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**Abstract**

In recent years, mergers have been widely used in higher education (HE) to achieve a variety of purposes, ranging from problems of institutional fragmentation to the lack of financial and academic viability, and low institutional efficiency and quality. However, despite a large stream of HE literature addressing those issues, there has been little attention to the link between funding-related problems and merger processes. Moreover, there is very little comparative research among different higher education systems experiencing those processes. In this paper, we map and characterize the recent experience of 25 European countries with these processes, aiming at identifying main patterns regarding key drivers and motivations. We also analyze the main difficulties identified, the role of funding and financial incentives and, whenever possible, the main impacts and economic gains associated with those merger processes. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)