



Are Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) Going to Reshape the Higher Education? What are the Key Challenges and Opportunities for the European Higher Education Institutions?

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Abstract

MOOCs is a new concept that is generating widespread interest in the American higher education circles. It has opened up strategic discussions about online education in a growing number of higher education institutions. MOOCs are expected to have a strong transformative power on the higher education structure. In the USA, the Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) phenomenon is sometimes called "the campus tsunami" of online education. Top US universities such as Stanford, Harvard, MIT, and the University of California-Berkeley are already investing significant amounts in order to provide MOOCs. The educational technologies enable higher education institutions to deliver programs and courses all around the world, sharpening competition between them. Although the advent of MOOCs originated recently in the USA, MOOCs can also be seen from a broader perspective where they are a milestone towards the globalization of higher education.

This paper will explore a set of key issues, such as: What are MOOCs and what are their key characteristics? How does the MOOC phenomenon challenge the traditional higher education providers? What are the key online delivery models? What are the key players? What kind of business models are emerging? Is the European higher education ready to take up this new challenge?

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