

# Guadalajara Panel Discussion

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## *Challenges and Opportunities from a Cross Regional Perspective*

To begin with, I would once again like to thank IAUP, my friends and colleagues, for having me here today. It is my pleasure and honor to participate in a panel over the challenges and opportunities in education from a cross regional perspective. As persons responsible for developing higher education the world over, members of IAUP are to be at a front seat of any developments in education and as such it is important and beneficial we have this discussion here and now. Thus, I will begin by discussing a few important points that I think are crucial for us today. I would like to outline the general shape of challenges we face and follow with the opportunities presented to the Education industry. I will touch both parts with the regional specifics that would be of interest for our members.

To begin with let us look at the challenges on the global and regional scale. The most stark and important issue at the current state is the question of internationalization. As shown both in research done by international organizations like European Union and World Bank, as well as by past experiences the internationalization is the key to developing future education. We as an organization must strive towards uniting our members and developing common international IAUP culture. The most important topics within globalization are the manifold and include a development of international curricula, mobility system and teaching materials. As well as a development of inclusive, tolerant culture that would allow smooth integration for both regional and international students. Furthermore, on regional level a need for development of quality adult is becoming more and more apparent. As world becomes more interconnected and homogenized we cannot continue to ignore a large share of students with requirements that differ from previously considered. Furthermore, raises the need of internationally available high quality teaching and learning materials, which require deep cooperation and commitment of educators on all levels. To make affordable and relevant syllabi and classes are the

foundation for a success on hypercompetitive international market. However, here too we can examine the differences between different regions. While for the core European universities the main focus is on innovation and research, the universities in the other corners of the world would reach more efficient and sustainable growth greater international involvement and exchange of ideas, like in my homeland – Georgia and universities in Latin America. On the other hand, such a partnership provides students and intellectual resources to the institutions in the saturated educational markets, like Europe and United States. The one global issue for all the members of IAUP is a requirement for wider, quality and efficient tertiary and vocational education rising on the modern high-skill oriented market.

Furthermore, the aforementioned problems combine with relatively stratified educational structures, limited by both regional and international government interference and lack of resources, creates an illusion of unwavering future increase of the past patterns that influences the development of education. In other words, there is a bubble that inflates the value of standard Higher Education. I understand how all this sounds to you, but fear not – Let us first hear the second part of what I want to say. Let us talk about Opportunities.

In current age there are ample opportunities for development and advancement for both universities in first and third world countries. All we need to do is look at the world with fresh eyes, open minds and readiness for action. First of all, I would like to underline the importance of education in current economy. The driving forces of innovation and research tied to the leading universities worldwide are what allow the technological progress and that is one thing that is growing in importance and economic value. Furthermore, an international symbiosis of educational resources between first and third world universities allows an exchange and pooling of material and intellectual resources that open opportunities the world over. Such interconnectedness allows for the development of streamlined student and staff exchange between educational institutions and provides stimuli for the private companies and governments to invest resources and incentives into the development of education. Furthermore, the development of alternate forms of education for adults, non-natives and vocational fields allows the spread into less explored

markets that are growing in value. Even the growth of more straightforward, socialized and less resource intensive education allows us an opportunity for growth through our international networking, integrity and resource efficiency.

In conclusion, I would like to say that as we enter a new era of the development in the fields of education we are going to meet both new challenges and new opportunities on both international and regional level. Fortunately, IAUP is an international education that promotes the exchange of intellectual innovation, research and experience, things that will always have value. As such, through integrity, innovation and a culture of international community members of IAUP have an opportunity to intermingle, share and boldly go into the brighter world. All it needs is your continued support and commitment.

Thank you for the attention.

Kakha Shengelia

President of IAUP