

The 9th Annual International Symposium on University Rankings and Quality Assurance 2017



Thursday 22nd June 2017

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre,
Brussels



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Overview

With the potential of higher education as a tool for societal development and economic growth, university ranking systems have become a vital information resource. To utilize this potential and facilitate a wider modernisation of higher education, the European Commission developed the European Multidimensional Global University Ranking - commonly known as U-Multirank – in the spring of 2014, a nuanced initiative for students and institutions in the contentious field of global rankings. In April last year, the project released its third and largest global ranking, revealing the leading role of European universities in knowledge creation and innovation. Based on dozens of criteria across five areas of performance, the results present comprehensive data on 1,300 higher education institutions and more than 10,000 study programmes from over 90 countries. Evidently, U-Multirank is a radical redefinition for the field, providing a global overview of universities' positioning with a multi-dimensional focus on research, teaching and learning, internationalisation and regional engagement. The fourth global ranking, currently being finalized, is due for publication in March 2017.

However, alternative ranking methodologies and new quality assurance indicators to ranking have been introduced over the past few years. New ranking systems have also been implemented, for example in Russia, reflecting shifting global trends in higher education and the global labour market. These different approaches and initiatives mainly refer to professional reputation, performance and employability. By trying to encompass as many criteria as possible and guarantee educational quality, more and more universities are seeking to place themselves as high as possible within various international ranking systems. Nevertheless, there has been extensive debate on the ranking's relevance, particularly on their potential uses and misuses as well as their impact on students, recognition of qualifications and choice of university partners.

This annual international symposium, now in its ninth year, will assess the challenges that lie ahead in creating and maintaining high quality, comprehensive and user-friendly systems for ranking universities, and will offer an invaluable opportunity to discuss the dynamics between international rankings and national initiatives developed in various countries. This conference will also discuss the relevance of rankings in shaping the development of higher education systems, with implications not only for elite institutions, but also for the significant number of universities who seek to be included or improve their position in various rankings. The symposium will support the exchange of ideas and encourage delegates to engage in thought-provoking and topical debate.



“Universities and higher education institutions can no longer work in splendid academic isolation. They are integral parts of our societies. And they are critical in forming the creative, talented graduates who will help to boost Europe’s social development and economic prosperity.”

Tibor Navracsics

Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, European Commission

March 2016

Venue and Accommodation

Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre
Avenue du Boulevard 17
1210 Brussels
Belgium



Why Attend?

- ✓ Discuss current policy initiatives and priorities for comprehensive and multi-dimensional university ranking systems
- ✓ Analyse the mechanisms for defining performance, professional reputation and status of universities through user-friendly rankings
- ✓ Develop methods to facilitate student and staff participation, access to higher education and information
- ✓ Strengthen the links between the EU U-Multirank initiative and the proactive modernisation of higher education at the European level
- ✓ Take part in interactive discussions with key stakeholders in the field of higher education
- ✓ Understand U-Multirank's upcoming edition of rankings, methodology and implications
- ✓ Build constructive partnerships and meet delegates to inspire cross-border collaboration in higher education
- ✓ Share best practices from the implementation of the rankings system both nationally and internationally

Who Should Attend?

- Registrars
- Senior University Administrators
- Faculty Deans
- University Chancellors and Vice-Chancellors
- Rankings Agencies
- Quality Assurance Institutes
- Researchers
- Academics
- National Ministries for Education
- International Organisations
- Higher Education Organisations
- Employer's Organisations
- Data Centres
- Standardisation Organisations
- Careers Services and Advisers
- Admissions Bodies
- Research Councils
- Schools and FE Colleges
- Funding Bodies
- Local Authority Education Officers
- Representatives of Industry and Commerce
- Education Charities and NGOs
- Lifelong Learning Practitioners
- Equal Opportunities Officers
- Access Officers

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Programme

09:15	Registration and Morning Refreshments
10:00	Chair's Welcome and Opening Remarks
10:10	International University Rankings: Current and Future Developments <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Developments in University Rankings: Coordinating Data Collection Activities Between National and International Rankings• Striving for Transferable Accreditation: Qualifications Frameworks and Quality Assurance Systems Across Member States• The Role of Rankings in the Direction of Higher Education Policies• Recommendations for Future Policy Action in a Changing Landscape
10:40	First Round of Discussions
11:10	Morning Coffee Break
11:30	U-Multirank: Discussing the Fourth Release and Data Collection <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Understanding the Methodological Approach to U-Multirank• Experiences with Data Collection and Analysis: Analysing the Fourth Release of Results• Facilitating the Internationalisation and Accessibility of Higher Education• Next Steps and Future Perspectives for 2018 and Beyond
12:00	Second Round of Discussions
12:30	Networking Lunch
13:30	Encouraging Student's Participation and Impact in University Rankings <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Student's Role in Academic Life and their Perspectives on Indicators• Integrating a Student Centred Approach to Multi-Dimensional Ranking• Reflecting the Diversity of the Student Experience in University Rankings• Discussions and Recommendations for Student Centred Policy Making
14:00	Third Round of Discussions
14:30	Afternoon Coffee Break
14:50	Rethinking the Role of Universities for the Future of Higher Education <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Measuring the Third Mission of Universities: Improving Data on Employment-Oriented Outcome Indicators• Collaboration between Employers and Universities to Facilitate Labour Market Harmonisation• Discussion of Emerging Alternatives to Ranking and Methodology• Best Practices, Lessons Learned and Ways Forward
15:20	Fourth Round of Discussions
15:50	Chair's Summary and Closing Comments
16:00	Networking Reception
16:30	Close

* Please note that the programme is subject to change without notice *

Event Details

Date: Thursday 22nd June 2017
Time: 10:00am – 4:30pm
Venue: Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre, Brussels



Speakers Include:

- ✓ **Sophia Eriksson Waterschoot**, Head of Unit, Higher Education, Directorate-General for Education and Culture, European Commission
- ✓ **Gero Federkeil**, U-Multirank Coordinator
- ✓ **Simon Baker**, Data Editor, Times Higher Education
- ✓ **Lea Meister**, President, European Students' Union

Forthcoming Events

- ✓ Mental Health in Europe: Promoting Equal Opportunities and Social Participation
12th April 2017
- ✓ E-Skills and Jobs in the Digital Age: Accelerating Europe's Competitiveness and Inclusive Growth
10th May 2017
- ✓ 7th Annual International Symposium on Human Trafficking and Migrant Smuggling
17th May 2017
- ✓ The Future of Tourism in Europe: Promoting Competitiveness Through Sustainability and Digitisation
30th May 2017
- ✓ Strengthening Youth Employment in the EU: Ensuring Bright Futures for the Young Generation
1st June 2017
- ✓ Reforming European VAT: Boosting Trade and Achieving Modernisation
8th June 2017

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