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Abstract

A new report entitled "Global university rankings and their impact II" was published by EUA and launched in a special session during the EUA Annual Conference, on 12 April. Authored by Andrejs

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Rauhvargers, the report underlines that there have been significant new developments in the field of international rankings since EUA's first rankings review report, in 2011. It reveals that the number of international university rankings and other 'transparency tools' continues to grow, with the arrival of new rankings and the development of new products by ranking providers. The growing volume of information that is being gathered on universities and the new 'products' on offer also strengthen both the influence of the ranking providers and the potential impact of rankings. The report shows that rankings are also impacting on public policy making. The developments outlined in the report also indicate the need for all stakeholders to reflect on the extent to which global rankings are no longer a concern only for a small number of elite institutions but have become a reality for a much broader spectrum of universities as they seek to be included in, or improve their position in one or the other rankings. Discussions that followed the presentation also underlined the continued lack of indicators for addressing teaching quality in an appropriate way, and concluded on the difficulty of conceiving a totally objective ranking. Nevertheless, it was noticed that some rankings providers have themselves started to draw attention to the biases and flaws in the data underpinning rankings, and thus to the dangers of misusing rankings. EUA will now take this work on rankings forward with its new pan-European project (RISP) designed to study the impact of rankings on institutional strategies in more detail and to provide recommendations on how rankings can promote institutional development while also identifying potential pitfalls that universities should avoid. (Abstract übernommen)

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