Debate on the Democratic Mission of Higher Education
Since 1999, the Council of Europe and the International Consortium for Higher
Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy (IC) have cooperated to further the role
of higher education in developing and maintaining democracy.

Learn more

Educating for Sustainability: From Access to Student Success

With the advent of AI, quantum computing, genetic engineering and a plethora of other paradigm-shifting innovations, tertiary education is at a turning point. It is against this backdrop that Educating for Sustainable Development (ESD) is not just a vision of transformation; it is a call for reconceiving education in light of a global common good.

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To Survive in Today's HE, You Can't Tiptoe Around Change

Why is revenue still a dirty word? True sustainability demands economic pragmatism. Higher education is at an inflection point. Declining enrolment, unpredictable federal policy and rising student expectations aren't warning signs. They're a mandate.

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Can AI Design a Better University for the 'Age of Complexity'?

As climate disruptions accelerate, artificial intelligence challenges our understanding of intelligence itself, and as democracy faces increasing pressure worldwide, universities are confronting a quieter but equally urgent crisis: the erosion of their legitimacy.

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The McDonaldisation of Higher Education in the Age of AI

In 1993, sociologist George Ritzer introduced the concept of McDonaldisation to describe how principles like efficiency, calculability, predictability, and control, derived from the fast-food industry, permeate other sectors of society.

Learn more

Shaping Inclusive AI Futures in Higher Education

UNESCO IESALC took part in a parallel session at the Anna Lindh Foundation's Forum 2025 in Tirana, Albania, where the two organisations discussed how artificial intelligence (AI) could help to transform higher education systems across the Euro-Mediterranean region, making them more inclusive, ethical, and responsive to local needs.

Learn more

Is the 3-Year Degree Dream Becoming a Reality?

The first three-year degree programs in the country—online programs at Brigham Young University–Idaho and Ensign College in Utah—gained approval just two years ago. Since then, the number of shortened degree programs has expanded exponentially, with nearly 60 colleges nationwide now offering or working toward developing such programs.

Columbia Deal a 'Threat' to Higher Ed, Experts Warn

The Trump administration's landmark settlement with Columbia University threatens the institution's independence and academic freedom, higher education experts say. Many warn that the agreement marks a threat not only to higher education, but also to democracy at large.

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