

Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society

VOLUME 1

**SPECIAL FEATURES: GOVERNANCE,
FUNDING, QUALITY**

**By Paulo Santiago, Karine Tremblay, Ester Basri
and Elena Arnal**

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Foreword

In April 2004, the OECD Education Committee embarked on a comprehensive international review of tertiary education policy, the OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education. Its goal was to help countries share innovative and successful initiatives and to identify policy options to maximise the contribution of tertiary education to national economic and social objectives. In addition to this publication, the Review generated 24 reports by participating countries, 14 reports by external review teams (released as a publication series, *OECD Reviews of Tertiary Education*) and several research papers (all available on the OECD Web site at www.oecd.org/edu/tertiary/review). This OECD project provides probably the most comprehensive analysis ever undertaken of tertiary education policy issues at international level.

OECD work helps countries to learn from one another. It can also highlight issues and explore policy options that may be difficult to raise in national debates. Both of these elements clearly underpin this report and the work behind it. The active engagement of Member and Partner economies has been crucial to the process. The 24 participating countries committed substantial resources and opened their tertiary education policies to external review and debate. This collaborative approach enabled countries to learn more about themselves and to add to the broader knowledge base by sharing evidence on the impact of policy reforms and the circumstances under which they work best.

The project benefited substantially from the involvement of organisations representing students, tertiary education institutions, academics, researchers and employers. Their representatives served on national steering committees, prepared written submissions, met with review teams and participated in conferences and workshops. The project also benefited from the involvement of the Business and Industry Advisory Committee to the OECD and the Trade Union Advisory Committee to the OECD and other international organisations interested in tertiary education policy, including the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, the European Commission, the European Investment Bank, the European Students' Union, the European University Association, Eurydice, the International Association of Universities, the International Network of Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education, UNESCO, UNESCO-CEPES (European Centre for Higher Education), UNESCO's International Institute for Educational Planning and the World Bank.

Appendix A (in Volume 2 of this report) details the many people and organisations who contributed to the project as national co-ordinators, members of country review teams, and authors of country background reports and commissioned research papers – more than 150 people in all. In addition, the project benefited from the input of hundreds of others through national steering committees, consultations for country background reports and country review visits, and the 150 tertiary education institutions visited by the OECD review teams. We thank them all for their valuable contributions to the collective knowledge base.

The project was carried out by the Education and Training Policy Division of the OECD's Directorate for Education under the leadership of Abrar Hasan (until his retirement) and Deborah Roseveare (since June 2007). Paulo Santiago and Karine Tremblay were responsible for the project and preparation of this report. A partnership was established with OECD's Directorate for Science, Technology and Industry (DSTI), whereby Ester Basri of DSTI took responsibility for the area of research and innovation. A number of other colleagues contributed to both the project and this report (see *Acknowledgements* below). A larger group of colleagues within the OECD provided advice at key stages. In particular, close collaboration was established with the work of the Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) on *Supporting the Contribution of Higher Education Institutions to Regional Development*, the work of the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) on the *Future of Higher Education*, the developmental work on indicators on tertiary education, and the work by OECD's Department of Economics on *The Policy Determinants of Investment in Tertiary Education*.

This report was released in Lisbon on 3 April 2008 at an international conference jointly sponsored by the OECD and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Higher Education of Portugal through the Foundation for Science and Technology, and locally organised by the *Instituto Superior de Ciências do Trabalho e da Empresa*, a public university based in Lisbon.

The OECD intends to maintain the momentum of its work on tertiary education and to build on the *Thematic Review of Tertiary Education* and this report.

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Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society provides a thorough international investigation of tertiary education policy across its many facets – governance, funding, quality assurance, equity, research and innovation, academic career, links to the labour market and internationalisation. The report presents:

- an analysis of the trends and developments in tertiary education;
- a synthesis of research-based evidence on the impact of tertiary education policies;
- innovative and successful policies and practices that countries have implemented; and
- tertiary education policy options.

The report draws on the results of a major OECD review of tertiary education policy – the OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education – conducted over the 2004-08 period in collaboration with 24 countries around the world.

Further reading

A companion series – *OECD Reviews of Tertiary Education* – offers an in-depth analysis of tertiary education policies in each of the 14 countries which opted for a country review: China, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Japan, Korea, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland and Spain.

www.oecd.org/edu/tertiary/review

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