out to the wider world and wider audiences. This has facilitated the cross-service approach in the drafting phase of our Strategic Agenda for Disability for example. In a similar way, our cooperation with the corporate world on the issue of disability has generated a collective effort to establish a repertory of actions.

We also reward students who dedicate time to charities or student associations and they may validate ECTS in recognition for their engagement. Part of our undergraduate level course of studies is designed specifically to help students gain recognition for their involvement in the wider community. This includes in all semesters the possibility for students to engage in projects during which they benefit from guidance on the legal framework for charitable bodies from professional coaches, whether from academia or from other fields of activity. This enables students wishing to be active in a project-based approach to gain recognition of their involvement in projects initiated by student organisations or outside associations or charities. The course also provides students with skills in project management, notably in terms of fund-raising, communication over projects, and the drafting of budgets for associational projects. Assessment consists in the writing of a report describing the students' involvement in associational projects through the year. Any undergraduate student on campus, no matter what type of diploma they actually prepare, may sign up for this course. Six hundred of our students have taken this engagement course in the 2016-2017 academic year, which makes it one of the most popular transversal courses in our university.

The pedagogical team which supervises the scheme gathers academics, professionals of the charitable sector, members of the administrative staff and representatives from students' associations. Students can choose between the following five fields of engagement: deconstruction of gender stereotypes, exile and migration, addictive behaviours, inclusion of people with disabilities and tutoring of elementary and secondary school pupils.

At times, some of the resources we receive from the state for the support for student initiatives are channeled towards such student-run charitable projects. We also tend to articulate as much as we can the various offers we have in terms of campus jobs for students and the projects under way on campus. With the recruitment of an increasing number of Civic Service volunteers (10 this year), this provides us with a student task-force that can be collectively mobilised towards the success of ongoing projects such as the accompaniment of over 80 refugees on campus last year for classes of French as a foreign language. Research-wise, in a Social and Human Sciences university like Lille HSS, there are numerous examples of research projects revolving around issues ranging from the sociology of vulnerable populations (the specialty of our sociology research unit, the

Ceries) to our specialists in sign languages. For example, one of the projects which recently mobilised our music specialists from the Arts department helped to foster the practice of music in prisons, an initiative highly consistent with the nature of the Master's degree they supervise, which make graduates competent in the management of arts projects involving international cooperation. Members of our Languages laboratory were prominent in the early stages of the student/refugee programme we embarked upon a year ago. The root of their initiative was the need to build contacts with the networks of charities active around Calais as part of a research project on migrants, and after a range of workshops and conferences, the project took shape, with a definition process that saw academics, social workers, volunteers, and public authorities cooperate – sometimes admittedly in a chaotic way – to devise this student-refugee scheme.

COLLABORATING WITH EXTERNAL PARTNERS FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION

Openness towards and willingness to cooperate with the actors of our region, whether public bodies such as the CROUS already mentioned, charities, associations, local authorities, and the local business community, is key to our strategy of social innovation.

Part of the ethos of this university is to work for inclusion with a range of partners and outside bodies. Services, whether those dealing with student life, with counselling, with IR, with sports, with French as a foreign language, and of course all faculties are actively encouraged to forge and nurture links with outside bodies and organisations, especially, but not exclusively of course, local ones. Needless to go through the whole range, but a few examples will highlight the diversity of our partnerships: Our library cooperates with the network of public libraries, and free access has been awarded to all residents of the city in 2014, in a consistent effort of openness towards people of all walks of life. For our awareness campaigns towards staff and students, we obviously seek the support of specialised associations. Some like Association de la Fondation Etudiante pour la Ville (AFEV), a foundation dedicated to student welfare and outreach programmes to support disadvantaged kids in run-down areas, Zup de Co, which specialises in the participation of students to programmes designed to accompany schoolchildren, or l'Union Régionale des Métiers d'Art (the federation of people and companies in the field of arts and crafts), even become actors of our teaching programmes. Some of those associations are also our partners when it comes to recruiting young people who chose to sign up for a Service Civique (civic service), for example, the association KAPS, which specialises in project management, and with which we made two such recruitments. Another beneficiary of Service Civique recruitments is the Kino, the name of the association which runs the movie theatre we have on campus. We pool our resources and training schemes for Service Civique volunteers with the CROUS, AFEV and the Lille municipal authorities. This is obviously just a brief foray into the rich, dense and expanding networks of cooperation we have with local and national actors.

Two other projects are the student-refugee scheme we initiated back in October 2016, and the solidary grocery store which opened on this campus in December 2017. The way those two projects have been conducted showcase our approach to inclusiveness as they mobilised the whole community, students, academics, and members of the administrative staff, alongside institutional or charitable partners. The aim of both schemes is to embark our university on

projects in which we can legitimately intervene, in our role as educational institution for the student-refugee programme, and given our social responsibilities towards our students for the outreach grocery store.

The student-refugee programme launched at the start of the last academic year is very similar to initiatives taken elsewhere in France and in Europe. The aim is to provide asylum seekers with one-year courses in French as a foreign language in order to enable them to pursue studies in undergraduate or graduate courses. As stated earlier, it was via a bottom-up approach that the project got off the ground with the mobilisation of a team of researchers from our research units which sought to cooperate with charities active in the Calais area. The first group of 80 migrants (who were not all at that stage asylum seekers) came directly from the notorious Calais Jungle. What is also original about our approach is that we sought and obtained the support of the state with the financial and administrative help provided by the prefecture and that of the CROUS. This enabled us to solve the problem of accommodation for that particularly deprived population and to create for them the conditions for easy access to asylum procedures. The second group, comprised of 51 people, arrived in September 2017. A number of student-refugees from the first year have now moved on to undergraduate studies, but the bulk of the student-refugee population from the first year have had to be enrolled for a second year of French as a foreign language. The scheme has given us the opportunity to mobilise individual students and student organisations for various initiatives, like the collection of clothes, notably when the refugees arrived on campus, and mentoring jobs to help them discover campus and campus life.

The last example is our outreach grocery store, a project which has materialised thanks to a group of members of staff and students who created an association, *La Campusserie*, in order to provide students in situations of economic distress with access to cut-price items. The store is located on the ground floor of our library, thus guaranteeing maximum visibility, and we have received the financial support of a range of economic partners, among which the MACIF Foundation and – to be confirmed soon we hope – the Auchan and the Carrefour Foundation. Access to that service is reserved for students identified by the social services of the CROUS. We have received the assistance of the Andes, the *Association Nationale pour le Développement des Epiceries Solidaires*, a national network *La Campusserie* became a member of.

This short overview offers but a glimpse of how we operate here concerning inclusiveness, an objective the importance of which has vastly expanded in the last decade across the board in French academia, notably for people with disabilities and for the issue of gender inequalities.

Integration and Opportunities through Education in a Metropolitan University: The Diversity Strategy of Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences

By Monika Schröder, Head of the Department, Consulting and Strategy for Teaching and Learning and Dr. Sabine Geldsetzer, Programme Manager in the Department, Consulting and Strategy for Teaching and Learning, Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Germany

Type of institution: university of applied sciences

Number of students: about 14,500

Number of staff: 872, among them 262 professors and 46 lecturers (without scientific staff that also partly teaches)

WHO ARE WE?

The Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences stands for values, attitudes and social responsibility as an academic institution. Our university of applied sciences is located in the most international and future-securing region of the state of Hesse: the metropolitan region Frankfurt Rhine/Main with its extremely diverse and growing population. People from more than 170 nations live in Frankfurt. We consider ourselves a metropolitan university advocating the conditions of this success perspective: integration and opportunities through education'. Our profile as a university of applied sciences is attractive for people who see chances through education in our practice-oriented scientific-based study programmes. More than half of our students have a migrant background and more than a third are academics from a non-academic background.

Integration, opening up chances through education and enabling advancement through education: this is what this institution focuses on next to family-friendliness and the participation of all students. We would like to encourage the people who learn, teach and work at our university to show society what potential diversity can offer and how society can be further developed this way.

We started to strategically anchor diversity and respectful coexistence as values of our university in 2011: in our image, the university development plan and the new target agreements 2016-2020 with the state of Hesse.

We have been working on the strategic realignment of the university since 2015, based on 11 strategic guidelines. The four guidelines: 'internationality and cultural diversity', 'innovative development partnerships', 'open admissions and holistic understanding of education' as well as the 'institution of life-long-learning' stand for our values as a diverse university.

WHERE DO WE STAND?

Many of our students (currently 14 500 people from 105 nations) possess at least two of the following diversity dimensions:

- 50-55% have a migrant background, as a reflection of the young population in this region – the highest percentage among post-secondary education institutions in Hesse and the second highest percentage in all of Germany;
- 35-40% are academics from a non-academic background;
- 30-40% completed a vocational training prior to their studies, according to internal applications and interviewing of graduates;
- approximately 2% of the new students are categorised as ‘professionally qualified’. This means that they get university access by vocational training and work experience as substitutes for a regular university entrance qualification (Abitur/Fachabitur);
- approximately 5% of the students have children, of which half are under the age of three;
- a statistically undocumented number is impacted due to health impairments;
- 99% are registered as full-time students, of which 90% are studying part-time (58% are working continuously, 20% are working on a regular basis, 12% are working occasionally during the semester).

The specific dynamics of our location is characteristic for the composition of our student body, most of whom live in Frankfurt or within a radius of 60 kilometers around our university.

Frankfurt/Main, like Amsterdam and London or Stuttgart, Augsburg and Nuremberg, belongs to those groups of cities in Europe and Germany we call super-diverse, in which a large number of social classes, ethnic identities, types of residence permits, different countries of origins and cultures have replaced majority societies. The distinctive features of the city’s demographic profile can be summarised thus:

People from 170 nations live in Frankfurt. Frankfurt is the German commune with the highest share of people of non-German citizenship (24.3%). Overall, approximately 40 percent of the population in Frankfurt has a migrant background.

Frankfurt counts as one of the German cities in which, with increasing tendency, already more than 50% of the young population has a migrant background.

In Frankfurt this applies to half of the children under the age of six and up to two-thirds of all 18-year olds—indicative of a young, multilingual, intercultural generation.

A few examples of how we are promoting diversity:

WELCOME YEAR FOR REFUGEES

The 'Welcome Year for Refugees' has been offering refugees the opportunity to take on or continue a degree course since 2016, if they had to discontinue their studies because they had to flee their country. They receive the chance to take part in an intensive German course and in language courses relevant for their respective degrees at the Language Center of the Frankfurt UAS. At the same time they attend modules of the first semester, which are spread out over two semesters. The 'Welcome Year' prepares refugees for the following degree courses: architecture, computer science, mechatronics and mechanical engineering. A mandatory internship which is integrated into the mechanical engineering programme is optional for the other participants.

'REFUGEE BUDDIES'

In the initiative 'Refugee Buddies', established by students in 2015, more than 150 volunteers from Frankfurt and surrounding areas are actively helping in funding sponsorships (currently 110) for refugees. The refugee buddies support people who have come to Germany due to a desperate situation and who have to learn the German language in order to cope with everyday life situations. There is no age limit for the programme, and everybody is welcome. The German courses are currently for young adults and families. In addition, mathematic courses are offered. Furthermore, the initiative, which is now an association with the same name, helps in searches for internships / vocational trainings and in the organisation of joint leisure activities.

ACKNOWLEDGE POTENTIALS – USE CHANCES!

Together with the Goethe University, the Frankfurt UAS plans a programme for languages of origin for the students who speak Arabic, Persian, Polish, Russian or Turkish in their families. With this cooperation project, both institutions of higher education will be sensitised to the topic 'original languages'.

At the Frankfurt UAS, we would like to face the challenge 'globalisation, diversity and multi-languages' and help to elevate languages of origin: the still-hidden treasure which many of our students carry in themselves. Present linguistic and cultural knowledge is to be extended and improved for the studies and occupation. In addition, multiple languages are presented as a chance rather than an obstacle toward academic success and thereby is also considered a measure of successful social integration.

The starting point is the result of a survey that was carried out among students at the Frankfurt UAS in 2017. It revealed that roughly half the students speak two languages at home. A third of the respondents indicated that German is not the language spoken in their family. Turkish takes the first place (after German) among languages that are spoken within families, followed by Russian, Persian, and Arabic. Particularly students from Turkish families are interested in improving language competencies in their native tongue. One third of all respondents who indicated Turkish as their families' language said they were interested in improving these language competencies. The one-third ratio is the highest value compared with other languages.

Regular language courses that improve listening, reading, speaking and writing skills only meet the requirements of these students to a certain extent. They are at a different level than beginners and would be bored in beginner courses, but at the same time they lack the foundation in writing and reading literacy that are provided in the beginner course.

Inspired by the achievements at other higher education institutions, the following goals are pursued through the programme for languages of origin:

The participants learn to communicate orally on a high level and at the same time learn those aspects of grammar and structure that are still lacking in their language abilities. Specific vocabulary is built and writing skills and text production are improved.

The increase of competencies in the native language usually leads to an improvement of the knowledge of the German language and at the same time has a positive effect on learning a third language.

The participants further expand their knowledge in the history and culture of the country of origin of their families and improve their linguistic skills, thereby gaining intercultural competencies.

HOW WILL WE PROCEED?

Despite significant successes and developments in individual areas, we discovered that we have to continue working on a strategic and structural level in order to connect our diverse and good examples systematically in order to increase efficiency.

This is why we would like to develop a comprehensive diversity strategy which mainly focuses on 'opportunities through education' for all motivated students, breaking away from linking choice of study with origin, personal life situation, or gender. At the same time, we require this strategy in order to look at the long-term effects of diversity for our development goals and identify diversity dimensions in order to evaluate them and compare them more easily with our current activities and strategic objectives.

This is why we take part in the 'shaping diversity' audit of the Foundation for German Science (*Stifterverband für die deutsche Wissenschaft*). We are only at the beginning of the process that is described below. Currently, we are preparing the first university-internal workshop as the hosting university of a diversity forum for all participants in this audit.

WHAT IS A DIVERSITY AUDIT?

A diversity audit offers us the chance to take on the challenges connected with a diverse student population and develop a specific diversity strategy customised for our university profile. The audit links elements of organisational development with collegial advice and external support. Moderated reflections and discussions with all involved and potentially involved groups (teaching staff, students, university administration and employees) accompany and support the process within the university.

THE COURSE OF THE AUDITING PROCEDURE

The auditing procedure takes two years. It consists of the internal auditing procedure at our university, supervised by the Presidential Committee of the Frankfurt UAS, the Vice President for Academic Affairs, and the diversity forum, in which all higher education institutions that take part in the audit phase in 2018 and 2019 will participate. The exchange amongst these 16 universities gives additional value to the auditing procedure.

For the acceptance within the university and the participation of the members of the universities from various areas, a control group and a steering committee will be formed, representing all focus groups (presidential committee, faculties, teaching staff, students, employees and the university administration). Here, under supervision of the Vice President for Academic Affairs, the university administration communicates the process, appoints the control group and the steering committee, and discusses the affairs, goals and implementation of the process, as well as further procedures, with the steering committee.

THE INTERNAL AUDITING PROCEDURE

The internal auditing procedure, which is led by the steering committee and accompanied by the control group with their respective forms of expert knowledge, serves the development and implementation of a customised diversity strategy. In particular, it considers the following areas of activity: 'strategy and structure', 'teaching and learning – service and consultation', as well as 'staff management – IT and properties'.

The internal auditing procedure consists of five university-internal workshops of the steering committee as well as the control group, moderated and accompanied by an external and independent experienced auditor. Members of Frankfurt UAS with special expertise in one of the areas of activity mentioned above will also be invited to share their expertise and perspectives.

We started the auditing procedure in November 2017 with the preparation of a self-evaluation report. This documented our initial situation and formulated development goals, which are supposed to be attained in the course of the auditing procedure. At the end of the process, which will be probably at the end of 2019, we will have the chance to reflect and see how far the self-defined goals were achieved in a second self-evaluation report. We will receive a certificate after completion of the auditing process that honours our efforts.

OUR FOCI

The audit at Frankfurt UAS will focus on the following questions:

- How do we define diversity for our university of applied sciences?
- How can we anchor diversity as a strategic cross-sectional goal of the development of the university on different levels?
- What are the interfaces to the already existing strategies, such as our e-learning and internationalisation strategy?

THE DIVERSITY FORUM

Parallel to the internal auditing procedure, a collegial exchange among the higher education institutions that undergo the audit at the same time takes place in the diversity forum. Five diversity fora will take place during this two-year long audit. Most of them will take place at the campuses of the participating institutions. The topics of the individual fora are determined jointly. Next to the experts from the institutions and academics, representatives from companies and communities will be invited to provide their perspectives and insights.

After the end of the approximately two-year long auditing process, the Foundation confers the 'shaping diversity' certificate to every university who has successfully ended the 'shaping diversity' audit, which is valid for three years. A re-audit is necessary for a prolongation of the validity period.

What goals do we connect with diversity?

We are already a diverse university and would like to make this existing diversity more visible in teaching, research and in our infrastructure, and use it in a positive manner for the university and those associated with it.

Thanks to the diverse expertise, linguistic and cultural competencies of our students and staff, the Frankfurt UAS possesses the potential to become a lighthouse project in Germany with our extremely diverse profile, and we may be able to position ourselves as a future model of modern higher education institutions in super-diverse contexts in Europe and internationally.

We would like to make our students, with their diverse languages and countries of origin, the link between universities and the increasingly international urban planning and regional policy of the city of Frankfurt.

What do we expect from making diversity such an important topic at our university and how will the diversity strategy help us accomplish that?

Diversity is a topic that every institution must deal with. We noticed that it is to our advantage that we are already embedded in a highly diverse region, particularly with respect to the students in their heterogeneity of educational backgrounds, languages, countries of origin, religions and cultures. We would like to use this as our strength and be one of the pioneering institutions that view diversity as a potential instead of a burden. As a higher education institution and particularly as a university of applied sciences, it is our social mission to offer a practice-oriented, academic education on a scientific basis to all motivated students under the given conditions. We perceive diversity as a guiding principle in the development of our university, and we would like to offer target-oriented cross-university measures that promote this diversity. With our diversity strategy 'Opportunities through Education', we would like to have a major impact and keep the focus on those students who have specific needs.

Diversity for Excellence and Innovation in Science, Engineering and Design at the Technical University of Delft

By Marian Neuteboom, HR policy advisor mobility & development, Delft University of Technology (TU Delft), Netherlands

Type of institution: university of technology

Number of students: about 22,500

Number of staff: 5,200 FTE staff (2,100 support staff, 3,100 Scientific staff) 34% international staff

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION IN THE NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands is a diverse mix of different cultures from, for example, Turkey, Morocco, China and from former Dutch colonies such as Indonesia, Suriname and Curacao. Especially in the bigger cities, such as Amsterdam and Rotterdam, many cultures co-exist. The Netherlands was the first country in which same-sex marriage was fully legalised (in 2001). Nowadays diversity and inclusion is still a topic of discussion in the Netherlands. An example of such a discussion is the debate about our colonial past and the artwork of that time period. Should we show this work of art to the public? And if so, how can we do that without ignoring the oppressive regimes that so often formed the basis for this period? Another topic is the gender-neutral restroom. Do we include everyone if we only have restrooms for males and females? Or should we have gender-neutral restrooms?

The Dutch government is stimulating diversity. Two examples relevant for academia that will be mentioned later again are the *Westerdijk talent impuls*, a national programme to attract female professors in academia, and the *participatiewet*, a labour law to include more employees with a disability in the public and private sector. The gender ratio in companies is monitored and companies set targets for themselves, even though explicit quotas are not imposed. The thought behind this is that companies themselves are responsible for gender balance.

TU DELFT

TU Delft is a university that focusses on science, engineering and design. The university consists of eight faculties located on one campus in the city of Delft. TU Delft contributes to solving global challenges by educating new generations of socially responsible engineers and expanding the frontiers of the engineering sciences.

Mission of the TU Delft

- We perform world-class research by combining science, engineering and design in a socially responsible manner. Thus, we advance and share the benefits of technology.
- We develop and enhance the expertise of tomorrow's engineering leaders and educate professional, high-level and responsible engineers throughout their careers.
- We help to develop and deliver technology-driven, innovative solutions to societal problems through collaborations with leading national and international partners whilst being firmly rooted in Delft.
- We continuously improve our collective effectiveness, performance and organisational resilience through the principles and practice of professionalism, collaboration and openness.

DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION AT THE TU DELFT

As stated in the strategic framework of the TU Delft: *We are convinced that we need diversity for excellence and innovation.* We believe that diversity and inclusion enhance creativity and improve decision-making. The HR strategy of the TU Delft is aimed at attracting and including a diverse pool of talent as one of the five core objectives. Having this diverse pool of talent will help to attract diverse talent in the future. Reflecting the diversity of society within the university also helps in finding solutions for societal problems.

Diversity officer

To create a diverse and inclusive environment, Professor Rinze Benedictus has been appointed as the first Diversity Officer of the TU Delft in September 2017. Together with Sarah Benschop, senior policy advisor of HR and coordinator of Diversity & Inclusion (D&I), he is developing a vision and policy based on input from the Diversity & Inclusion team.

The goal was to form a diverse team for the following reasons:

- Everyone should be heard, meaning that everyone who wants to be part of the team and wants to give their input on the subject should have the chance to do so.
- The impact of the team should be university wide.
- We represent what we stand for: a diverse team.
- Diverse teams have many talents and perspectives.

To create a diverse group of people, the team was formed through an open and transparent recruitment and selection procedure. It was important that everyone who wanted to be part of the team had the chance to do so. Therefore, the vacancy for the role was broadly communicated. In the selection procedure an important criterion was affinity with the subject, either from a personal or professional experience. Eventually a team was selected, representing all eight faculties, different positions in the university (from student, support staff to professor), and all gender and minority groups of the University.

The D&I team

The D&I team has an advisory role towards the executive board of the university. The D&I team initiates and coordinates activities for students and employees across the areas of education, research and representation to make the university more inclusive. The team cooperates on a university level, nationally and internationally, with other universities, organisations and stakeholders.

To prepare for the role of D&I team member, everyone followed a two-day training to work on team building, learn more about diversity and inclusion, and brainstorm on how to make the university more inclusive. The next step is to create so-called *Terms of Reference*, which include a mission statement and a vision of diversity and inclusion at the TU Delft. Moreover it will contain short- and long-term actions.

Exchange with other universities

To receive input on how to create a diverse and inclusive environment, the TU Delft takes part in the regular meetings of the Diversity Officers of Dutch universities. In these meetings, knowledge and expertise are exchanged on the subject and joint initiatives are set up.

TU Delft is also engaged in the exchange on the matter with universities from other European countries through networks such as CESAER (Conference of European Schools for Advanced Engineering Education and Research) which considers gender equality as a *conditio sine qua non* for scientific excellence and works with its members on the topic in its HR taskforce.

FOUR PILLARS OF DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Before our Diversity Officer and D&I team started, the TU Delft already paid attention to the subject. The numerous diversity and inclusion initiatives can be divided into four subcategories: gender, sexual orientation and gender identity (LGBT, i.e. lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender), disability, internationals and cultural differences. These pillars are applicable for students and staff.

Gender

The Diversity Policy of the TU Delft, as established by the board, was at first focussed on increasing gender diversity. The expectation was (and continues to be) that cultural and structural changes will follow and that diversity in general will be stimulated on the other dimensions as well. The focus in increasing gender diversity is to attract more female scientists and let them flow through higher scientific positions and also to create an inclusive environment in which female talent can flourish.

Delft Women in Science

The women's network Delft Women in Science (DEWIS) is committed to inclusion and gender diversity, equality and awareness. DEWIS has been founded in 2006 by and for female scientists with the support of the executive board. They stand for the benefits of difference and the success of teams made up of diverse players. This requires creating equal opportunities, irrespective of sex.

The network provides a platform for every TU Delft staff member who is interested in gender and diversity-conscious policy. Furthermore, DEWIS is a sounding board for the Executive Board and the HR department and can provide advice and unsolicited advice. They also organise lunch meetings and other events to create awareness for the subject.

Westerdijk talent impuls

Gender diversity is also stimulated by the government. Minister Bussemaker has set up the Westerdijk Talent impuls programme, named after Johanna Westerdijk, a Dutch plant pathologist and the first female professor in the Netherlands, to honour the 100 years of female professorship. The goal of the program is to increase the share of female professors in academia and thereby contribute to more women in the top positions of Dutch universities. Minister Bussemaker has granted 50 million euros for appointing 100 extra female professors in the Netherlands during the period between February 2017 and February 2018. The universities mutually decided not to appoint women who were already professors at another university, because this would in sum not lead to more female professors in the Netherlands. Instead, the universities agreed to look within their own organisation for candidates for a professorship. The Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) has made a contribution of 50 000 euros available for six positions at the TU Delft. The TU Delft has decided to pay the appointed female professors in the Westerdijk-year with its own resources.

Delft Technology Fellowship

A Delft initiative to increase the share of women in high scientific positions is the Delft Technology Fellowship. This fellowship has been founded in 2011 and offers high-profile, tenure-track positions to outstanding female academic researchers in research fields in which the university is active. The fellow will be offered the unique chance to establish her own research programme of international repute, including a generous start-up funding. The fellowships are awarded at assistant, associate or full professor level. Now a total of 27 fellows have been appointed in the fellowship. In the most recent and fourth round, 295 candidates applied for the 10 positions spread over the eight faculties.

Awareness in selection processes

To enhance a fair selection procedure, the selection committees for professors and the committees around the Delft Technology Fellowship have been trained to recruit and select scientific talent in an inclusive way.

The training focussed on two levels. The first level is cognitive awareness on the subject and prompted the committee to look at one's own strengths and weaknesses. The second level focussed on awareness of behavioural patterns and possible moments of interventions. The committees are thus trained to recognise their own biases and thereafter act to overcome this bias.

LGBTQ

On 11 October each year, activities to celebrate Coming Out day are organised all over the world. On that day last year, the rainbow flag waved proudly on the campus of the TU Delft. Several activities were organised that day. One of those activities was a march of students and staff over the campus to show acceptance for the LGBTQ community. The march ended festively with a concert in the middle of the campus.

LGBTQ communities

For the LGBT employees of the TU Delft there is the network True U. The network contributes to a working culture in which every employee can be themselves. The network gives the LGBTQ community a face and gives LGBTQs the possibility to get to know each other and exchange experiences. True U is also a sounding board and advises the executive board and the Human Resources department. Students can go to Outside, a group which is there for everyone in and around Delft under the age of 28 who identifies as LGBT. Group members organise activities such as drinks every Thursday and parties. As an independent stakeholder group, Outside gives solicited and unsolicited advice to the TU Delft. In 2016 the university also became a member of Workplace Pride, an international platform for LGBT inclusion in the workplace. Workplace Pride raises awareness and has set up a declaration for organisations to sign saying in short: "We believe in workplaces where LGBTI people can be themselves and are striving to make this happen in our organisation." The platform works together with researchers on detailed research on the topic, organises trainings and facilitates networking.

(Dis)ability

Students

The TU Delft strives to give equal opportunities in following and finishing academic education to students with a disability (physical handicap, chronic disease, psychological complications or dyslexia) but with equal competencies and the same level of knowledge as students without a disability.

To create equal opportunities the TU Delft asks new students for their experiences and needs in their former education as part of the enrolling process for their studies. The student can request a meeting to discuss the needs for their disability. The TU Delft translates these adjustments into the circumstances of the TU Delft.

Staff

The *Participatiewet* (translated as participation law) sets quotas to attract people who can work in the labour market but would not make it without support. Even without this law, the TU Delft feels obligated to society, to find suitable jobs within the organisation for people without easy access to the labour market. The TU Delft works for a sustainable approach in implementing this law in the organisation. We are currently setting up a clear and transparent long-term plan to make it easy to hire staff members with a disability. The plan describes

the process whereby jobs can be made suitable and hiring matches made, job support arranged and funds requested. Also, awareness about the hiring process and the opportunities will be communicated within the organisation. Hereby we hope to attract and retain more staff members with a disability.

Internationals, cultural differences and religion

Students

When a new international student comes to TU Delft, they start with a special introduction program. This mandatory programme consists of an online preparation before arrival and an intensive introduction on the TU Delft campus. This one-week introduction programme aims to get the students ready for their studies in four different ways: academic, acculturation, social and practical. The programme is organised by Education and Student Affairs. Dutch and international coaches, who are current students at TU Delft, will guide the new students through the programme.

Another possibility for international students to get in touch with other students is the platform Delft Tulip, an online community for students.

Staff

The TU Delft pays a lot of attention to welcome our new international staff.

For new staff the Coming to Delft Service & Partner Career Advice office supports new staff in visa and housing matters, advice about school/childcare centres and partner career advice. Partner career advice is offered through a website with information about the Dutch labour market and also through a partner career workshop for which the partners are invited. Other workshops that are given at the TU Delft are, for example, a workshop in Dutch culture or an information session about Dutch tax.

Other useful information, for example about the Dutch tax system, transport information, pension or social networks for partners, can be found on the website. All help making settling in the Netherlands easier and eventually making this country a home.

CONCLUSION

With the recent start of the diversity and inclusion team the TU Delft aims to build further on a diverse and inclusive academic environment in which everyone is able to use their full potential. We have already come a long way and can be satisfied with what is already there, though there is still a long road ahead of us.

eLearning to Promote Quality Education for All at the Universitat Oberta de Catalunya³⁰

By Gemma Xarles, Director, Globalisation and Cooperation, and Nadja Gmelch, Head of Projects, Globalisation and Cooperation, and Pastora Martínez Samper, Vice-President for Globalisation and Cooperation, Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC), Spain

Type of institution: university delivering online education

Number of students: 54,059 (academic year 2015-2016)

Number of staff: 945 (faculty and administrative staff; academic year 2015-2016)

SUMMARY

The Universitat Oberta de Catalunya (UOC) is an innovative university, based in Catalonia and open to the world, which was created in 1995. The mission of the UOC is to train people throughout their lives, contributing to their progress and to the progress of society, while carrying out research related to the knowledge society.

In 2015 the United Nations adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development³¹, an action plan that seeks to address major global challenges and contribute to building a sustainable future. Among the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SDG 4 seeks to guarantee inclusive, equitable and quality education for all, including university education. At UOC, we are convinced that one of the most effective and efficient ways to contribute to SDG 4 is through quality e-learning. There are several targets linked to SDG 4. For the purposes of this paper we will focus on the one that refers to the commitment to guarantee equitable access to a quality higher education without any discrimination and that mentions the commitment to put in place mechanisms for positive discrimination to certain collectives through scholarship systems:

Target 4.5: By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples and children in vulnerable situations

Target 4.7.: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and culture's contribution to sustainable development.

Target 4.B: By 2020, substantially expand globally the number of scholarships available to developing countries [...] for enrolment in higher education, including vocational training and information and communications technology, technical, engineering and scientific programmes, in developed countries and other developing countries."³²

³⁰ This article has been first presented in a slightly adapted version in Spanish in the framework of the international conference "Universidad 2018 - 11no Congreso Internacional de Educación Superior" which took place in La Habana, Cuba, from 12 to 16 February 2018.

³¹ United Nations, 2015. A/RES/70/1 'Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development'

³² United Nations, 2015, 'SDG 4 Targets and Indicators'. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdg4>

Online education offers a great opportunity to attain these high ambitions. The UOC's own experience is proof of this. The profile of the students of the UOC in Catalonia is that of professionals who require elements of flexibility – for different reasons – that traditional universities have difficulties to provide. Likewise, the role of the UOC to meet the demand of people with functional diversity is significant. In addition, specific projects for refugees or asylum seekers, or for professionals working in remote areas around the world, are very difficult proposals to fulfil if it is not through the intensive use of technologies to accompany the learning processes.

The experience of the UOC can be replicated in other contexts to expand access and coverage of quality higher education. The UOC has been accompanying educational institutions and governments in the implementation of their online education proposals. Its educational model is based on the personalisation and the accompaniment of the student through e-learning.

The UOC was created in Catalonia to complement the Catalan university system, composed in the 1990s exclusively of primarily face-to-face universities. During these years, the UOC has given the possibility of accessing a quality higher education to people who for various reasons had been excluded from the university system until then. More than 58 500 people have benefited during these years from the training of the UOC, people in age groups that are far from the age composition of the students of other universities in the system (see figure 1).

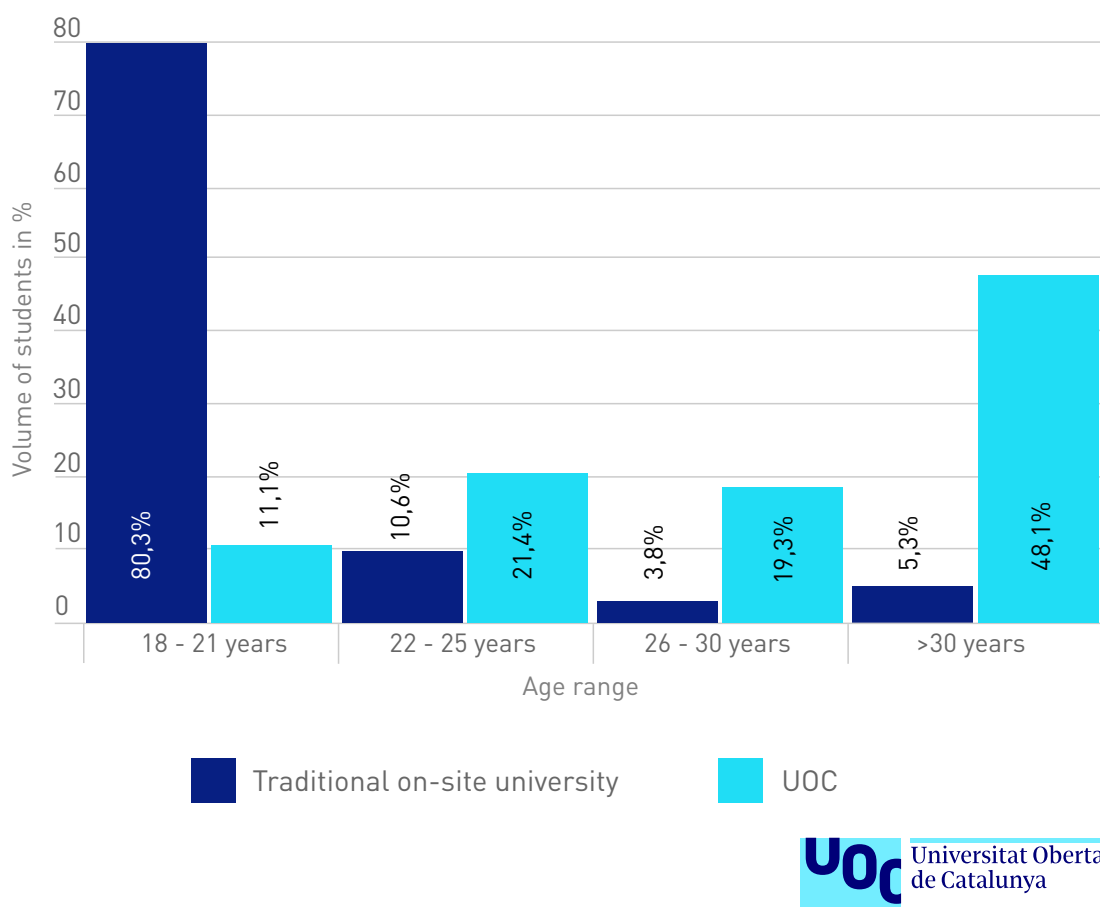


Figure 3: Newly enrolled students in the Catalan higher education system (by age)

Source: own elaboration, academic year 2016-2017 including official Bachelor's and Master's degrees

This commitment to being an inclusive university explains why in the 2015-2016 academic year, out of the 54 059 UOC students, 60% were 30 or more years old and 80% combined their studies with work. This differential fact has led the UOC to be recognized by different institutions, as for example, through the National Alares Award which the UOC received in 2009, recognising its work in favour of the reconciliation of work and family life as well as in favour of the development of services for personal autonomy and care for dependants.³³

ONLINE HIGHER EDUCATION TRAINING AND PEOPLE WITH FUNCTIONAL DIVERSITY

The UOC is committed from its origins to the social inclusion of people with functional diversity. To advance its commitment, the UOC launched an accessibility program that, in addition to the economic facilities, has led it to make significant adaptations in the virtual platform. Through the Committee for Curricular Adaptation, individual adaptations are made to the curriculum. They offer, likewise, special accompaniment in reference to work orientation and internships. If required, study support material is available.

The results of these policies are obvious. Students with functional diversity at the UOC have been growing in recent years to represent about 2.5% of all students at the university. It is important to mention at this point that during the 2015-2016 academic year only 8% of the UOC's students with functional diversity requested some type of adaptation of the contents of the subjects by the university (see figure 2).

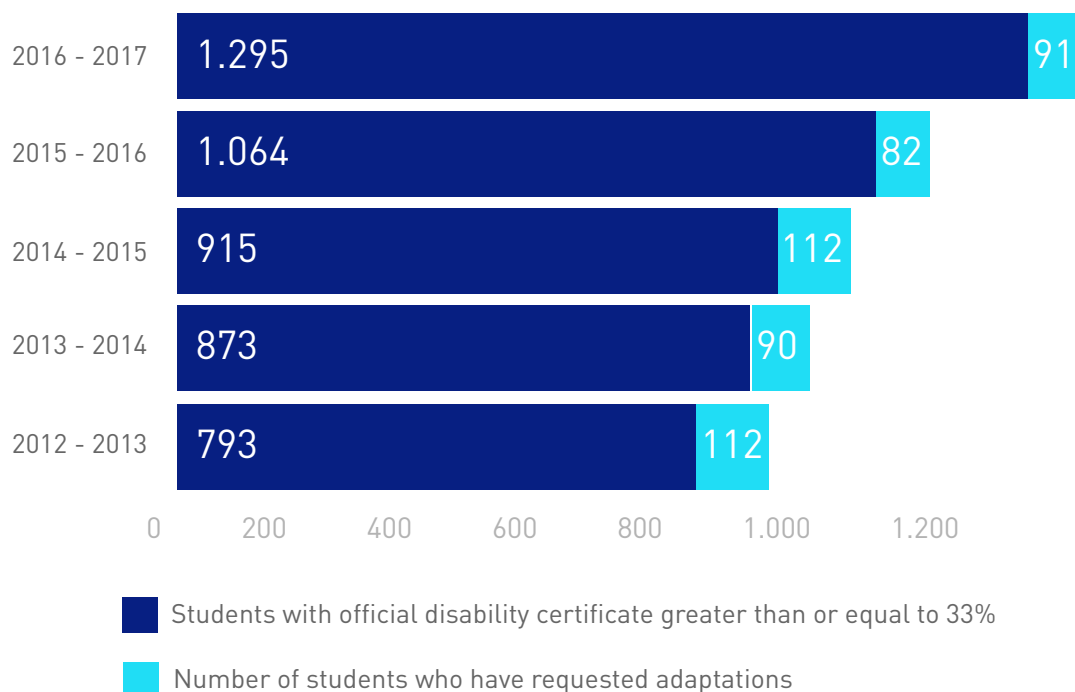


Figure 4: UOC students with functional diversity

Source: own elaboration

33 Fundación Alares, 2009, 'Galardonados Premios Nacionales Alares 2009'. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from http://www.fundacionalares.es/index.php/fundacion_ alares/premios_nacionales_ alares_r/premios_nacionales_ alares_r_2009_1/galardonados_premios_nacionales_ alares_2009

In Catalonia the number of students with disabilities amounted to 2 854 in 2017. The UOC is the first Catalan university in number of students with functional diversity: around 40% of them study at the UOC, the remaining 60% (1 064 students) are distributed among the other 11 universities of the Catalan university system (see table 1). According to the census of students with disabilities enrolled in 2017 in Spanish universities, 20 793 people with functional diversity represented 1.4% of the total of university students.³⁴ The UOC is the third Spanish university in number of students with functional diversity, behind the National Distance Education University (UNED) (6 793 students) and almost equal with the University of Valencia (1 076 students).

	2015	2016	2017
Universidad Abat Oliva CEU	4	10	10
Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona (UAB)	140	320	311
Universidad de Barcelona (UB)	654	722	730
Universidad de Girona	140	135	104
Universidad de Lleida	52	57	62
Universidad de Vic	10	12	17
Universidad Internacional de Catalunya (UIC)	13	13	10
Universidad Oberta de Catalunya (UOC)	793	873	793
Universidad Politécnica de Catalunya (UPC)	150	162	174
Universidad Pompeu Fabra (UPF)	85	85	108
FPCEE Blanquerna, Universidad Ramon Llull	33	33	29
Universidad Rovira i Virgili	105	105	155
	2.179	2.527	2.503

Table 1: Census of students with disabilities enrolled in the universities of Catalonia

Source: Fundación Universia, 2017, Anexo Territorial p. 2

This work of the UOC of inclusion of people with disabilities has been recognized by various institutions. Highlighted here is the recognition that the National Organization of the Blind in Spain (ONCE) granted to the UOC in 2017 through the Ilunion Prize for its commitment to accessibility,³⁵ as well as that of the Spanish Federation of Rare Diseases (ERDF) with the Prize for Inclusion for Rare Diseases in 2016.³⁶

ONLINE HIGHER EDUCATION AND REFUGEES OR ASYLUM SEEKERS

The UOC wants to be an attentive university to its surroundings. Faced with the arrival of thousands of Syrian refugees to Europe fleeing the war that began in their country in 2011, thousands of young Syrians have been forced to cut short their university studies, and with it their dreams and life projects. In Spain, it was expected that 16 000 refugees would arrive in 2015, but by the end of 2017 only 1 200 arrived. From the UOC we decided to launch a project

³⁴ Fundación Universia, 2017, 'Guía de Atención a la Discapacidad en la Universidad 2017'. Anexo Territorial. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from http://www.fundacionuniversia.net/wp-content/uploads/2017/05/Guia_Atencion_Discapacidad_2017_ACCESIBLE.pdf

³⁵ Ilunion, 2017, 'ILUNION entrega a cerca de 40 instituciones y empresas un diploma que reconoce su compromiso con la accesibilidad'. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from <http://www.ilunion.com/es/comunicacion/actualidad/04102017/ilunion-entrega-cerca-de-40-instituciones-y-empresas-un-diploma-que>

³⁶ FEDER, 2016, 'Su Majestad la Reina preside el acto oficial del Día Mundial de las ER'. Retrieved on 23 April from <https://enfermedades-raras.org/index.php/slider-home/5581-su-majestad-la-reina-preside-el-acto-oficial-del-d%C3%ADa-mundial-de-las-er?jjj=1500768065002>

that will benefit refugees or asylum seekers not only in Spain but also in other countries, who can access our courses thanks to eLearning. Furthermore, the UOC decided to extend its work to other groups in the same circumstances, who have already been in Spanish territory for some years and have difficulty accessing the standard higher education system. In 2017 the UOC offered these groups 61 scholarships to study languages and specialisations. The beneficiaries are from different countries of origin, especially from Syria and Western Sahara, but also from different countries of sub-Saharan Africa and Latin America (see figure 3). Grantees are living in refugee camps (Greece and Sahara) or are already residing in Europe, mainly in Spain but also in Germany, the Netherlands and Norway (see figure 3).

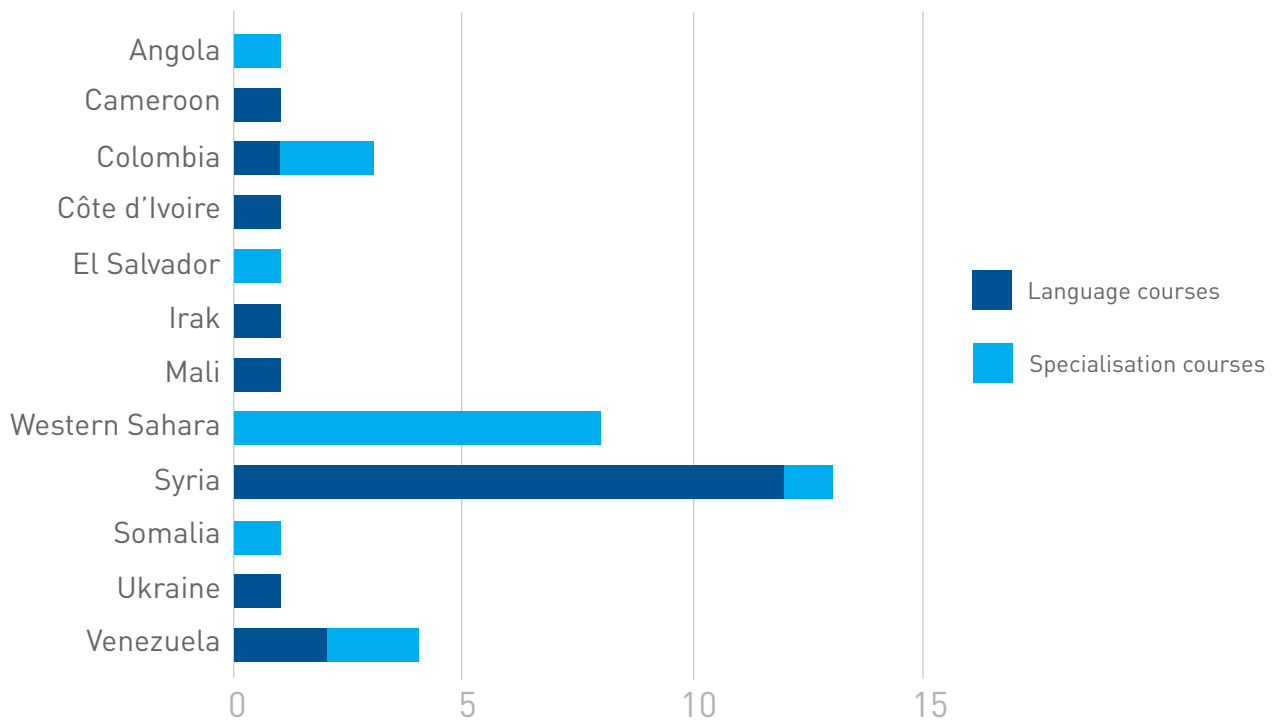


Figure 5: Country of origin: UOC scholarship program for refugees
Source: own elaboration

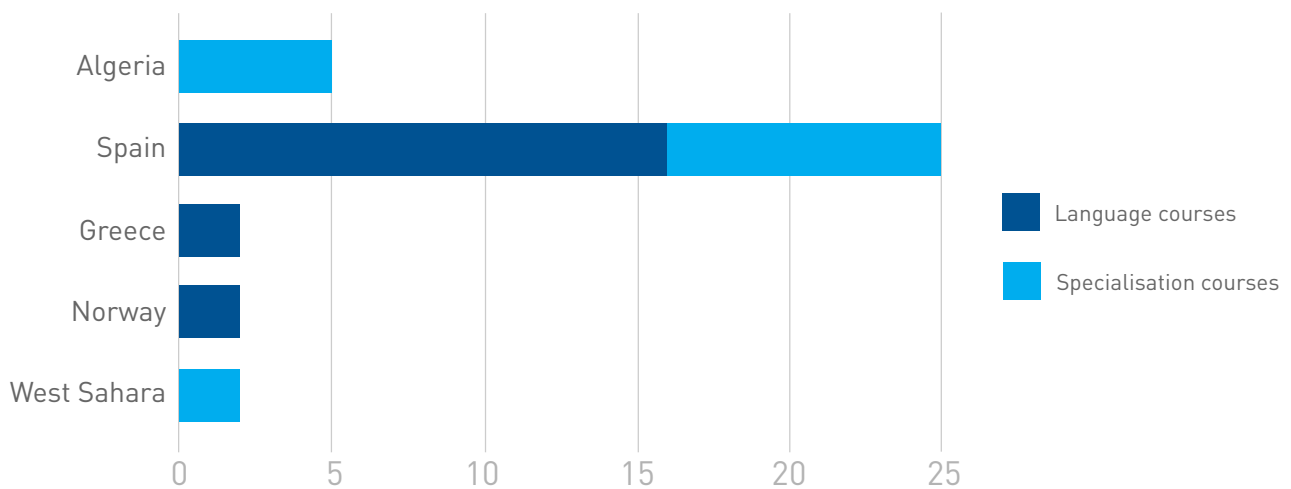


Figure 6: Country of residence: UOC scholarship program for refugees
Source: own elaboration

Some of these people had not been able to access university due to the beginning of conflict in their respective countries when they were very young, and due to the escape process, which made them stop their studies for a few years. Thanks to this programme offered by the UOC, they have been able to undertake new studies, regardless of where they currently reside or where they are going to move to in the coming months.

It is important to mention that, despite the multiple advantages of online learning, there are still challenges to be overcome, such as access difficulties due to reduced connectivity in refugee camps and, above all, the psychological barriers derived from trauma, loneliness, adaptation to change and low self-esteem of this population group. Aware of these, the UOC has set in motion a reception programme for refugee students that consists of a mentoring service carried out by UOC student volunteers who accompany them virtually during the course (in addition to the teachers and tutors) in order to facilitate the adaptation process and increase the success rate of this group at their newly initiated or reinitiated studies. The aim of the UOC is to extend this initiative in number and scope over the coming years by seeking international alliances.

ONLINE HIGHER EDUCATION AND GLOBAL PROFESSIONALS

Online learning not only allows access and coverage of higher education to be extended to people who are excluded from the standard education system. It has multiple other advantages that favour the training of citizens and global professionals in a way that would be very difficult to achieve on a personal level.

During these 20 years of the university's history, global institutions such as the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR), the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) have approached the UOC in order to design and implement training programmes for its officials, as well as for specific teams of their institutions in different countries of the world. These programmes respond to the need, among others, for training physically separated professionals who require specific technical knowledge while sharing professional experiences among peers. This is how the Master's in Conflictology (UNITAR-UOC) was created in 2013 for the training of blue helmets of United Nations teams assigned to conflict zones. More than 130 students located in 69 different countries have already obtained that Master's degree. With the same objective, two other training programmes were created in collaboration with UN departments: the Master's programme in Food Security and International Food Governance, which annually forms teams from FAO and helps them to redefine intervention policies in food safety, as well as the course in Specialization Management of Skin Neglected Tropical Diseases that trains health agents in countries of the tropics and north of the Maghreb, in the implementation of WHO protocols for the attention of people who suffer these diseases.

With the aim of extending these opportunities and peer-learning practices to more UOC programmes, the university began in late 2016 a project aimed at achieving massive virtual mobility with other international universities. These virtual mobilities allow many students from other universities to study one or more subjects in the virtual classrooms of the UOC, thus providing them with an international experience without having to travel, in addition to contact with other students located in other parts of the world. The first experience was

carried out with 706 undergraduate students from the UNIMINUTO Colombian university in the second semester of the 2015-2016 academic year. During the 2016-2017 academic year this same initiative has been extended to other higher education organisations in Peru (Universidad Peruana Cayetano Heredia), Colombia (Universidad Cooperativa de Colombia) and Chile (Duoc UC).

EXTEND THE EXPERIENCE OF THE UOC

Convinced that the UOC's experience, with its lessons learned, can be replicated in other contexts to expand access and coverage of quality higher education and thus contribute to the achievement of SDG 4, the university has been accompanying, on the one hand, national quality agencies and governments in the implementation of mechanisms for the recognition of online degrees and, on the other hand, educational institutions in the complex process of incorporating virtual methodologies into their academic offerings.

For example, the UOC has led the European TEMPUS project "Enhancing Quality of Technology-Enhanced Learning" that called to promote the reform and modernisation of higher education in Jordan through the introduction of a national system of quality assurance for the improved learning in technology.³⁷ UOC also worked with the Council for the Evaluation, Accreditation and Quality Assurance of Higher Education (CEAACES) of Ecuador (2016-2017), the National Accreditation Commission (CNA) of Chile (2017) and the Council for the Accreditation of Higher Education of Mexico (COPAES) (2017-2018).

CONCLUSIONS

Quality online education is an effective and efficient way to contribute to SDG 4. The experiences presented in this article, resulting from the work of more than 20 years of the UOC both as an online higher education institution on its own as well as in collaboration with different types of institutions in other countries and globally, are proof of this. The aim of the UOC is to contribute its experience and knowledge to the improvement of the quality of higher education around the globe. Many of these experiences could well be taken up by all kinds of universities that want to use technology to enhance inclusiveness through blended or distance learning.

³⁷ eQTeL, 2013, TEMPUS project number 544491-TEMPUS-1-2013-1-ES-TEMPUS-SMGR (grant agreement for 2013-4568). <http://eqtel.psut.edu.jo/Home.aspx>

Gender Equality and Integration of Refugees: Two Initiatives of the University of Strasbourg for Inclusiveness and Diversity

By Isabelle Kraus, Deputy Vice-President for Equality and Mathieu Schneider, Vice-President for Culture and Science & Society, University of Strasbourg, France

Type of institution: university

Number of students: 50,000

Number of staff: 5,600

Located in the heart of Europe, the University of Strasbourg (Unistra) is heir to a great tradition born of the humanism of the 1500s, when Jean Sturm created an institution where one could study theology, philosophy, medicine and law. Through the centuries it has become a comprehensive university. With nearly 50 000 students spread over 35 faculties and institutes, it is one of the largest universities in France and was the first in France which decided to take a further step by uniting the potential for higher education and research of the three former universities in Strasbourg within a single university. European by nature and international by design, the University of Strasbourg emerges among Europe's foremost research universities and is a founding member of the League of the European Research Universities (LERU). Nevertheless, it is aware of the social challenges it will have to cope with in the next decades, especially due to the increasing number of students, their social and cultural diversity and an increasing need for a better gender balance in several areas of Unistra's activities. Diversity, gender equality and inclusiveness belong to the most challenging issues for Unistra in the next years. Actions have been initiated in these fields during the past years, and in some domains, Unistra is now considered in France as one of the most advanced universities on these questions. This paper focuses on two initiatives: the structuration of a general policy for gender equality and diversity, and the integration of migrants, both students and scientists, in the university.

GENDER EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

The University of Strasbourg has dealt with the issue of diversity and gender equality at an institutional level since 2009, when a gender and diversity officer was appointed. However, these issues were addressed previously by informal reflection groups of technical, administrative and academic staff within the three previous universities in Strasbourg since 2002. The gender and diversity officer was in charge of staff policies only. From 2017 on, the policy includes students as well, and a deputy vice-presidency for equality was established.

At the national context level, French universities started to have formal commitment to gender equality after the signature of an inter-ministerial convention for equality between girls and boys, women and men in the public education system in 2000. At that time, grants from the European Social Funds (ESF) had enabled seven universities to appoint gender officers and to conduct sex-disaggregated statistical studies. In 2008, the rectors' assembly established a charter for equality in higher education and research, and 17 universities,

including Unistra, created an internal task force dedicated to gender equality. This process led to article 46 of the Fioraso Law for Higher Education and Research³⁸ in 2013, which makes mandatory the creation of a task force for gender equality within all 67 French universities. Most of these task forces are conducted by a single person, the gender-equality officer. There is no diversity or gender office with dedicated staff, as we know in other European universities.³⁹

Unistra approaches the issue of equality and diversity as a transversal dimension of the institution. The university-employer, on the one hand, must ensure a fair treatment between women and men, allow career development beyond the stereotypes of our society, and fight against all forms of discrimination suffered or produced by its staff. The university-trainer, on the other hand, must play a role in sensitising students and staff to stereotypes, the prejudices it generates and the inequalities that ensue, and provide ways for actions. The university-knowledge producer, lastly, must conceive how to shed light on the sociological, anthropological and philosophical questions posed by the observation of these inequalities, but also must include sex and/or gender as a parameter of research in other disciplines (health, economy, law, etc.).

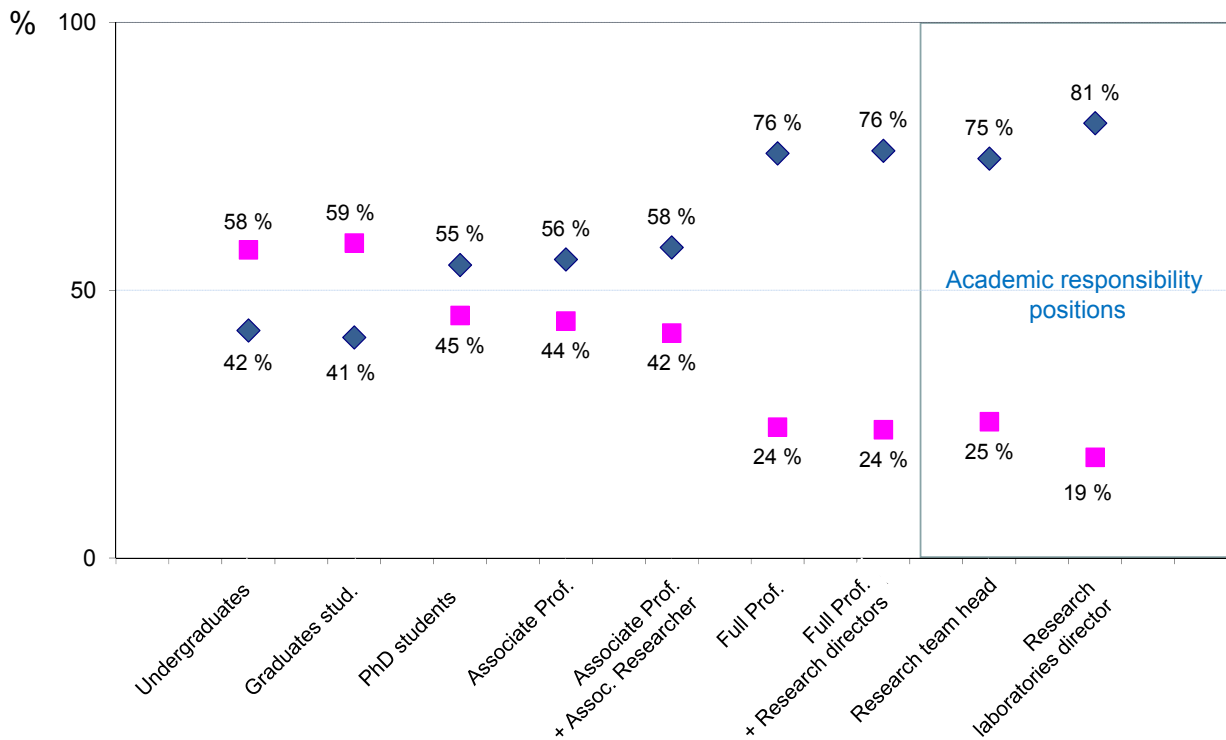
In this context, Unistra's strategy has been to initiate a structural change in order to encourage transversal involvement of all administrative departments (human resources, research, students' affairs, legal affairs ...), teaching departments and laboratories, and to invite them to become part of the gender equality policy. Actions have been carried out towards parental leaves, sex-disaggregated statistical indicators, parity in recruitment committees, women's careers, and non-discriminatory forms in the French language, homophobia, sexual harassment, sexism and sexual violence. Training for students and staff has also been a focusing point addressing: discrimination processes, female/male equality in professional and social life, resistances opposing it and tools to fight against gender inequalities. Four examples of actions are described below, specifying particular challenges, the way they were addressed and the concrete measures that have been taken.

Unistra's first action was to map the female-male repartitioning of all staff members as well as of students considering disciplines, graduates, professional positions, responsibility and collective duties. We had two goals: 1) raising the university community awareness (which was very weak in 2010) by advertising the mapping in the institution newspaper *SavoirS*; 2) finding at which precise level actions should be taken in order to face and to foil discriminations' sources, using a fine-enough mapping grain. Unsurprisingly, the glass ceiling was found at all levels of the institution, even for administrative staff (Fig.1, 2 and 3). Particular attention was directed to the need for women to obtain a *habilitation à diriger des recherches* (accreditation to conduct research projects), a step which is required to become full professor in France. The mapping action is repeated every year as part of the published university social report. The Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation has made mandatory the presence of sex-disaggregated statistical indicators in the social report⁴⁰ and publishes the global national results yearly.

38 Law 2013-660 of 22 July 2013, relative to higher education and research. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000027735009>

39 Except for Université Paris Diderot and Université de la Réunion.

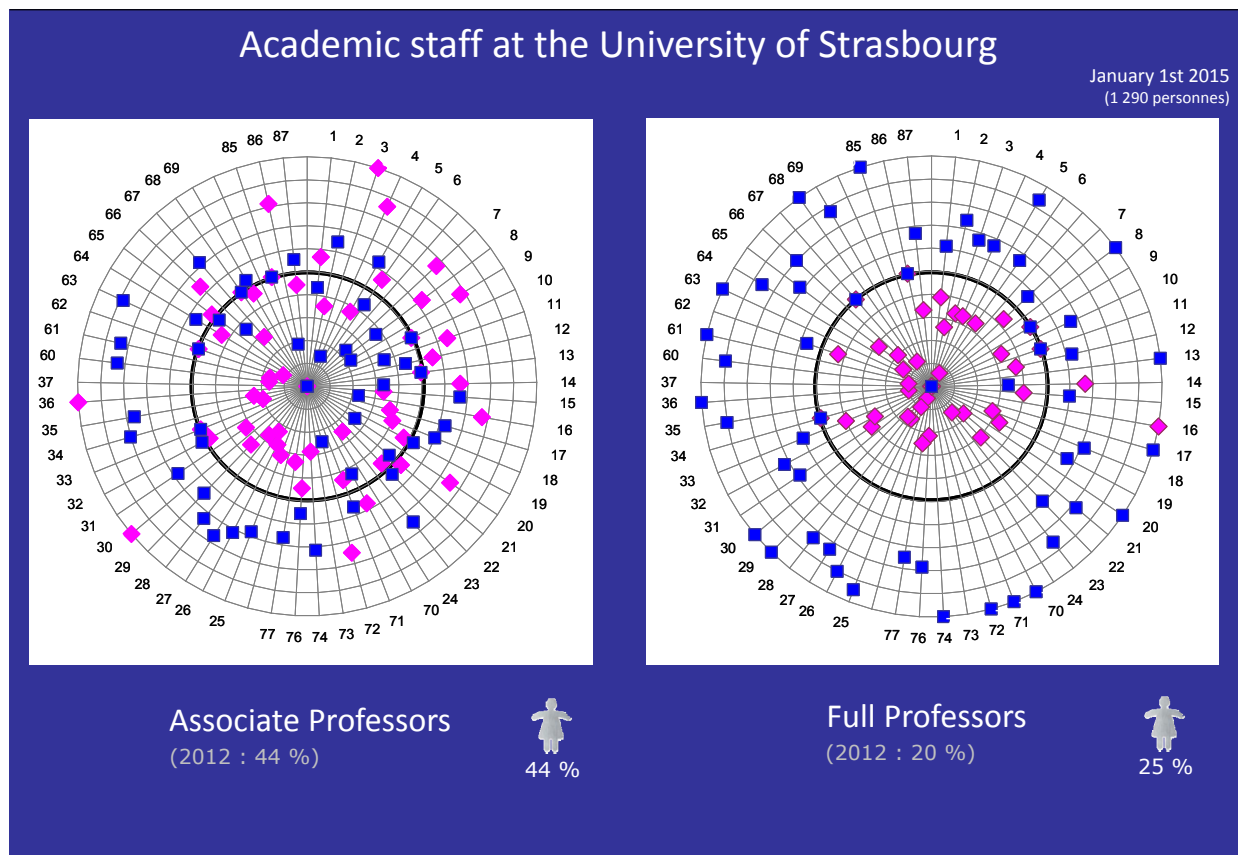
40 *Instruction of 22 December 2017, fixing the list of indicators which must be in the social report.* Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from <https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000036269335&fastPos=185&fastReqId=676464720&categorieLien=id&oldAction=rechTexte>



Sources: Humain Ressources Dept. – Research Dept. – Equality-Diversity Mission

Université de Strasbourg

Figure 7: Repartitioning of women and men at the University of Strasbourg for different stages of the student and academic career path, all disciplines averaged



Source: Human Resources Dept. – Formatting: Equality-Diversity Mission

Université de Strasbourg

Figure 8: Repartitioning of female and male academic staff at the University of Strasbourg
Each radial axis corresponds to a discipline (1-77: AHSS, 25-69: STEM, 85-87: Health. For more information see <http://www.cpcnu.fr/listes-des-sections-cnu>). The concentric circles indicate the percentage value: 0% at the center, 100% at the outer edge. The bold circle emphasises the 50% mark.

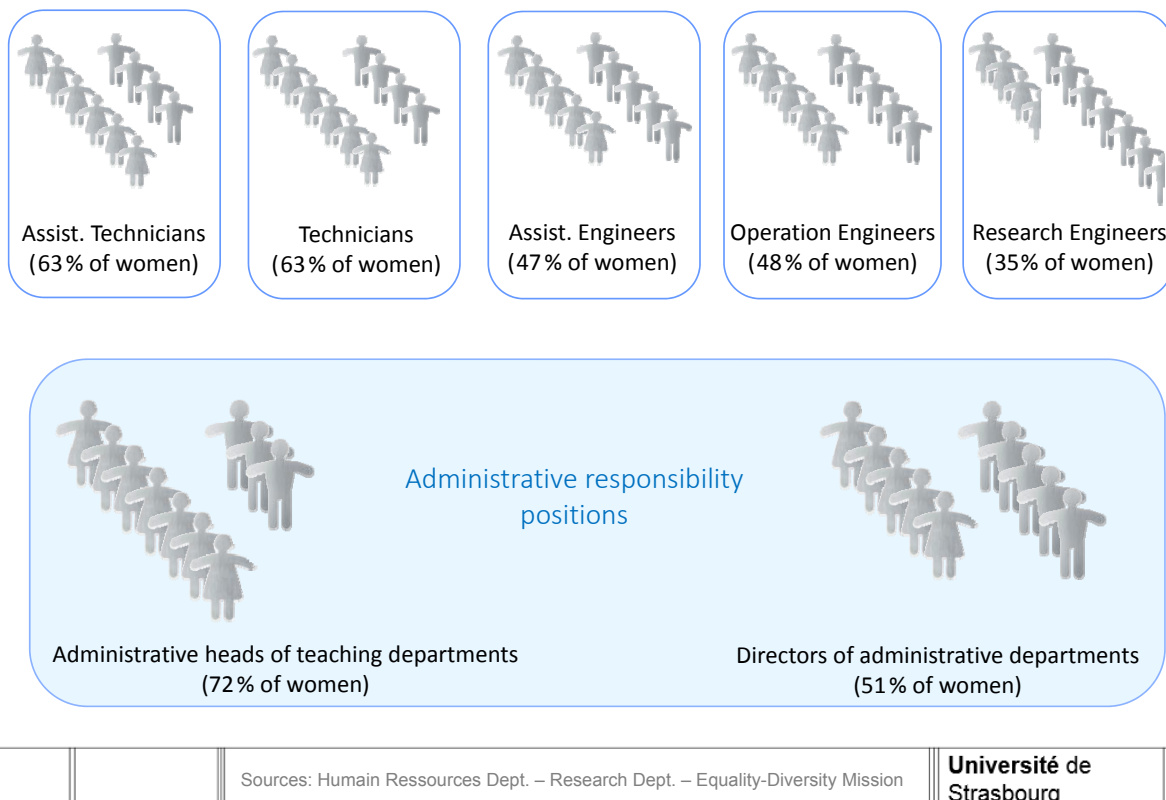


Figure 9: Repartitioning of female and male technical and administrative staff at the University of Strasbourg
 Assistant engineers, operation engineers (*ingénieurs d'études*) and research engineers are part of the professional A-category, technicians are the B-category and assistant technicians are C-category.

Unistra also paid great attention to the female/male composition of recruitment committees. In 2009, a detailed study of each of the 82 committees held at the university that year showed that more than half of them were composed of between 90% and 100% of men, while local and national sex repartitioning known in the discipline could not satisfactorily account for that. This is problematic as a recruitment committee meeting is a political place where decisions are made about who will be hired for the next 20 or 40 years. Academic women should therefore be part of recruitment processes. An important awareness-raising work started, and with the support of the Board of Trustees (BT), the trend changed, removing the 100% male committees as well as those at 90%, avoiding the "alibi woman". The BT's action validated the composition of each committee before it convened. This unequal female/male repartitioning of the committees soon became a national issue, and in 2015 the application of the Fioraso Law became effective in universities, making mandatory the presence of representatives of at least 40% of one sex in recruitment committees (except for a few disciplines) for a full professor recruitment.⁴¹

Awareness-raising actions are also done at Unistra, one of which is the gender and discriminations teaching proposed in four STEM departments. More than half of the current youth generation in France registers at the university, putting them in an interesting position to sensitise a generation. A chosen teaching model involves groups of 30 students supervised by female-male binomial teachers coming from various disciplinary fields (physical sciences,

41 Instruction of 24 November 2017, fixing the list of derogatory disciplines to the 40% same sex rule for full professor recruitment committees. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do;jsessionid=2F4A9A4C7B4D48F34415A2984F76B865.tplgfr29s_1?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000036086658&dateTexte=20171126

economy, natural science). The teachers are part of the department and were sensitised to the issues of equality and diversity through internal training. A sociologist specialised in discrimination and gender issues accompanies them during their preparatory meetings and debriefing sessions. The obligatory sensitisation sessions for students allow them to express their ideas and listen to those of fellow-students, letting them face the diversity of opinions, and the resistances in their own generation. Its display in the compulsory curriculum is a concrete testimony to students that sexual harassment, gender inequality and any discrimination are not accepted in the institution. This action will soon be extended to undergraduate students. Unistra also has lifelong staff trainings on gender, discrimination and sexual harassment, making each staff member at the university a sentinel to defend our humanistic values.

Let us mention that Unistra is currently setting an action plan on sexual harassment at university to accompany victims and help university departments to prevent and deal with this issue when it unfortunately happens. The action is requested by the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation for all universities and should take place during fall 2018.⁴²

Finally, let's not forget the benefit provided by national networks that help universities dealing with diversity and gender issues. Unistra was the initiator and co-founder of the French Standing Conference of Gender Officers for Equality and Diversity in Higher Education and Research (CPED), chairing it from its creation in 2011 to 2016. The CPED, where practices, ideas and information can be exchanged, is a great place to help universities dealing with diversity and gender issues. It is also an interlocutor of the Ministry of Higher Education, Research and Innovation for the development of new laws and measures on equality and diversity, and for preparing the roadmap for real equality between women and men published by the ministry yearly.

INCLUSIVENESS: HOW MIGRANTS GET INTEGRATED INTO THE FRENCH UNIVERSITY SYSTEM

Migrants are present in French universities since quite a long time. The University of Strasbourg has the particularity to have been itself a migrant institution, when in 1939 it moved to Clermont-Ferrand to escape from the annexation of Alsace by the National-Socialists. Since the end of World War II, waves of migration swept through France, especially in the post-colonial context of the 1960s. Each year, French universities thus welcome children or grandchildren from those migrants and have to deal with a rich diversity of cultural habits and backgrounds, even (or especially) within the community of French natives. In Strasbourg, this diversity is even larger, due to its geographical situation at the border and its economic attractiveness. Unistra has thus the third highest rate of international students (ca. 20%) in France. These students in general contribute to the cultural and social diversity of the university.

⁴² Frédérique Vidal, 2017, 'Égalité et lutte contre la discrimination', intervention de la Ministre de l'Enseignement Supérieure, de la Recherche et de l'Innovation au *Colloque sur les violences sexistes et sexuelles dans l'E.S.R. à l'Université de Paris Diderot*, Paris, France, 4 décembre 2017. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from <http://www.enseignementsup-recherche.gouv.fr/cid124837/colloque-sur-les-violences-sexistes-et-sexuelles-dans-l-e.s.r.-intervention-de-frederique-vidal.html>

Their integration is generally mostly passive: they are taught in French, for those who do not speak the language, and we expect their academic curriculum to be the main way for them to get socially integrated, via student associations and campus life. Migration became a political issue in Europe in 2015 because waves of refugees fled from Syria and Iraq to Europe. Germany and Austria had to cope with hundred thousands of refugees arriving at once. Immediately, migrants became visible in the political discourses and, very soon, in reality. One spoke not only of migrants, but rather of “refugees”,⁴³ for these people came urgently (unlike economic migrants who are generally more prepared).

French universities generally felt concerned and began to be aware of the need to enrol refugees who had previously been following an academic curriculum in French degrees, in order to facilitate their social and professional integration. So did Unistra. Within a month, a plan for refugees was set up. Unistra spent € 80 000 and enrolled 100 refugee students in the academic year 2015-2016. These students were taught in France, they got social assistance and accommodation (a strong partnership with the CROUS⁴⁴ and the city of Strasbourg was really helpful), and events with other students were organised by the student unions and associations. Out of these € 80 000, Unistra got financial support from the AUF (University agency for Francophonie) for € 15 000, from the City of Strasbourg for € 5 000 and from private donators (€ 17 000 from over 200 donors) (see Fig. 4). The budget and the refugees plan was renewed in 2016-17 and 2017-18. In June 2017, the first refugees students got their diploma in French (they need two years to get a proper level in this language [B2]) and they now can continue their original curriculum in France.

More than 40 universities in France followed the example of Strasbourg and very few other pioneering universities. They all are now members of a newly created network called MEnS (Migrants dans l’enseignement supérieur / Migrants in Higher Education), which Unistra is currently coordinating. The aim of MEnS is to share good practices and to improve the conditions in which refugees are welcomed in French universities. First, MEnS asks for a better financial support of the public authorities, since the French courses given in universities for refugees cost € 2.4 billion, for which public authorities only give € 380 000 (in 2016 and 2017). By comparison, in 2017, Germany granted € 100 billion for refugees, both students and scientists, in German universities. In France, estimations show that there are approximately 1 700-2 000 refugees in higher education institutions, whereas in Germany 6 806 refugees were part of the Integra-program of the DAAD in 2016.⁴⁵ The second main demand of MEnS concerns the social assistance of refugees who cannot have access to the regular student grants because they are registered in special diplomas that are incompatible with the allowance of a normal grant, or because general social benefits are not accessible for students. For this latter problem, Unistra found a solution in 2017 by asking the Conseil départemental (council of the département) for a dispensatory measure, which allows students with the status of refugees to remain students and to receive the RSA.⁴⁶ More than 30 students benefitted from this dispensation.

43 The word “refugees” does not correspond here to the administrative status of these people, but has a general meaning that includes both refugees in the administrative sense and asylum seekers.

44 Centre régional des œuvres universitaires et sociales (CROUS) are French institutions providing all services related to student’s life (accommodation, restaurants, culture...).

45 German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), 2017, *The Integration of refugees at German higher education institutions. Findings from higher education programmes for refugees*, (DAAD), p. 12.

46 Revenu de solidarité active (RSA) is the French form of a work welfare benefit granted to people who need social integration.

The most positive consequence of the plan adopted by Unistra was the engagement of all the university community: the administrative staff, whose mobilisation was unexpectedly high, the academic staff who was willing to help the refugees, and especially the students who are now involved as buddies to accompany the refugees in their curricula and in the campus and city life. The faculties took an important role as well: each of them has an officer for international students, who is also in charge of the accompaniment of refugees. Last but not least, since refugees in Unistra mostly come from Syria, and because their integration in the university is correlated to their general integration in the French society, we established (since the launching of the refugees plan in 2015) a constructive dialogue and cooperation with the Syrian community in Strasbourg, represented by the association Alsace-Syrie. We share information with them, and we also jointly organise conferences and talks about the situation in Syria and about migration in general.

In 2016, we welcomed our first scientist in the framework of a refugee program. He has been supported by the American Rescue Fund of the IIE for one year, and for the second year, we got funding for his position from the newly created French program PAUSE. As it was a success, we decided to create a specific fund for scientists at Unistra. In 2018, € 100 000 will help the financing of three to four positions for refugees, since rescue funds like PAUSE ask for a financial support of the universities. Unistra has thus a complete programme for refugees, students and scientists, and hopes in the future to improve its efficiency.

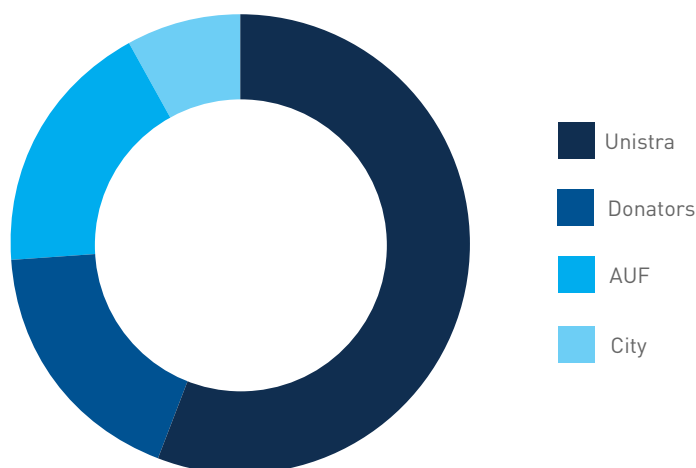


Figure 10: Budget of the plan for refugees in Unistra (2017)

CONCLUSION

Universities are nowadays more and more struggling for funding on a national and international level. Their competition is on the one hand a positive incitation to boost research, elevate the academic level of their diplomas and merge into (or create) big university clusters, which should be even more competitive. On the other hand, it might also overshadow the social and cultural diversity of these clusters and larger higher education institutions. Unistra became especially aware of these social and cultural issues since the three former universities merged in 2009. A balance has to be found between excellence and social inclusion. We call it “inclusive excellence” in Strasbourg. The two actions showcased here are part of this policy. Hopefully, they are only the first steps on a long way leading to socially responsible universities.

Targets Ensure Intentions Become Actions: Coventry University's Aspirations to Inclusiveness

Compiled by Caroline Wilson, Researcher at the Research Centre for Global Learning: Education and Attainment, Coventry University, United Kingdom

Type of institution: University

Number of students: 30,000

Number of staff: 6,500 plus 1000 visiting lecturers/researchers

Coventry University Group⁴⁷ has a diverse population of students, with 55% from black, Asian, and minority ethnic (BAME) communities. Approximately 30% of our students are international. Our global reach also includes work with HE providers in other countries, and nearly 20% of our students are studying outside the UK. Students can study toward a Coventry University degree in 32 countries around the world.⁴⁸ Our mission is to build an extensive, reputable and diverse global education network.

We recognise that in order to build a global university with a diverse student population and workforce we need to provide an inclusive working and learning environment where people of all backgrounds feel equally welcome and are able to achieve their full potential. As a result, our Corporate Strategy (2021) provides both a statement of intent and measurable targets around internationalisation and diversity, reflecting that our actions match our statements of intent.

One way of being able to evidence that we are a truly inclusive institution is by being able to also evidence equity of attainment. We are moving now to thinking about whether students from different backgrounds also have equal opportunity of attainment – whether the structures, traditions and cultures of an established higher education environment favour one group over another.

Initial research around the UK has suggested that even when students from disadvantaged backgrounds arrive at university with similar level qualifications as others in their cohort, they may not leave with a similar level of qualification. Initial research suggests that this disparity appears to be the case at Coventry also. Findings from this research have been fed to course teams to enable them to identify and monitor attainment gaps for all demographic groups as part of course quality enhancement and monitoring.

Coventry University's Equality Action Plan for 2016-2020 sets the target to see an increase in the percentage of BAME students achieving first- or upper second-class degrees.

This chapter will focus on how Coventry University is making aspirations to be inclusive into a reality.

⁴⁷ Coventry University Group is an umbrella term for Coventry University and all of the locations owned and governed by Coventry University.

⁴⁸ Coventry University, 2018, 'Study With Us Around The World'. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from <http://www.coventry.ac.uk/international-students-hub/partnerships-and-places-to-study/>

BACKGROUND

Coventry University is a comprehensive university in that it undertakes both world class research and supports the learning of undergraduate and post-graduate students studying at campuses across the world and also online. We have approximately 30,000 students and received a Gold rating in the UK's new Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF).⁴⁹ Six months after graduation, 97% of our students are employed or in further study.

We have five physical campuses in the UK. CU Coventry, our second campus for the City of Coventry, was established in 2012, and offers classes in six-week blocks, providing 'life shaped' learning for people who have decided that the traditional student experience is not for them. CU Coventry demonstrates our commitment to providing increased flexibility and scope for students who might not otherwise benefit from access to higher education. In 2015 we opened CU Scarborough in an area of North East England which has fewer than average graduates in its population, and CU London followed in 2017 in the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham, an area identified as low income and low skill. There is a fifth campus, Coventry University London, serving students who want a traditional university experience, but in London.

LEGAL DRIVERS AND INSTITUTIONAL AMBITIONS ALIGNED

The UK's legislative and policy agenda and our institutional ambition of being increasingly global providers of learning and teaching align as drivers of our agenda of diversity and inclusiveness. A corporate strategy with clear measurable goals, aligned to training and opportunities for all staff, ensures successful mainstreaming of diversity, creating a new diversity-friendly and inclusive culture.

On internationalisation, our corporate goals include all courses to feature substantial internationalisation of the curriculum, which means integrating international, intercultural, or global dimensions. At the same time the university has set aside funds and opportunities to develop the international capacity and capability of staff. More students travel and learn abroad as part of their course at Coventry University than at any other UK institution.⁵⁰

On diversity, we are working to a target of being ranked in the top 10% of all UK Higher Education Institutions for staff diversity (in relation to the categories included within the Equality Act 2010, including age, disability, race, gender and belief)⁵¹. We are also encouraging all staff (with a target of reaching 95%) to have experience of international engagement through teaching, research, enterprise or service delivery.⁵²

49 The TEF is a government assessment of the quality of undergraduate teaching in English universities and is judged on criteria including teaching quality, learning environment and student outcomes. See also <https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/teaching/what-is-the-tef/>

50 Coventry University, 2017, 'We're Ranked Number One For Giving Students The Opportunity to Learn Overseas'. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from <http://www.coventry.ac.uk/primary-news/brexit-ready-coventry-university-ranked-number-one-for-giving-students-the-opportunity-to-learn-overseas/>

51 The Equality Act 2010 codified previous race and disability discrimination law and protects individuals from discrimination on the grounds of age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, marriage and civil partnership, and pregnancy and maternity, with these groupings together to be known as 'protected characteristics'.

52 Coventry University, 'Creating Better Futures, 2021 Corporate Strategy'. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from http://creatingbetterfutures.coventry.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/08/Creating_Better_Futures.pdf

In addition to the legislative driver for equality in the UK, there are particular drivers of change for the UK higher education sector. For some years now the UK has had a Widening Participation agenda, focussed on getting more people from under-represented groups into higher education. These are students from families with lower than average wealth; people with disabilities; and people from certain under-represented ethnic minority groups.

An internationalised curriculum, and a policy (and targets) around equality of access for students regardless of background, create useful conditions for a truly inclusive university – one that offers equality of opportunity. To deliver on these corporate goals, the university has in place staff and activity to foster both diversity and inclusiveness.

STAFF INITIATIVES

The internationalisation agenda is embedded into staff development activity. Teaching staff both in the UK as well as at overseas partner institutions take an accredited post graduate teaching qualification. Other training for course teams includes the global classroom; assessment and the international student; global experiences for home and international students, and sessions on intercultural inclusive teaching. Coventry University's Equality and Diversity Team has two dedicated members of staff and has been championing equality for staff, students and visitors for more than a decade.

STUDENT INITIATIVES

Practical encouragement of diversity and inclusiveness is also delivered by our Centre for Global Engagement, which supports 12 000 students to travel to another country each year. It also supports students coming from abroad to study in one of our UK campuses and also to gain work experience as part of their development. Intercultural events and training, along with opportunities to learn new languages, are also part of its work.

The overseas mobility on offer covers a range of activities, to suit student needs and to build confidence in overseas travel. These range from short five-day field trips to semester or even year-long placements.

The Linguae Mundi language programmes offers staff and students opportunity to learn a new language in a practical and interactive environment, with 21 languages to choose from, all delivered by native speakers.

We also have a strong focus on 'Internationalisation at home', or virtual mobility experiences, which provide an opportunity within the curriculum for students and staff to interact with international universities and industry professionals. There were 6 892 such engagements on the Coventry campus in 2016-17. These activities are designed to develop intercultural competences and digital skills, while also facilitating students to work with peers in other countries.⁵³ Research and analysis to quantify the benefits of such activity is work to be taken up by a new research centre.

53 Coventry University, 'Online International Learning (OIL)'. Retrieved on 23 April 2018 from <http://www.coventry.ac.uk/study-at-coventry/student-support/enhance-your-employability/centre-for-global-engagement/online-interactive-learning-oil/>

LEADING RESEARCH INTO INCLUSIVITY AND DIVERSITY

To support our leadership in developing an inclusive institution the University has opened a new dedicated research centre, the Research Centre for Global Learning, focussing on the education and attainment of higher education students (GLEA).

GLEA is working closely with the University's Centre for Global Engagement to understand more about how our students benefit from international mobility and whether that benefit is felt equally by all types of student. Its remit will include working with our education partners to evaluate the enhanced intercultural dialogue possible as a result of such partnerships, along with other benefits such as the value of co-created curricula, empowerment of students, social benefit and return on investment offered by such partnerships.

The GLEA research centre has a further related strand of work looking more generally at whether the benefits of university learning and attainment are felt equally by all types of student. The Coventry University Group, with its global reach, could be said to have achieved some level of diversity of *participation*, at least in terms of access for students from ethnic minority groups. The next level is to ensure equity of *opportunity* for its diverse body of staff and students.

As set out in the introduction, the university, via this new research centre, is looking to also evidence equity of attainment opportunity.

To achieve this the university is

- monitoring our performance against the sector
- including equity and inclusion actions into the annual course review process (such as to review curriculum or assessment so that it is equally accessible to students with differing backgrounds and cultures)
- running targeted sessions on unconscious bias with academic departments
- researching causes of differential of degree attainment in the sector.

INVESTIGATING DISPARITY OF DEGREE ATTAINMENT

Researching the causes of differential degree attainment is a current focus for GLEA. There is a need for a better understanding of assessing the structural and personal level barriers and levers to quality student engagement, which leads to enhanced and more equitable levels of attainment. Better understanding includes being able to identify what has been effective. This understanding can enable improvement of both proposed and existing engagement projects. This, in turn, makes effective transferability and scalability more likely.

DRIVER is a partnership project between four colleges and four universities working together in the West Midlands of the UK to address barriers to student success. It is part-funded by the Higher Education Funding Council for England. The focus is on the transition between colleges and universities where students from disadvantaged backgrounds (e.g. BAME, commuter, mature and those from low socio-economic backgrounds) are highly represented yet less likely to achieve a good degree.

The colleges and universities are collectively creating actions that will address the multiple factors which affect student success. They do not, however, single out students according to a demographic characteristic. Instead they offer learning support designed to be particularly beneficial to a student from a disadvantaged background, but which is available to any student (See Figure 1).

HEFCE Catalyst Fund: Addressing Barriers to Student Success PROJECT OVERVIEW

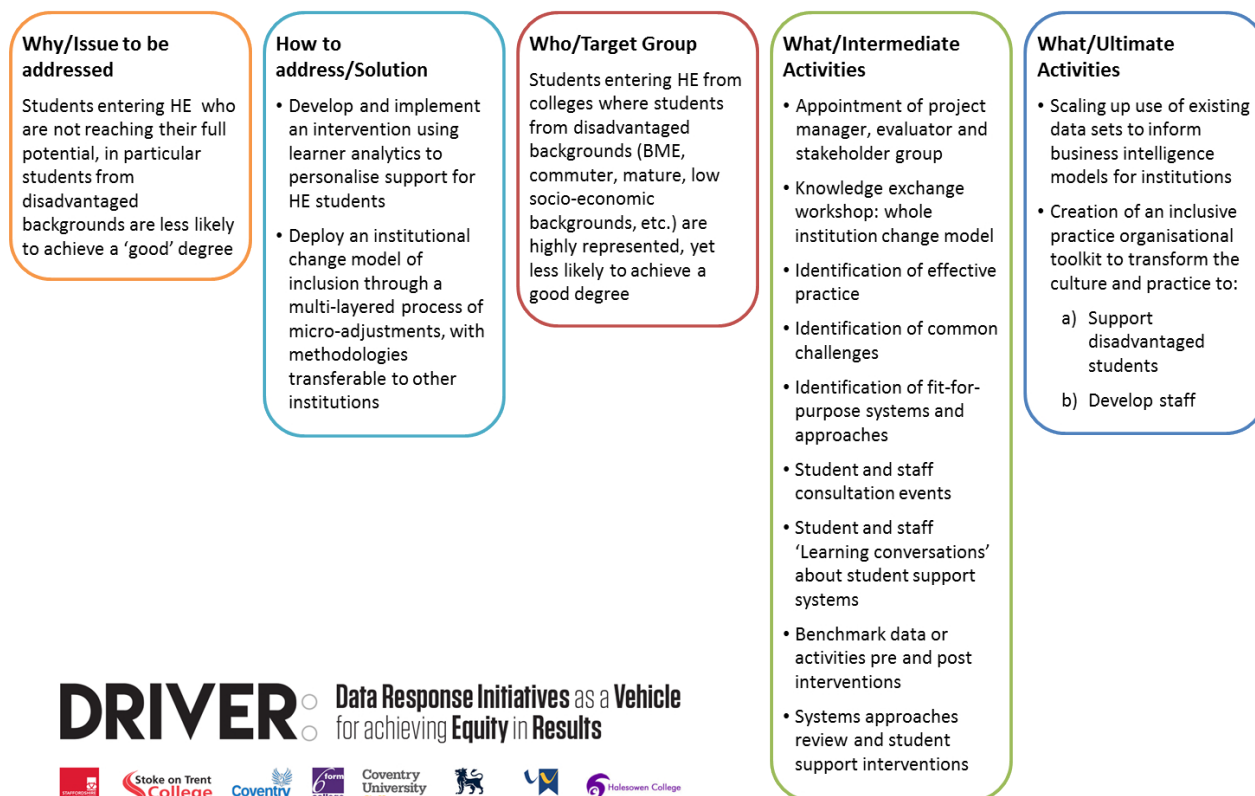


Figure 11: DRIVER Project Overview

DIGITISATION AS SUPPORT FOR DIVERSITY AND INCLUSIVENESS

DRIVER is using learner analytics to inform a multi-layered process of micro-adjustments within each institution. The underlying goal is to ensure that all students, regardless of sociodemographic characteristics, receive adequate and equitable support while they are at university.

Progress of all students will be evidenced according to incoming qualifications and achievement as they progress through their university journey, with any differential according to sociodemographic characteristics identified and addressed.

Within these new systems, student support will be data driven, personalised and delivered at the point of need, often independent of physical location. This is in contrast to the more traditional 'personal tutorial' style approach that can be more variable both in terms of fairness and value.

Many students are used to 'live chat' methods of accessing information, advice and guidance (IAG) for services as varied as ordering a takeaway meal to car insurance. A system which uses their performance profile to offer tailored support, at their fingertips whenever they want it, is perhaps a reasonable aspiration for their university experience too.

Each member of the partnership is addressing any differential in its own way. At Coventry University, a new Student Engagement Centre is making contact with students who are shown on the university systems to be engaging less, whether in person or online, than their peers. The idea is to offer friendly support before reduced engagement means students get into difficulties. Success at Coventry will be measured according to better student retention rates generally, and reduced gap in attainment compared with their peers for students who might not otherwise have easy access to such support.

Our initiative using learner analytics to support students aligns with the practice of many universities which are moving towards a more automated system of identifying and prioritising students who need support. Early findings from this project are examining the validity of the data, firstly in terms of face validity (whether the 'engagement' measure used to select students for contact is an accurate measure of engagement), and secondly in terms of record keeping protocols.

INCLUSIVE PRACTICE

With this new model, we should expect all students, regardless of demographics, to be accessing and receiving support in order to achieve their full potential. Of course, we know that in the past this has not been the case. So how confident can we be that this new model of student support will be inclusive and fair, addressing the disparity of attainment which has proved to be so stubborn to date? In this respect, the potential for this new style of support is clear. For example, we know that our disadvantaged students have some of the longest commutes and so removing barriers of time and space will help. Rather than giving privileged access to underrepresented groups to the detriment of others, this is likely to 'equal up' access to IAG support.

We also know that certain groups of students currently do not feel the same sense of institutional belonging and a 'right' to support. These students may, therefore, not make demands of the university for fear of being embarrassed or rejected. If the new methods of support offered are proactive, based on learner analytics, maybe students in need of support will have less need to ask for help?

Learner analytics and artificial intelligence provide real opportunities to help to address disparity of opportunity, experience and ultimately attainment, but we shouldn't just assume these will occur automatically. Academic and professional staff and accompanying systems and processes will all need to be clearly inclusive, promoting equity of opportunity such that no student is disadvantaged once they are in higher education.

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Annex

List of universities and associations which participated in the EUA focus group on institutional strategies towards diversity and inclusiveness in November 2017 at the University of Lille 3 – Human and Social Sciences, France:

Bonn-Rhine-Sieg University of Applied Sciences, Germany
Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Germany
Ghent University, Belgium
Hellenic Open University, Greece
The Norwegian Association of Higher Education Institutions (UHR), Norway
Oriental University of Naples, Italy
RWTH Aachen University, Germany
Stockholm School of Economics, Sweden
Delft University of Technology, Netherlands
Catholic University of Louvain, Belgium
University of Lorraine, France
University College Dublin, Ireland
University College London, United Kingdom
University of Bremen, Germany
Coventry University, United Kingdom
Granada University, Spain
University of Lille 3 - Human and Social Sciences, France
University of Strasbourg, France

The European University Association (EUA) is the representative organisation of universities and national rectors' conferences in 47 European countries. EUA plays a crucial role in the Bologna Process and in influencing EU policies on higher education, research and innovation. Thanks to its interaction with a range of other European and international organisations EUA ensures that the independent voice of European universities is heard wherever decisions are being taken that will impact their activities.

The Association provides a unique expertise in higher education and research as well as a forum for exchange of ideas and good practice among universities. The results of EUA's work are made available to members and stakeholders through conferences, seminars, website and publications.

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