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**Abstract**

In this preliminary review, the authors analyse the effects of privatisation on diversity in higher education (HE) systems by exploring the consequences of the establishment of HE Institutions by non-public organisations. The rising importance of privatisation in Europe (Western and transitional economies), Latin America, and Southeast Asia is analysed. Then follows detailed examinations of private-sector HE in countries representative of all these geographical areas to determine how far privatisation has stimulated diversity. The preliminary results indicate that in each case the private sub-sector has promoted limited and partial diversification. In general, though, the more recent private establishments, created to satisfy increasing demand for HE, have nonetheless focused predominately on teaching, have undertaken little, or no, research and appear to be of lower quality than the older institutions. The private sub-sector is characterised mostly by its low-risk behaviour, and a concentration on low-cost and/or safer initiatives. Public authorities must share at least a partial

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responsibility for some of the negative side effects of the development of private higher education.

(HRK / Abstract übernommen)