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Abstract

Since forever colleges and universities compete with each other for students, teachers, donors and social support. For a long time, the competition has been evaluated by implicit reputation without any data to back up perceptions. Recently the competition has been accelerated in many countries as governments develop initiatives to build world-class universities that can compete more effectively with other leading institutions across the globe. Although there are concerns with using rankings as tool for measuring the quality of a university, many institutional leaders still often rely on rankings to inform their policymaking. Global rankings have major impacts on higher education systems, higher education institutions, academics and consumers (students, parents, employers). For this reason, university rankings should encourage universities around the world to carry out a self assessment in

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relation to several quality issues, including sustainability. None of the main global rankings have so far addressed the issue, both in terms of good practice assessments and as an important signal to society as a whole. The introduction of sustainability in global rankings could be an important addition to the existing metrics and a significant dimension of comparison with multiple and far reaching benefits, not only for single universities as well as for the entire higher educational system. It is important introducing sustainability in global rankings not simply as a criterion for identifying the best universities, but as a general underlying best practice principle in university activities, in the same way they have been recognized in all other institutions such as companies and households.(HRK / Abstract übernommen)

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