

**DIRECTORATE FOR EDUCATION AND SKILLS  
CENTRE FOR EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH AND INNOVATION (CERI) GOVERNING BOARD**

**INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EDUCATION IN THE PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR**

**OECD-Laureate International Universities Europe**

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*In November 2013, the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) and Laureate International Universities Europe organised an international seminar on innovation in the private higher education sector.*

*This report summarises the key points of the presentations and discussions. It highlights the trends in enrolment and regulation of private higher education, describes examples of pedagogic, organisational and marketing innovations, and points to some barriers to innovation in the private sector as well as to lessons that could be applied to the public sector.*

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## INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO EDUCATION IN THE PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

### Box 1. Highlights of the discussions

#### ***Trends and perspectives***

- The global growth of the private higher education sector will continue to be driven by increasing demand, especially in countries where this largely outpaces the capacity or willingness of the public sector to extend provision to young cohorts and to groups with specific needs such as working adults.
- The demand-absorption model of growth presents challenges for innovation in private higher education. Private providers that emerge to meet demand do not always have sufficient size and resources to meet increasing quality standards nor to shape a proactive innovation strategy. This is similar to challenges faced by small-size companies in the private sector. At the same time, large private higher education networks are gaining a stronger market position and putting in place organisational structures to develop and implement innovations in a variety of areas.
- There is a variety of types of private higher education institutions and it can be misleading to think of this sector as homogeneous.

#### ***Innovative practices***

- Private providers feel that they are in greater need of innovation than public institutions because their success depends to a larger extent on being responsive to rapidly changing labour market needs and the demands of their students. Business-like approaches and willingness to identify and solve problems lead to quicker adoption or development of innovations.
- Partnerships with industry appear as a distinctive feature of the private higher education sector. These partnerships can support organisational and pedagogical innovations that foster graduates' employability but seem to be pervasive in all dimensions of institutions' operations. It is only small, demand-absorbing institutions in some regions that can be disconnected from industry, even though they meet a local student demand.
- Innovative solutions have been developed by some private higher education institutions to implement skills-based curriculum, teaching and assessment practices.
- Private institutional networks are establishing innovative organisational and professional development structures to exploit synergies in the production of instructional content and in the delivery of student services across member institutions. Being part of a same group helps in this respect, but the sharing of similar resources across public institutions could be explored.
- The digital revolution is bringing new opportunities for higher education institutions but also challenges to their existing business models. Private providers have not generally been at the forefront of developments in large-scale, costly technology-enhanced innovations in higher education.

#### ***Regulation and lessons for the higher education sector at large***

- Regulation is becoming stricter, especially in Anglo-Saxon countries and areas of influence. Regulatory frameworks are often too uniform to accommodate the institutional diversity of the private sector. The slow pace of accreditation is also often perceived as hindering innovation, notably in the offer of new programmes.
- There are opportunities for the public sector to learn from best practices and innovations that have proven effective in private institutions. Some of these involve more systematic exchanges and collaboration with external stakeholders, better ways of carrying out needs analysis, and more continuous professional development of faculty better ways of carrying out needs analysis, and more continuous professional development of faculty.

## Summary Report

### *Introduction*

1. The seminar discussed innovative responses by the private higher education sector to the new skills demands in rapidly changing and globalised labour market. It explored how private higher education institutions are adapting their organisational and pedagogical models to better serve an increasingly heterogeneous student population by helping them acquire 21st century skills for innovation societies.

2. The seminar examined drivers and barriers to innovation in the context of the sustained growth of the private higher education sector and of changing regulatory and technological environments. The discussion built on the presentation of promising innovations organisational and teaching and learning practices in private institutions, and inquired to what extent these innovative practices have been or could be adopted by the higher education sector at large.

3. The specific objectives of the seminar were to (1) discuss the growth of the private higher education sector and its distinct role in educational innovation and in developing the skills of traditional and adult students; (2) map innovation in the private higher education sector in both organisational and pedagogical areas; and (3) provide a forum for higher education institutions to share experiences on their explicit or implicit educational innovation strategies.

4. The workshop was co-organised by the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and Laureate International Universities Europe within the framework of CERI's project *Innovation Strategy for Education and Training*.

5. Invited participants were a mix of senior officials in private and public higher education institutions, educational researchers and entrepreneurs, all of whom had extensive experience implementing innovation-driven approaches in their countries or institutions. The number of participants was limited to 50 and the interactive format of the seminar was intended to promote in-depth discussion. Participants came from the Czech Republic, France, Germany, India, Korea, Mexico, Portugal, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States. The full list of participants and their institutional affiliations can be found in the Annex.

6. The meeting was hosted by Universidad Europea de Madrid, a member of the Laureate network, in its Villaviciosa de Odón campus in Madrid. Miguel Carmelo (Laureate Europe), Águeda Benito (Universidad Europea de Madrid) and Juan Salcedo (Laureate Europe) welcomed participants on behalf of the seminar co-organiser Laureate International Universities Europe.

7. This report summarises the key points of the presentations and discussions following a thematic structure.

### *Framework and key questions*

8. Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin (OECD) presented the theoretical and conceptual framework that motivated the organisation of the seminar. The OECD Innovation Strategy<sup>1</sup> serves as the broader frame of reference. The Strategy provides analysis and policy guidance on a broad range of issues from education and training policies, to policies that promote a conducive business environment and infrastructure for

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/sti/theoecdinnovationstrategygettingaheadstartontomorrow.htm>

innovation and foster the creation and diffusion of knowledge. CERI's *Innovation Strategy for Education and Training* project explores the same questions in the education sector.

9. Building on analyses carried out for CERI's *University Futures* project, Mr. Vincent-Lancrin showed that, across OECD countries: a) enrolments in tertiary education are largely concentrated in the public sector while changes in the distribution between 2001-2011 implied, for most countries, a growth of the private sector; and b) the funding sources of tertiary education institutions remain also largely public, while changes in the distribution between 2001-2011 brought, in most countries, a reduction of the share of government funds and an increase in the expenditures of households and private entities. The data also reveal wide variation across OECD countries in: c) the proportion of students in public, government-dependent private and independent private institutions; d) the contribution of households to direct expenditures of tertiary education institutions; and e) the share of part-time students in public and independent private institutions. Taken together, these findings suggest that the private higher education sector is playing a variety of roles across OECD countries. While the sector appears to cater more than its public counterpart to non-traditional students (e.g. working adults), other common features and trends across countries are difficult to identify through international data.

10. Work from the *Innovation Strategy for Education and Training* project provides insights about the relative level of innovation that characterises the higher education sector and helps formulate hypotheses about the position of the private sector in the innovation ecosystem. Data from a forthcoming CERI book on Measuring Innovation in Education shows that the proportion of highly innovative jobs – as measured by the number and type of innovations that workers are involved in – is higher in the education sector than in most other sectors of the economy, thanks mainly to the high prevalence of knowledge and process innovations. More importantly, higher education – taken as a subset of the whole education sector – concentrates the highest number of innovative jobs, topping even the manufacturing sector.

11. On the question of whether there is more or less innovation in the private higher education sector as compared to its public counterpart, a number of system-level and institution-level factors can be invoked to draw predictions about the intensity of innovation in each sector. The reasons why the private sector could be expected to be more innovative include: a) lesser constraints in access to finance; b) a greater need to innovate to meet demand because of market competitive pressures; c) being less subject to central regulation and public administration rules. The first two conditions could lead to innovation in the supply of educational programmes and/or in pedagogies, and to a quicker adoption of innovations developed elsewhere, while the third may lead to more organisational innovation.

12. The leeway for innovation in the private higher education sectors is therefore related to the local (and sometimes global) accountability and accreditation mechanisms, to market standards and, more generally, to the specific demands and needs of non-traditional students that private providers preferentially serve in many countries. The question remains whether these factors encourage innovation in the private higher education sector or, on the contrary, hamper risk-taking behaviour.

13. Mr. Vincent-Lancrin closed his presentation by noting that these overarching topics translate into specific questions for seminar participants: is there more research on and attention to quality teaching in the private higher education sector? If so, how does it translate into curricular and pedagogical innovations? Are there organisational innovations in contractual, admissions, financing or governance models? Are private higher education institutions laggards in technology-driven innovation and e-learning, which is often seen to be driven by public institutions? Are Open Educational Resources (OER) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) a threat to some segments of the private sector?

14. The presentation by Águeda Benito (Universidad Europea de Madrid, Spain) introduced another key framing theme for the seminar, namely the mismatch between labour market needs and the current

offering of higher education institutions. As highlighted by a large number of studies, the recent economic crisis distils a clear and worrying message: there is a substantial gap between the skills demanded by employers and those generally promoted in higher education. Unemployment figures and recurrent accounts about shortages in the skills that support employability and innovation are a testimony to this mismatch.

15. Ms. Benito argued that innovation is the only way forward for higher education institutions in order to become more responsive to labour market needs and bridge this gap. Innovation could be seen as a guiding principle for action in three areas: a) the redefinition of the offering of higher education; b) the development of student competencies and values; and c) more and better use of educational technologies.

16. Higher education institutions need to improve their offer in sectors and occupational fields of increasing importance in the economy such as technology development and health care, especially with regards to ageing populations. Programmes of study should also strengthen their international dimension, further support foreign language acquisition and intercultural awareness, and increase their collaboration with industry through internships and by bringing practitioners as part-time faculty. Fostering technical and vocational study programmes with high employability should be another priority.

17. Universities should also put greater effort in developing students' transversal skills and values in addition to technical knowledge. These include communication and collaborative skills, autonomous learning, the ability to apply knowledge to practice and to new situations, and leadership and entrepreneurship skills. In order to do so, higher education institutions need to embrace pedagogical models that emphasize comprehensive approaches, active methodologies, and active guidance and tutoring, as well as innovative forms of assessing student competencies that are aligned with these pedagogies.

18. Innovative uses of educational technologies can in turn support hybrid and online education models that improve accessibility and efficiency in delivery and provide better adaptation to student needs. Another component of this innovation agenda is the improvement of the indicators used to measure success. An example of efforts in this direction is the multi-dimensional IEF Educational Excellence index developed by Universidad Europea de Madrid. This index rates programs and schools taking into account factors such as employability, academic results, internationality, competencies and external accreditation.

19. The role of higher education institutions in promoting skills for innovation and the teaching practices that are effective in doing so were the subject of the presentation by José Ginés Mora (Institute of Education, United Kingdom). Mr. Mora argued that higher education can contribute to innovation in the economy, and thus to economic growth, by supplying graduates who are able to both mobilize existing knowledge and resources and to create, adapt, and apply newly-available knowledge or resources to production processes in their jobs. His presentation drew on a variety of international surveys to graduates (e.g. CHEERS, REFLEX, PROFLEX) and a study of recent graduates from the Spanish region of Valencia (LVE-CV) to examine three questions: a) the extent to which higher education institutions contribute to skills for innovation; b) what teaching and learning modes in higher education promote these skills more effectively; and c) what skills define innovative workers.

20. The studies discussed by Mr. Mora suggest that in Spain and other European countries, higher education institutions are perceived by both faculty and graduates as not contributing enough to the development of skills on dimensions such as innovation (e.g. ability to question prevailing ideas, alertness to new opportunities, ability to come up with new ideas and solutions), leadership (e.g. ability to mobilize the capacities of others), or foreign language acquisition, among others.

21. Further analyses of graduates' perceptions of the extent to which their study programmes emphasized different teaching and learning modes suggest that the promotion of these skills is significantly

associated with specific pedagogies, most notably with problem-based learning, participation in research projects, group assignments, and work placements and internships. A promising development exemplified by the case of higher education faculty in the region of Valencia is a gradual and very recent shift in teaching methodologies away from traditional pedagogical approaches (e.g. lectures, multiple choice exams, perception of teachers as main source of information) and towards more active teaching practices.

22. Lastly, the data suggest that the main predictors of workers being involved in some form of innovation are being employed in innovation-oriented firms, the relative match between one's job and educational qualifications, and positive self-assessments about two specific skills, namely the ability to mobilize the capacities of others and the ability to come up with new ideas and solutions.

23. While caution was advised about drawing strong causal inferences from self-assessment and cross-sectional data, the evidence presented by Mr. Mora clearly suggests that the acquisition of skills for innovation is associated with the prevalence of proactive teaching and learning modes, and that the most common instructional approaches in higher education contribute little, if any, to the development of these skills.

24. In summary, the framework for the seminar – which combines insights from CERI's *Innovation Strategy* project and research on labour market needs and skills for innovation – served to identify a variety of rationales for and potential locus of innovation in the private higher education sector. Seminar participants thus were invited to structure the discussion around three questions transversal to this framework: a) how much innovation is there in the private higher education sector?; b) what do these innovative practices look like, and to what extent are they unique to the private sector?; and c) what are the mechanisms to ensure that these innovative practices can inspire the higher education sector at large?

#### *Examples of innovations in the private higher education sector*

25. The seminar was an opportunity for higher education institutions to present successful examples of innovation in a variety of areas including organisational practices, pedagogy and the application of new technologies, and marketing strategies. This section of the report provides a summary of these cases and the discussion that they generated.

26. A central axis of discussion was how the private higher education sector caters to the specific needs of working adults and other students with “non-traditional” profiles. These population segments are less often in a position to interrupt their employment and/or to participate in standard education programmes. In many OECD countries, part-time students are largely concentrated in independent private tertiary institutions. The seminar thus discussed how private providers design their study programmes and instructional delivery to better meet the needs and constraints of working adults in order to enhance their employability and professional development.

##### *a) Organisational and governance innovations*

27. In discussing inspiring governance and organisational practices in the private higher education sector, the seminar sought to depart from the conventional focus on national higher education policies and evaluation schemes and concentrate instead on specific examples of innovations in the organisation of work within higher education institutions and within multi-national networks.

28. Participants were invited to present examples of organisational practices that address in innovative ways the demands of students, faculty or employers, and governance practices that sustain pedagogical or other types of innovations within organisations and networks. The discussion shed light on internal governance challenges; on organisational features aimed at fostering innovation; and on constraints to innovation related to the environment in which institutions operate.

29. A large number of presentations showed that university-industry partnerships constitute a central axis of organisational and pedagogical innovation for the private higher education sector. Internships and student placement programmes remain the most common feature but partnerships take a variety of forms. Higher education institutions see these partnerships as a main channel for the enhancement of students' professional skills and employability. The frequency and centrality of these programmes across institutions suggests that partnerships with industry represent a distinctive feature of the private higher education sector.

30. Shobha Mishra Ghosh (Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI), India) argued that partnerships with industry are one of the innovation pillars of India's roadmap towards high quality provision as the country consolidates the massive expansion of its tertiary education system. The private sector played a central role in this expansion, with the number of private providers increasing from 1 to 165 between 1995 and 2013 (i.e. a compounded annual growth rate of 44%). The growth was largely driven by changing labour market needs and the private sector accounted for over 90% of the growth in enrolment in the most demanded professional fields (e.g. engineering, hotel management or pharmacy). In this context, partnerships with industry helped structure much of the offering of private higher education institutions, which enjoyed more flexibility in programme design (and thus responsiveness to market needs) than their public counterparts.

31. Skills mismatches have remained a major concern throughout the expansion of tertiary education in India and partnerships with industry were largely motivated by the need to enhance graduates' employability. Tie-ups between industry and higher education institutions and other training providers adopted a variety of forms. Regular consultation through advisory bodies helped design and launch new employment-oriented modules in which student placements were a central component. In relation to research, individual and corporate endowments served to fund research parks and incubation centres in top performing universities and strengthened the shift towards a competitive and sponsored research funding model. Industry and academia collaborations were also developed to promote applied research. Partnerships have additionally facilitated faculty movements and temporary assignments of industry professional as visiting faculty and university board members.

32. These developments are illustrated by the collaborative framework for partnerships promoted by FICCI: the National Knowledge Functional Hubs (NKFH). In this model, industry champions sponsor research and development in Indian universities, with FICCI acting as a facilitator in the governing council of the partnership. Three regional hubs have been established to date in Western, Northern and Southern regions, and some international corporations and universities have addressed FICCI to set up additional hubs. India's Planning Commission has endorsed the NKFH model (cf. *2012 Report of the Committee on Corporate Participation in Higher Education*) and recommended its implementation in order to establish urban and regional inter-institution clusters and promote innovative research leveraging existing infrastructure.

33. Another form of innovative organisational arrangements in the Indian higher education sector described by Ms. Mishra Ghosh are partnerships with foreign universities and leadership development programmes. These have been set up to foster the adoption in Indian institutions of best practices in governance developed in top international universities. The programmes involve visits by Indian faculty and university managers to institutions abroad as well as guidance and monitoring for local implementation.

34. Partnerships with industry are also a common denominator of the private higher education sector in France. Pierre Pariente (Institut Français de Gestion, France) discussed the role of these partnerships and the organisational innovations they have experienced over the last decade. Collaboration with industry is a defining characteristic of French private higher education institutions which carry out most of the training



provision for working adults. The partnerships have long been established and are reflected in work legislation. French companies with over 20 employees are required to devote a 1.6% of their wage bill to finance professional development programmes (*Formation professionnelle continue*). In the case of large firms, these investments can represent a significantly higher percentage of their annual payroll. More specifically, a “training tax” (*Taxe d’apprentissage*) amounting to about €2bn a year is used to fund training in higher education institutions. This is part of the overall €30bn that are invested annually in training the workforce across the country. These funds are typically used to cover up to 80% of tuition fees and salaries while workers undergo training. Firms are allowed to deduct the amounts invested in workers’ training from their taxable income. Furthermore, industry representatives are commonly present in the managerial bodies of private higher education institutions, and to a lesser extent in those of public institutions. The wide coverage and strong ties formed around these partnerships is a reality not always acknowledged in debates about higher education in France.

35. Recent developments in higher education and industry partnerships in France have resulted in a number of innovations. On the one hand, collaboration has extended to most fields of study from a coverage traditionally restricted to the disciplines of management and engineering. On the other, many institutions have established departments dedicated to set up new partnerships and coordinate existing agreements, as well as to support academic teams in developing research projects that are then proposed to companies. A key driver of both developments has been the increasing involvement in research activity on the part of private higher education institutions, which became a requirement to comply with new accreditation standards. While basic research in France continues to be funded mainly with public funds, a substantial share of applied research is carried out by companies and channelled through contracts with higher education institutions. Private providers are also entitled to apply for state and EU research grants and tend to do so through Public-private partnerships (PPP). Strong fiscal incentives exist for companies to fund research while higher education institutions are also expected to contribute to research activity with their own funds. For example, the Institut Français de Gestion devotes about half a million Euros annually to its research activity, with the bulk of the funds being contributed by industry partners. This represents between 10% and 15% of the budget of the institution, which also developed a policy to support the research activity of its faculty by lessening teaching loads and allocating internal research funds.

36. Accreditation requirements played a major role in transforming private higher education providers in France into more research-oriented institutions. Business schools are the clearest example of these developments. The growing importance of research has in turn led to a transformation of faculty roles as teaching-only positions have declined in number and importance. Faculty are increasingly required to embrace new modes of instruction and prepare content for online delivery.

37. Turkey is another country where private higher education institutions incorporate internships in most programmes of study. The case of the Plato College of Higher Education was presented by Tolga Yacizi (Plato International). Plato focuses on vocational education programmes which are now offered at 14 study centres across Turkey, most of them in medium-size cities or rural areas. All programmes include internships at local industries and the vocational training offer is adjusted to industries in the region. Collaboration is sought with local business communities to improve alignment between educational and training programmes and regional labour market needs. Plato’s offering seeks to enhance entrepreneurship and employment opportunities locally and help reduce differences in economic development between regions in Turkey.

38. The need for further cooperation between universities and industry was also stressed by Atilla Eris (Istanbul Bilgi University, Turkey). Mr. Eris argued that partnerships with hi-tech industrial centres to strengthen the know-how and research potential of Turkish universities are a necessary step to create an academia-industry ecosystem suitable for innovation. Technology parks and research incubation centres are being promoted in Turkey to foster this type of collaboration in order to develop a national innovation

system. Over the last decade, over 40 techno-parks have been established in Turkish universities and granted special fiscal exemptions. The governance model is based on consortiums of higher education institutions with municipal councils, chamber of commerce and other stakeholders. Private universities in Turkey, which adopt the model of non-profit foundations, are underrepresented in these partnerships: only two private institutions (Bilkent University in Ankara, Sabanci University in Istanbul) currently have an active technology park and another two (TOBB University in Ankara, Istanbul Ticaret University) are in the process of setting up one.

39. A more ambitious and forward-looking proposal to strengthen partnerships with the private sector and decision makers in public policy on innovation was presented by Gerri Burton (New Learning Ventures, United States). Ms. Burton argued that ongoing developments in technology and data analytics place higher education institutions in a privileged position to manage talent supply and demand in the global economy. Higher education providers are at a critical intersection between schooling systems and labour markets which affords them a unique perspective on existing skills gaps. Ms. Burton called for an extensive use of education data to support the personalisation of learning from pre-school to tertiary education, and for higher education institutions to manage the pipeline of data and help overcome the segmentation of educational trajectories towards a better match between the formation and use of skills. Talent maps produced by higher education institutions could then be used by companies for location decisions and by governments to inform innovation policies.

40. In order to play this role, the higher education sector should strengthen partnerships with employers and entrepreneurs, fully embrace technological innovations in the field of data analytics, and gain an in-depth understanding of the dynamics of workplace learning including, most notably, corporate training. That would allow higher education institutions to attract workplace training budgets currently allocated to other providers, to define curriculum niches and areas of specialisation in concert with regional talent needs and to better support innovation incubators and entrepreneurial growth. A better alignment with pre-tertiary stages of schooling through extensive data use would also help to reduce drop-out rates and remediation in higher education. While this need not be restricted to the private higher education sector, its current partnerships with the corporate sector may give it an edge to move in this direction.

41. Other forms of organisational innovation presented at the seminar related to structures and policies to promote knowledge transfer within networks and institutions, to sustain instructional improvement, and to better meet the needs of specific groups of students.

42. Laureate International Universities created Laureate Network Product and Services (LNPS) to provide programme operations, software development and support services to Laureate network universities. As explained by Solángel Corpeño (LNPS), the unit was created in 2008 to promote collaboration among network members. The aim of LNPS is to act as an innovation hub for the network by creating quality tools and services for Laureate institutions. Member institutions benefit from savings in development-related costs, joint resources and experience within the network. Laureate retains ownership of the products and each university decides which programs and resources to implement according to their needs.

43. The LNPS portfolio focuses on four areas: internationality, academic excellence, employability, and business acceleration. Examples of products and services include, among others: an English teaching programme offering content and assessment tools, teacher training and consultancy modules; a video streaming service that provides universities the ability to broadcast events across the network; a faculty development programme; a content repository of best practices; signature instructional content in different formats; and international accreditation support. LNPS also provides software development and IT support for websites developed by LNPS for network universities. In order to promote these solutions, each

member institution appoints an internal LNPS “champion” and can allocate internal funds to support local implementation and customization of the products.

44. LNPS’ approach to product and service development prioritizes needs, analysis and local customization over uniformity across the group. Nonetheless, common branding and the provision of a coherent experience for students who participate in exchange programmes within the network remain important. Ms. Corpeño noted how efforts required to align the needs of network members increased over time as the network grew larger. Smaller networks may find the development of similar solutions easier in their initial stages of growth.

45. Juan Salcedo (Laureate Europe) noted that a major challenge for cooperation among institutions lies in establishing sustainability mechanisms that ensure collaboration beyond formal agreements. Mr. Salcedo highlighted the LNPS model as an effective solution to sustain collaboration within networks in a way that is robust to changes in management teams in member institutions.

46. An organisational practice aimed at improving knowledge management within Universidad Antonio de Nebrija (Spain) was presented by Alfonso Sánchez-Macián. The institution has established its Professional Skills Institute (*Instituto de Competencias Profesionales*) as part of a series of structures to gather knowledge about how to enhance students’ career success. The Institute operates as an independent unit within the university and its main role is to conduct research on professional skills demanded in the labour market and on ways to transfer this knowledge to curriculum and instructional practices. The Institute consults regularly with a variety of stakeholders including companies and professionals, policy-makers, students, faculty and university administrators.

47. An example of the work of the Institute is the report on the skills sought in job interviews in Spanish companies published in February 2013. The study was based on a survey of senior managers and heads of human resources departments about the importance of different professional skills identified in the research literature. It showed that companies continue to place a high value on traditional skills such as being outcome-oriented at the same time as change management and own initiative emerge as new important criteria in selection and promotion processes. The study further suggests that generic skills play a more important role in external than in internal job selection processes. Universidad Antonio de Nebrija has also a Student Career Service that coordinates the internship module present in all study programmes at the university. The service carries out an exhaustive evaluation of the internship programme through surveys and interviews to participating students and companies.

48. Based on the work of these two departments, the curriculum at Nebrija incorporates skills development modules in each year of the study programmes. These modules place a strong focus on employability and include individual development plans, 360-degree feedback, personal branding, and the simulation of job interviews and group dynamics, among others. The certification of these skills is not explicit but taken to be embedded in the university degrees.

49. Innovative logistics and administrative solutions to address the needs to working adults were presented by Tawfiq Rkibi from Universidade Europeia of Lisbon (Portugal). The institution mainly serves working professionals in middle and upper managerial positions and has devised a series of measures to better adapt its offering to their demands and constraints, which students were invited to express through an in-house survey. On the logistics side, Universidade Europeia has increased the number the group study rooms and allows access to its facilities 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. The simplification of administrative procedures has been another area of action, with a simplified service to support students in obtaining the working adult status. Examination periods have also been extended, and about 90% of the university’s courses are offered on both day and night shifts. These organisational arrangements cater to the students’ needs by increasing flexibility in work modes and facilitating work-study balance.

*b) Pedagogical innovations*

50. Several presentations throughout the seminar focused on how the private higher education sector seeks to promote the acquisition of 21st century skills through innovative pedagogical practices. Successful cases of innovative curricula, instruction and assessment were discussed, with special attention to the possibilities afforded by new technologies and the challenges they may represent. The discussion also explored how extended these innovative practices are in both private and public sectors and how they can most effectively be sustained.

51. Universidad Europea de Madrid is currently piloting a programme to assess general competencies. The aim of this initiative is to provide students with richer feedback and help them construct individual skills profiles to complement standard academic records. Universidad Europea de Madrid was among the first higher education institutions in Spain to embrace the “competencies approach” promoted by the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). This approach promotes the recognition of generic skills in thinking and creativity and social and behavioural skills as explicit learning outcomes alongside technical and subject-based skills. The framework adopted by Universidad Europea de Madrid recognises 18 generic skills that can be grouped into 3 broad categories as distinguished in the *Tuning Educational Structures in Europe* project<sup>2</sup>: instrumental competencies (e.g. methodological abilities, linguistic abilities), interpersonal competencies (e.g. social interaction and co-operation), and systemic competencies (e.g. combination of understanding). More importantly, the formal recognition of the generic skills as learning outcomes is accompanied by practical efforts to align teaching, learning and assessment practices with these objectives.

52. While this approach to skills has in recent years become a common feature of universities across Europe and other regions of the world (recall the example of Nebrija above), the innovative character of the pedagogies promoted at Universidad Europea de Madrid lies, on the one hand, in the adoption of learner-centred and active teaching and learning methodologies that explicitly target the development of these skills. These include cooperative learning, problem-based learning, and case method. On the other hand, the institution is piloting an innovative skills assessment instrument which encompasses a detailed description form of the competencies under assessment, and evaluation templates to be used by both faculty and students which refer to validated evaluation methods and tools. These templates list indicators of the application of skills to authentic tasks and offer a range of responses that discriminate between frequencies and depths of execution.

53. Furthermore, the university requires its full-time faculty to undertake 60 hours of pedagogical training each academic year; this training aligns with the competencies framework outlined above. The innovative approach taken by Universidad Europea is presented in several publications on the topic (Benito and Cruz, 2011; Terrón López et al., 2012).

54. The impact of digital technologies on higher education and, more specifically, innovations in delivery methods were also recurrent topics throughout the seminar. Blended education models relying on a variety of forms of e-learning appear as a preferred instructional approach in many private higher institutions. More generally, the application of ICTs to education is seen as a means of improving efficiency in education services and supporting innovation in teaching and learning, and thus as an instrument for increasing educational opportunities and students’ employability.

55. Blended and online delivery is favoured over face-to-face only delivery by students in many of the institutions represented at the meeting, and specifically by working adults for whom it provides greater flexibility to follow courses and interact with peer students and faculty virtually. This applied, for instance,

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/competencies.html>

to adult students at Universidade Europeia of Lisbon (Portugal), whose levels of digital competence tends to be higher than that of traditional students.

56. In a different context, the Plato Higher Education group is using new technologies to extend access to vocational training to women and youngsters in rural areas of Turkey. Plato's blended education model integrates advanced technologies for distance education. Facilities in regional education centres are equipped to enable video conferencing and web TV, the use of learning management systems and interactive content managers. These tools allow students to both work on asynchronous tasks and exchange advice and feedback with teachers in live instruction sessions in online environments independent of location. While these tools are now mainstream in many higher education institutions across OECD countries and beyond, their application to vocational training in the Turkish context represents an innovation in delivery methods as it is expanding educational opportunities to communities outside the traditional reach of Turkish universities.

57. Discussions about instructional methods and formats addressed on a number of occasions the potential impact of Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) on the higher education system at large and on private providers in particular. MOOCs are an innovative form of e-learning which can be described as the delivery of free online courses without entry requirements and limits to participation, and which do not lead to formal credit or degree recognition. So far, MOOCs have been mainly developed by public elite institutions in Anglo-Saxon countries, but the model is extending rapidly. As discussed by José Antonio Díaz (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain), MOOCs are beginning to differentiate by the extent to which they emphasise traditional learning approaches through knowledge duplication (xMOOCs), or connectivity, creation, and learning through interaction on social networks (cMOOCs).

58. MOOCs present a series of characteristics that challenge prevailing models of higher education provision: they are open, easily scalable, inclusive, and favour interactivity and customization. These features can be seen promoting cost savings and supporting the personalisation of learning experiences. However, to date not sufficient evidence has been generated to assess the impact of MOOCs and other Open Educational Resources (OER) on private higher education providers and the tertiary sector at large. Working hypotheses suggest that impact will partly depend on the capacity of institutions to integrate these resources into new business models and instructional offerings via the curation of open content.

59. An application of new technologies based on innovative pedagogical approaches and having a clear focus on employability was presented by Daniel Torres from the Centro Superior para la Enseñanza Virtual (CSEV, Spain). CSEV, a foundation operating with private funding and in coordination with public institutions, is promoting virtual learning and entrepreneurship platforms for the Ibero-American community. The UNX and Weprendo platforms aim at establishing and energising social communities of practice around entrepreneurship. These platforms provide MOOCs and practical case studies designed by academic tutors and moderated by expert facilitators, tools for virtual interaction and collective learning, and a series of accreditation mechanisms such as badges and reputation indicators. Offered learning experiences place a special focus on the development of new professional skills in the digital economy, such as online and social networks, linguistic and entrepreneurship capabilities. While the platforms are designed to operate outside institutional boundaries, they can serve as models for the development of similar communities of practice and learning approaches in higher education institutions both public and private.

60. Exchanges throughout the seminar suggested another type of innovation being promoted by private providers, namely innovative marketing strategies motivated by the growing internationalisation of tertiary education. Gonzalo Redondo of Fundación Universitaria San Pablo-CEU (Spain) argued that private universities need new marketing models in order to compete in a global academic market and succeed in attracting international students. One of these strategies is to set up recruitment teams that travel

to present the offering of their institution and are able to connect more closely with students' motivations to embark in study abroad programmes. The duration of these programmes is shifting from the traditional semester/year-abroad model towards full-length study plans where most of the teaching is carried out in English, and greater attention is being given to multiculturalism to reflect the increasingly heterogeneous composition of student bodies.

61. Many participants highlighted the need to improve coordination among private providers around marketing strategies, in particular with regards to accreditation and quality labels. The Education UK website coordinated by the British Council appears as an example of effective branding (albeit not restricted to the private sector). In the case of Spain, Mr. Redondo suggested that efforts could be coordinated with the Spanish Institute for Foreign Trade (*Instituto Español de Comercio Exterior*, ICEX). The objective of these initiatives would be to increase collective brand awareness through quality certification. There was consensus among participants about the fact that investments in marketing should not come at the expense of innovation and improvement in instruction and student services.

### ***Challenges and barriers to innovation in the private higher education sector***

62. Barriers to innovation in a variety of geographical and regulatory landscapes were another key topic of discussion during the seminar. A common denominator across regions and competition scenarios is the sustained growth trend experienced by the private higher education sector. In light of this trend, the assurance of quality provision and opportunities for innovation appear as major challenges. Some of the interventions reflected on the impact that different ways of channelling this expansion can have on innovation. Others focused on problems related to regulation and evaluation procedures. A third cluster of factors concern constraints for financial investments to bring innovation forward.

63. Juan Carlos Silas (ITESO, Mexico) discussed the growth of the private higher education in Latin America, with a special focus on the Mexican case, and how its external conditions shape the ability of institutions to adopt and develop educational innovations. Nearly 22 million students are enrolled in higher education across Latin America and about half of them study in private institutions. The strong growth of the private sector over the last three decades is rooted in several factors including the large increase of primary and secondary levels of attainment in the population, the increasing weight of educational credentials for success in the labour market and, to a lesser extent, the "entrepreneurship" of both independent investors and players in state boards who have taken the steps to establish private higher education institutions. Overall, structural demand for higher education has largely outpaced the increase in public provision and created the conditions for the emergence of private institutions, which absorbed different segments of this demand.

64. Since the mid-1990s, private institutions in most Latin American countries are no longer perceived as surrogates to public universities. Private providers better understood the marketization dynamics of higher education and responded to the notion that quality is not solely indicated by solid academic programmes but also by factors such as students' employability prospects, accreditation from external bodies, international partnerships and an extensive use of new technologies. As a result, in many countries both public and private providers can now enjoy a reputation as innovation leaders. The latter have been faster and better-ordered in accommodating their educational programs, teaching models and facilities to the needs of prospective students.

65. In recent years, national public policies in Latin America increased regulation and strengthened accreditation requirements with the objective to promote quality. The result has been the increase in the costs of private education across countries. As these increases could not be entirely transferred to students, the need for greater efficiency and economies of scale favoured large institutions and those with the support of institutional networks. A concentration of enrolment in an increasingly small number of

institutions followed in countries like Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador, Panama, Costa Rica, Peru, Dominican Republic, Bolivia and Brazil. Large conglomerates are in a better position to offer innovative online or face-to-face higher education and take advantage of their operational volume.

66. In parallel, however, the weak implementation of regulation about the creation of new institutions failed to contain the proliferation of small institutions in most Latin American countries. In the case of Mexico, the highly segmented private higher education serves about 850 000 students enrolled in a universe of 1 800 institutions and over 25 000 higher education programmes. Segmentation is most visible in tuition prices and three segments of institutions (“elite”, “average”, and “low” consumption) can be distinguished. The small size and limited operational capacity of providers in the middle and low segments makes them a weak link in the educational system. As such, the market consolidation process limited diversification and innovation in smaller institutions.

67. The dynamics of innovation in the private higher education sector of Latin American countries is thus being transformed by strong demand for tertiary education, increasing levels of regulation focused on quality and accreditation, a growing international dimension, and the concentration of enrolment in larger institutions. Institutions’ size appears as the strongest correlate with the capacity to develop and implement innovations.

68. The private higher education sector is encountering similar trends and challenges in other regions of the world. Ms. Mishra Ghosh (FICCI, India) noted that while demand absorption is also playing a key role in the growth of the private sector in India, market self-regulation and reputational mechanisms operate effectively and many institutions perceived as low performers often struggle to fill vacancies in enrolment. The visibility for students (and by extension to other stakeholders) of the quality of private providers appears closely related to regulation and accreditation mechanisms and to employability outcomes.

69. The impact of regulatory frameworks on innovation in higher education was the object of several interventions throughout the seminar. The institutional diversity of the private higher education sector presents a challenge for regulation from a variety of angles. This diversity pertains to institutions’ size, funding sources and extent of profit-seeking behaviour, balance between teaching and research activity, and internationalisation and reputation profiles. Regulatory frameworks should take into account this heterogeneity in countries where the sector is large and comprises a variety of segments or differentiated players. In these contexts, one-size-fits-all solutions are likely to be of limited effectiveness in their goals. The extent to which regulatory frameworks support innovation in both the private and public sectors should also be given careful consideration.

70. The responses of regulators to the growth of the private higher education sector in (mainly) Anglo-Saxon countries were discussed by John Fielden (Chems Consulting, United Kingdom). In contrast to prevailing views, Mr. Fielden showed how in these countries regulation is becoming stricter and regulatory agencies are extending their competencies. For example, Malaysia, Ireland and the United Kingdom are merging public and private accreditation committees and adopting common evaluation standards and processes for both sectors, while Singapore has created a new agency with detailed controls over private providers. In Australia, new legislation was introduced in 2011 setting a standards framework for higher education that extends to teaching and learning standards, which previously were only subject to self-regulation.

71. Mr. Fielden highlighted other common trends in regulation across Anglo-Saxon countries: the growing importance for regulators of the distinction between for-profit and non-for-profit institutions; the default labelling of foreign providers as private; lacunae on the regulation of online provision, especially

when based offshore; and growing concerns about the locus of managerial responsibility in networks and about board policies being driven by financial rather than academic objectives.

72. In response to these concerns, regulators are increasingly demanding that private providers adhere to statements about public service and give greater input to their academic community in managerial decisions. Most importantly, regulators are increasingly scrutinising the efficiency of institutions that receive public money by demanding greater transparency about outcomes. The latter development is most visible in the United Kingdom and the United States. For instance, in the latter case the Federal government is urging the publication, for each higher education institution, of a College Score Card that provides comparisons with peer institutions on key metrics such as graduation rates, average net prices, loan repayment rates, average student loan debt, and earnings potential after graduation.

73. Requiring higher education institutions, both public and private, to make available more exhaustive information about their performance and efficiency is seen as a mechanism to protect students, taxpayers, and the reputation of the national higher education systems.

74. Participants raised a variety of questions around regulation. A common observation was that, in most countries, evaluators are appointed from public institutions and tend to bring a “public-sector mindset” to their assessment. The composition of evaluation committees can be problematic in countries where private and public providers are in open competition for students and research funds. Another concern in heavily bureaucratic systems is the insufficient expertise of evaluators who may not have professional experience in the education sector. The German model was presented as a successful case of combining public funding and evaluation by independent scientific bodies. The slowness of legislation in adapting to the internationalisation of higher education was also discussed, and examples were presented of instances when the length of evaluation processes prevented a quicker adoption of innovations. The cases of Portugal and France where specific legislation provides working adults with financial support and conditions for work-study balance were highlighted as models that foster life-long learning and support the role of private higher education institutions.

75. Another topic of discussion in this area were the funding barriers and incentives for innovation in higher education. Private institutions that do not receive public funds raised objections to being excluded from the fiscal regimes that public institutions enjoy in some countries, with argument that taxation does sometimes operate as a toll on the innovation capacity of private providers. There was a call for fiscal schemes that incentivise investments in educational innovation programmes.

### ***Lessons for public institutions and the higher education sector at large***

76. The driving forces behind the recent global growth of private higher education show no sign of slowing down. Higher education will continue its expansion worldwide and private higher education has become a viable policy alternative to the expansion of public provision, especially in countries where historical patterns favoured the emergence of private providers or where the public sector has a limited capacity to absorb increasing demand (Teixeira, 2009). Among OECD countries there has not been much expansion though (Vincent-Lancrin, 2009), but in 2011 the private sector represented more than three quarters of total higher education enrolment in Japan and Korea, more than half in Mexico, and between a fifth and a third in Chile, Poland, Portugal and the United States. Among key partner countries, in 2011 more than two thirds of all students in higher education were enrolled in private institutions in Brazil, and more than half in Indonesia (OECD, 2013).

77. The seminar was an opportunity to discuss to what extent the innovative practices of private institutions can inspire their public counterparts and the higher education sector at large, and the mechanisms through which these practices could be adopted and sustained.



78. Alejandro Tiana (Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain) discussed recent contributions to the debate about different models of governance in higher education institutions. These contributions have emphasised three axes of reform for the public sector: granting greater autonomy to institutions, a greater focus on conditional financing, and improving accountability mechanisms. Mr. Tiana argued that models of governance adopted by higher education institutions should first and foremost reflect their mission, and that goals differ across the public and private sectors. By extension, innovation should be a means towards better serving these goals, and thus the forms that innovation adopts are likely to differ between public and private institutions.

79. There is, nonetheless, room to learn from best practices and reforms that have proven effective. Mr. Tiana highlighted potential avenues to improve the governance of public institutions: opening the composition of governing boards to a greater variety of societal stakeholders; explore new ways of understanding the needs of students and staff through better consultation; base conditional financing models on agreed metrics for the returns of public investments in higher education; and strengthen accountability through quality assurance agencies. Many of these developments are common currency in the private higher education sector and could be further advanced in public institutions.

80. Positive lessons could be drawn by the public sector with regards to partnerships with industry that foster graduates' employability. These partnerships can help improve the design of existing academic programmes, inspire new ones, and help students gain labour market experience before or shortly after they conclude their tertiary education.

81. Networks of public institutions could adopt some or the organisational practices developed in the private sector to make a more effective use of their human and material resources and exploit synergies to reduce operational costs and extend opportunities to their students. Some services such as those provided by Laureate to its members could also be proposed and shared by public institutions.

82. The greater focus that private institutions generally place on the quality of instruction should also inspire reflection on the part of their public counterparts. Training opportunities for faculty could improve and pedagogy-oriented professional development could find more recognition in faculty promotion policies and in accreditation and quality rankings for institutions.

### **Next steps**

83. All seminar attendants agreed to stay connected and exchange further information on activities and events as well as practice-related content.

84. The possibility of organising meetings with a two-year periodicity to extend the discussion and report on the progress of existing programmes and new initiatives was mentioned.

### **Additional material**

The seminar programme and the list of participants are included in the Annex to this document. They can also be found, alongside presentations and other supporting materials, on the OECD website<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.oecd.org/edu/ceri/innovationstrategyforeducationandtrainingmeetingsandconferences.htm>

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**ANNEX****International seminar****“Innovative approaches to education in the private higher education sector”**

**Jointly organised by the OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI)  
and Laureate International Universities Europe**

**Universidad Europea, Madrid, Spain - 28-29 November 2013**

**Background**

Education and training systems are under increasing pressure to respond to the new skills demands generated by a rapidly changing and globalised labour market. The acceleration of scientific and technological innovations requires new strategic responses to train the workforce and make an effective use of existing skills. This presents challenges at all levels of schooling, but especially at the tertiary level.

Educational institutions and universities need to respond to the cycle of innovation and adapt their organisation and pedagogies to serve increasingly heterogeneous student profiles and improve the teaching and learning of a variety of skills for innovation. Across countries and in multiple occupational fields, the private higher education sector is a prominent actor in introducing innovative approaches to the development of 21<sup>st</sup> century skills.

The OECD Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) conducts research on innovative approaches to fostering 21<sup>st</sup> century skills through its project Innovation Strategy for Education and Training. Laureate International Universities (LIU) is the largest international network of private universities with a presence in more than 40 countries around the world. The two institutions have joined forces to organize this seminar on innovation in the private higher education sector.

**Objectives**

This seminar aims to:

- Discuss the growth of the private higher education sector and its distinct role in educational innovation and in developing the skills of traditional and adult students;
- Map innovation in the private higher education sector in both organisational and pedagogical areas;
- Provide a forum for higher education institutions to share experiences on their explicit or implicit educational innovation strategies.

*The working language of the seminar will be English.*

## ANNOTATED AGENDA

### Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November

8.45 – 9.00 – Registration and coffee

9.00 – 9.10 – Welcome by *Miguel Carmelo* (*Laureate Europe*)

#### **9.10 – 10.00 – Session 1: The importance of innovation in the private higher education sector**

- *Stéphan Vincent-Lancrin* (OECD): “Private higher education in the educational innovation ecosystem”
- *Águeda Benito* (*Universidad Europea, Spain*): “Reducing the gap between higher education and labor needs”

#### **10.00 – 13.00 – Session 2: The changing landscape of the private higher education sector: trends and perspectives**

This session will set the background for the seminar discussion by examining the evolving role of private higher education institutions in higher education systems.

The presentations and discussion will address the following questions:

- What is changing in the mission and function of private higher education worldwide?
  - How are different segments of private higher education growing and evolving?
  - What are the key drivers of demand and change/innovation and what will be their evolution over the next decade?
  - Do we observe a global trend or are there significant differences across regions?
  - What challenges do these trends raise from a policy or regulatory perspective?
- *Juan Carlos Silas Casillas* (*ITESO Universidad Jesuita de Guadalajara, Mexico*): “Who is pushing innovation in current higher education?”
  - *Shobha Mishra* (*Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry, India*): “The evolving face of private higher education in India”  
*Coffee break*
  - *Gonzalo Redondo* (*Fundación Universitaria San Pablo-CEU, Spain*): “The influence of globalization in the models of management of universities”
  - *John Fielden* (*Chems Consulting, United Kingdom*): “The regulator’s response to the growing private sector”
  - Moderator: *Trine Jensen* (*International Association of Universities*)

#### **13.00 – 14.30 – Lunch break**

#### **14.30 – 17.30 – Session 3: Organisational innovations in the private higher education sector**

This session will discuss inspiring governance and organisational practices in the private higher education sector. The discussion will depart from the conventional focus on evaluation and national higher education policies, and concentrate instead on specific examples of innovations in governance across institutions and countries, and in the organisation of work within higher education institutions. These examples may include organisational practices that address in innovative ways student, employer or faculty demands, and governance practices that sustain pedagogical or other types of innovation within organisations.

The presentations and discussion will address the following questions:

- What are the internal governance challenges faced by private higher education institutions? Successful examples in addressing these challenges.
  - Examples of organisational features in private higher education institutions to foster innovation.
  - Constraints to innovation related to institutional governance or the environment in which institutions operate.
- **Atilla Eris** (*Istanbul Bilgi Universitesi, Turkey*): “*Legal and administrative constraints to innovation in universities*”
  - **Alfonso Sánchez-Macián** (*Universidad Antonio de Nebrija, Spain*): “*Governing universities to prepare students for career success*”
- Coffee break*
- **Alejandro Tiana** (*Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain*): “*Changing structures and habits in the governance of universities*”
  - **Moderator: Daniel Burgos** (*Universidad Internacional de la Rioja, Spain*)

### **Friday 29<sup>th</sup> November**

#### **9.00 – 12.00 – Session 4: Pedagogical innovations the private higher education sector: teaching, assessment and curricula**

This session will shift the focus of the discussion to instructional and pedagogical aspects and how skills for innovation (i.e. subject-based skills; skills in thinking and creativity; social and behavioural skills) are nurtured in the private higher education sector. In doing so, it will also continue the mapping of innovative practices. Successful cases of innovative curricula, pedagogies and assessment will be reviewed, with special attention to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT).

The presentations and discussion will address the following questions:

- Examples of pedagogical practices that foster skills for innovation and/or pedagogical innovations that sustain improvement in education.
  - Examples of curricula that foster skills for innovation and/or curricular innovations that sustain improvement in education.
  - Examples of innovative assessment practices that sustain improvement in education.
  - Examples of innovative uses of ICTs for teaching and learning.
  - How extended are these innovations in pedagogy, curriculum and assessment in the private higher education sector, and how are can they be sustained?
- **Jose Ginés Mora** (*Institute of Education, United Kingdom*): “*Skills for innovation: what can higher education institutions do?*”
  - **Solangel Corpeño** (*Laureate Products and Services, United States*): “*Innovation in language teaching and creation of new academic products*”
- Coffee break*
- **José Antonio Díaz** (*Universidad Nacional de Educación a Distancia, Spain*): “*Innovative degrees and forms of delivery in an online university*”
  - **Tolga Yazici** (*Plato Group, Turkey*): “*An innovative approach to vocational education in Turkey*”

- Moderator: **Luis Calandre** (*Universidad Europea, Spain*)

**12.00 – 13.30 – Lunch break**

**13.30 – 16.30 – Session 5: Innovative approaches for lifelong learning in the private higher education sector**

This session will discuss how the private higher education sector caters to the specific needs of working adults and other population segments that are less often in a position to interrupt their employment and/or to participate in standard education programmes. The session will discuss interesting examples that could inspire the higher education sector as a whole and nurture innovative practices.

The presentations and discussion will address the following questions:

- How can instructional delivery and student experience be better adapted to the needs and constraints of working adults?
  - How can the demands of both employers and employees be better identified and met in the design of higher education programmes?
  - How can the offering of the private higher education sector enhance the employability of working adults students and support professional development?
- **Tawfiq Rkibi** (*Universidade Europeia, Portugal*): “*Innovative approaches in the delivery to working adult university students*”
  - **Pierre Pariente** (*École Centrale d’Electronique & Institut Français de Gestion, France*): “*Higher education and industry partnerships*”  
*Coffee break*
  - **Daniel Torres** (*Centro Superior para la Enseñanza Virtual, Spain*): “*Life-long learning and the de-clustering of life*”
  - **Gerri Burton** (*New Learning Ventures, United States*): “*Higher education and talent readiness: improving the alignment between higher education, employment and entrepreneurial needs*”
  - Moderator: **Miguel Gómez Navarro** (*Universidad Europea, Spain*)

**16.30 – 16.45 – Coffee break**

**16.45 – 17.30 – Session 6: Discussion and next steps**

In the final session, participants will build on the seminar’s presentations to identify key challenges and success factors for the promotion of innovation in higher education. Key conclusions and next steps for the seminar will also be discussed.

**Participants list**  
**International Seminar**  
**“Innovative approaches to education in the private higher education sector”**  
**Madrid, 28-29/11/2013**

*N.B: Country affiliations do not necessarily mean that participants act as representatives of their countries. The list is based on location of professional affiliations.*

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