

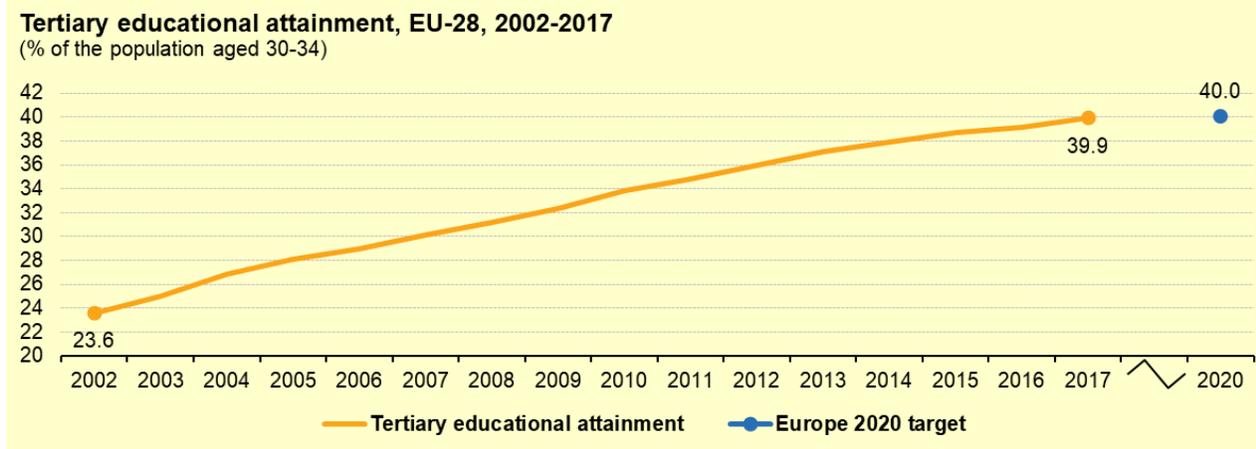
Factors conditioning accessibility differences of the disadvantaged groups to higher education in various countries

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Note: Break in time series in 2014 (switch from ISCED 1997 to ISCED 2011).

Source: Eurostat (online data code: t2020_41)

Bologna process (meeting in Yerevan, 2015):
to make higher education systems more inclusive
and to foster education of disadvantaged young people

- At the EU level 29,5% persons with disabilities (age group 30-34) have completed tertiary (or equivalent) education compared to 42,5% for persons without disabilities
- Access to inclusive high quality education remains elusive for many people with disabilities
- It is expected that, by 2020, approximately 120 million Europeans will have a disability

Progress Report on the implementation of the European Disability Strategy (2010-2020) by EC (2017)

Aim of the presentation

to detect factors conditioning accessibility differences of the disadvantaged groups to HE in various countries

Objectives:

- To substantiate the factors conditioning the accessibility to HE of the disadvantaged groups.
- To reveal the factors, which are the reason for the differences of the accessibility to HE of the disadvantaged groups among countries.

Research methodology

Conceptual framework

- The U. Bronfenbrenner bioecological theory is emphasized and factors are analyzed at the following levels: country, HE system; HE institution; human being;
- The open system approach is applied (G.W. Aalport, 1960; K.E. Weick, 1974), while underlining the meaning of individual participation as well as the impact of environments;
- The Action science (Argyris et al., 1985; Argyris, 1995) theories are applied

Research methodology

1) Research objective: to detect the differences in increasing the accessibility and inclusion in the selected institutions as well as the factors which conditioned these differences

2) Scope of the research:

- Disadvantaged groups: people with disabilities, women, ethnic minorities
- The countries, which had universities participating in the DARE project, (Georgia, Israel, the Czech Republic, Romania, Lithuania) as well as these universities (stressing on the beneficiaries from Israel and Georgia) and their representatives

Research methodology

Research methods:

- Literature and document analysis. Goal: to theoretically substantiate the factors.
- Case study strategy (DARE project beneficiary HE institutions from Israel and Georgia). Goal: to detect what factors were present in the process while countries were striving for the increase in accessibility and inclusion and at the same time solved different objectives.
- Applied methods: observation and document analysis (DARE project development), Focus group (DARE partners substantiating the need for accessibility and inclusion actions in the higher education institutions in Israel and Georgia); interview (with DARE partners from Georgia, Israel, the Czech Republic, Romania, Lithuania)

Factors conditioning accessibility differences

Literature analysis:

- a) the people with disabilities (Brandt, 2011; Liasidou, 2014);
- b) women (Sifuna, 2006; Viefers, Christie, Ferdos, 2006; Tavares, Tavares, Justino, Amaral, 2008);
- c) ethnic minorities (Smith, 2007; Oplatka, Lapidot, 2012). We also used sources (Wallis, 2005; Kim, Kwon, Cho, 2011),

Factors of the country/societal level

- a) The country's experience in the researched question conditioned by history;
- b) The development of the society's understanding about the experiences of the disadvantaged groups and why their accessibility and inclusion into HE has to be ensured;
- c) The economic status of the country.

Conclusions

Factors of the HE system level:

- a) The HE system legal documents of the researched countries adhere to the essential documents of the EC, UN, OECD and other international organizations on the questions of accessibility and inclusion into HE.
- b) The approved documents are not implemented equally successfully in the certain practice of the country; it depends on such aspects as sufficient financial, material, human resources, and if the adequate understanding of relevant needs is formed in the country.

Conclusions

The factors of the HE level:

- The economic, cultural, social situation of the external environment of the specific HE institution,
- The inclusive culture of the HE institution,
- The impact as well as the conditioned means of the accessibility and inclusion projects (especially EU)
- The attention of the Rector, administration and the entire community towards the disadvantaged groups,
- The competence of the administration to achieve accessibility and inclusion.
- The financial and material status of the HE institution.
- The various means, curriculum, time management, digital, organizational, consultations and technical means to detect the disability and to provide the possibilities to achieve accessibility and inclusion.
- Teachers competence to teach for inclusion.
- The competence development of administration and faculty.

Conclusions

Human factors:

- Understanding the conceptions of accessibility and inclusion (aspects of breadth and depth);
- Knowing the culture of the Ethnic minorities;
- Tolerance towards the disadvantaged groups;
- The attitudes of teachers and students towards the disadvantaged groups learning in HE;
- The openness of the individuals from the disadvantaged groups to communicate about own problems, to admit and not to hide the disability.