

25.3.2026

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**Title**

Global recession and higher education in Eastern Asia: China, Mongolia and Vietnam

**Publication year**

2011

**Source/Footnote**

In: Higher education. - 62 (2011) 6, S. 789 - 814

**Inventory number**

31170

**Keywords**

Ausland : China : Hochschulwesen allgemein ; Ausland : Mongolei : Hochschulwesen allgemein ;  
Ausland : Vietnam : Hochschulwesen allgemein

**Abstract**

This paper presents a perspective on the capacity of colleges and universities during past and present economic shocks. The main argument is that the environment of the global recession?an Asia far more economically integrated than during past economic shocks, with more unified aspirations to be globally competitive and socially responsible?no longer delay reforms in higher education. In fact, the global recession has become an opportune time for higher education in Asia, specifically developing countries in eastern (East and Southeast) Asia, to continue reforming governance and administration, access and equity, internal and external efficiency, and regional collaboration. Economic shocks have accelerated reforms in higher education, especially those for promoting innovation in their economies, though more is needed in improving governance and access for underserved populations. This paper examines the cases of China, Mongolia, and Vietnam as examples of how the global recession and regional integration are growing forces in shaping their higher education reform and development. The paper also identifies a series of measures for increasing the resilience of higher education systems

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in serving poor and vulnerable populations during economic recessions. Responses to the global economic recession by nations in eastern Asia are likely to improve the global shift in economy and human capital. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Postiglione, Gerard A., E-Mail: gerry@hku.hk