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**Title**

The general concept of benchmarking and its application in higher education in Europe / Joanicjusz  
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**Abstract**

The purposes of this paper are twofold: a presentation of the theoretical basis of benchmarking and a discussion on practical benchmarking applications. Benchmarking is also analyzed as a productivity accelerator. The authors study benchmarking usage in the private and public sectors with due consideration of the specificities of the two areas. Special attention is paid to the presentation of the current picture of higher education and conditions for the application of benchmarking. The chosen examples of benchmarking projects conducted in higher education illustrate the spectrum of benchmarking usage. The authors conclude the paper with a recommendation for the employment of benchmarking in the higher education environment, especially in the light of competition pressures and rapid economic development. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)