



A Qualitative Perspective on Educational Policies Convergence in Transition Systems

Alina Mihaela Dima, Simona Vasilache

Bucharest University of Economic Studies (Romania)
alinamihaeladima@yahoo.com simona.vasilache@gmail.com

Abstract

The paper analyzes convergence in the Romanian higher education system, in the Bologna framework, focusing on policies, structure and governance, at the national level, as compared with European best practices. Qualitative data were collected based on an interview guide, which was first discussed with ten prominent experts in the field of higher education, in Romania and abroad, and then distributed to 500 respondents selected using a snow-ball sampling technique. We have obtained 109 valid responses, which we considered, taking into account time and accessibility constraints, an acceptable response rate. These responses were interpreted using a qualitative study methodology, and conclusions were drawn regarding the hierarchy of the possible measures to be taken to foster convergence, and the most suitable indicators to be used in measuring the achievements on the convergence path. This qualitative perspective will be complemented, in further studies, with quantitative analyses, aiming at measuring the distance between where Romania currently stands, in higher education policies, and the European standards, and at proposing ways to reduce this distance. Presently, the conclusions of the research provide an overview of how the problem is seen and approached by the most knowledgeable actors in the field, thus orienting decision makers towards the most widely supported measures to be taken and indicators to be used. Extensions of this study into multiple cultural settings, in a comparative perspective, are, as well, an aim of the present approach.