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**Abstract**

This article deals with the past, present and future of higher education research from a regional perspective. South-East Europe has not been noticeable in this respect during the last two or three decades. However, development of higher education and the problems that are associated with it raise many questions that require a response from both researchers and policymakers. This is all the more necessary because of the great diversity of the region and the complexity of the issues raised. In comparison with other European countries, changes in higher education have been really dramatic. During the period of social and political 'transition' the impression was given that the region is completely lacking human resources as well as traditions in this area. This impression was strengthened under the influence of policy transfer from world 'centres' to 'peripheral' regions. However, the imported patterns and recommendations often do not work in local circumstances or are being interpreted and adapted in sometimes surprisingly idiosyncratic ways. In recent years, the number of specialized researchers on higher education is increasing gradually in South-East Europe,

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but is still relatively low. Without further development of a specialized sub-discipline in this area, it is hard to imagine a systemic approach to resolve problems in the area of higher education policy in the region. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)