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Title

Shifting themes in OECD country reviews in higher education

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Abstract

There have been changes in the political economy since the 1980s, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has changed as well. Scholars have noted shifts in OECD discourse in some policy fields since that time: shifts away from what might be called classic neoliberal perspectives. This paper reflects on the changes in the political economy and in OECD and explores how they might be related to changes in OECD discourse in higher education. Specifically, it examines country reviews of higher education systems conducted by OECD in the mid-1990s and the late-2000s for evidence of shifts in its higher education discourse. Instead of a softening of neoliberal perspectives, it finds a further entrenchment of assumptions associated with neoliberalization. It also describes what appears to be a deepening contradiction in the discourse concerning the private and public benefits of higher education. Finally, it reflects on how the contexts of the political economy as framed by OECDs discourse, affects its proposed goals and strategies for higher education. (HRK / Abstract übernommen) Hunter, Carrie P., E-Mail: cphunter@alumni.ubc.ca