



Welcome New Member Jacques Boulet *

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Report of Canberra Regional Workshop *

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Report of Frankston Conference *

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Murder Mystery night - Friday 16 May, 6pm *

A gruesome murder is set to take place at the Albury **Library Museum**

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A third of mothers are not working *

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Brimbank Community Learning Strategy 2014-17 *

At the Council meeting held 18th February 2014 Council endorsed the Brimbank Community Learning Strategy 2014-17. The Brimbank Community Learning Strategy supports learning in all life phases and is a long term approach to improving the social and economic outcomes of individuals and the community.

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What is Community Hubs?

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Community Hubs is a national program that links families and their preschool children to services and support, learning opportunities and the wider community.

[Read more](#)

Report into Higher Education

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The 5 GUNi World Report looks at critical dimensions in our understanding of the roles, and potential roles, of higher education institutions (HEIs) as active players in contributing to social change and the creation of another possible world.

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Mapping Social Cohesion

*

Recently arrived migrants arrivals report relatively high levels of discrimination, finds this survey on social cohesion in Australia.

[Read more](#)

Parental influences drive young people's educational aspirations *

Parental influence is a critical driver in influencing young people's educational and occupational aspirations, according to new research

[Read more](#)

Perspectives on regional Australia: change in regional educational attainment, 2001 to 2011

*

All regions in Australia experienced growth in the rate of attainment of higher level qualifications among their populations aged 20-64 years between 2001 and 2011

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Society at a glance 2014: OECD social indicators *

Income inequality and social divisions could worsen and become entrenched unless governments across the OECD act quickly to boost support for the most vulnerable in society, according to this report, which also finds that relative poverty in Australia is higher than the OECD average.

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The Living Classroom

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The Living Classroom recognizes that we are entering a period of extraordinary change. It seeks to chart a positive journey through that change, focusing on the opportunities which change will create.

[Read more](#)

Time Banking

*

The expansion of Timebanking comes after the 4,300 volunteers who registered to participate in a regional trial across the Hunter, Central Coast, Newcastle and Lake Macquarie contributed and exchanged more than 10,300 hours of service.

[Read more](#)

Turning around troubled schools: it can be done *

Some of Australia's most troubled schools are turning around their performance to achieve remarkable results and serve as a model for low-performing schools across the country, a new Grattan Institute report has found.

[Read more](#)

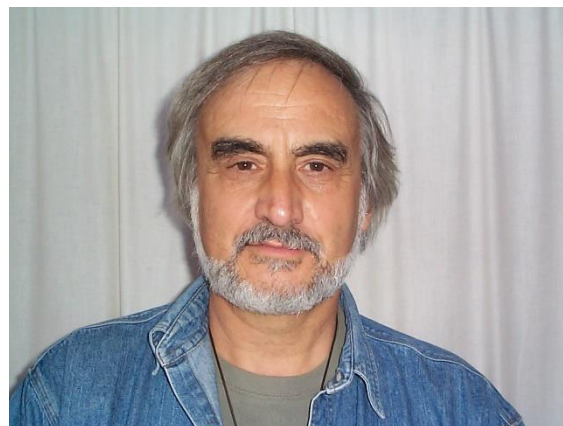
Welcome to Jacques Boulet

I have studied, worked and lived in five continents, starting in my native Flemish Belgium - where I obtained my Social Work Undergraduate Degree in 1965. I worked (and learned a lot!) for 3 years as a volunteer in a major Community Development project in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and subsequently obtained a Post-Graduate Diploma in Community Development and Social Planning at the Institute for Social Studies in The Hague (Netherlands).

I taught in Social Work and Community Development education programs in Germany throughout the seventies and was also involved in several grassroots community projects and activism. From 1980 to 1985, I studied and worked at the University of Michigan (US), finishing my MSW and gaining a PhD in Social Work and in Sociology. From 1985 to 1996 I was a Senior Lecturer and Associate Professor in two Australian universities (Melbourne University and RMIT).

I left academia in 1997 to start – with friends - a local community learning centre, the Borderlands Cooperative (www.borderlands.org.au). Borderlands functions as a mixture of a meeting space for community activism and initiatives, a learning and research/consultancy centre with a huge library and an 'incubation space' for good ideas and alternative praxis.

With Borderlands, I have been involved in research and consulting work in community health, local government policy development, community arts, volunteering support and a broad range of organizational development projects. I was involved in some way with the 100 projects the cooperative completed from its inception and still is today. With Cooperative, I was involved in the starting up of an accredited Master's Course, the **oases** Graduate School, which offers programs in Integrative and Transformative Studies addressing the social, spiritual, ecological and aesthetic issues of the day and finding answers for the pressing needs for change we face (www.oases.edu.au). He is the general editor of the *New Community*, the only community development journal in Australia, appearing quarterly (www.newcq.org).



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A Learning Agenda: introducing the concept of learning cities in the ACT

Representatives from a range of sectors in the ACT recently had the opportunity to participate in a conversation about learning and life skills in the region. *A Learning Agenda* introduced the concept of learning cities as a potential model to adopt in response to the 31% of adults in the ACT who are functionally illiterate¹. Participants heard from experts about the benefits of collaboration to promote learning opportunities and improve literacy.

Dr Leone Wheeler, co-author of [Learning as a Driver for Change](#) and Associate of RMIT University and Teaching Associate with Monash University, introduced the concept and benefits of learning cities. Mike Osborne, Professor at University of Glasgow and Co-director of the PASCAL Observatory on Place Management, Social Capital and Lifelong Learning gave an international perspective on learning communities. Peter Blunden, Executive Officer to the City of Melton Community Learning Board, shared his experience with successful learning initiatives in Melton.

The event was a successful first step in considering a learning region approach, and was covered on the local television news.

¹ Australian component of the *Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies* (PIAAC) 2011 – 2012 ABS 4228.0

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Lifelong Learning, Inclusion and Pathways Conference 2014

A joint project between the Australian Learning Communities Network and Frankston City Council

This conference brought together 115 people from a range of lifelong learning and education providers and local government at the Frankston Arts Centre on 1 May. The Conference aimed to connect various sectors in the region which do not usually have a forum for conversations, sharing and networking; to learn of various perspectives on lifelong learning; to understand challenges to effective pathways, and to showcase regional projects that have successfully engaged learners who would otherwise be excluded from mainstream learning opportunities.

The event was formally opened by the Hon Nick Wakeling, Minister for Higher Education and Skills. Keynote speaker Prof Mike Osborne gave an overview of the various economic and social benefits of lifelong learning and the growing global adoption by cities and regions of the Learning City concept. Mike also invited Frankston City to join the new PASCAL program of Learning Cities 2020 Networks through the Mayor, Cr Darryl Taylor.

Monash University then narrowed the focus to local and regional issues, presenting research findings on attitudes to higher education, pathways challenges, regional employment need, and the Diploma of Tertiary Studies program which supports secondary students with lower ATAR scores to commence and complete a Monash Degree.

After lunch, Dr Jacques Boulet provided an alternative and reflective perspective on learning arising from a lifetime of community development and academic teaching and research. Glenn Shea, an Indigenous youth justice worker, actor and writer then featured *The Storyteller*, an innovative game he devised which is designed to bring Indigenous cultural awareness to the community.

Eight Project Showcases were then presented in a more informal and smaller format for discussion and further interaction. These included two presentations about the development and measurement of learning strategies and plans; careers advice and social inclusion projects in libraries; a kids conference where children were engaged and participated in a conference giving them a voice to speak and be heard, and a partnership project for young mothers to continue their education through pregnancy and the early years of their children.

The day culminated in a panel discussion focussing on how regional collaboration between government, civil society and the private sector can generate learning communities. The audience heard a variety of perspectives from the FMPLLEN, Monash University, Chisholm TAFE, Business Development at Frankston City Council and Jacques Boulet. A summary of this discussion will be available soon for further discussion and development.

Highlights of the day were short cameos written and performed by the MC Jim Russell. Jim worked closely with Conference organisers to develop these. The first was an auction to determine the value of an education to a young single mother, both to the mother and child and to the broader community. The winning bid was a partnership which has actually

happened in Frankston with the Learn, Engage, Connect program for young mothers. The second vignette told the story of Des, an older man with a gambling addiction who had been out of the workforce for some time caring for his wife Maureen and who subsequently passed away. Maureen speaks to him from the afterlife to remind him to seek help from his local community house. Feedback about the Conference has been very positive and is forwarded separately.

Sponsorship

Sponsorship for the Conference was provided by ACFE Learn Local (who also purchased 20 registrations in advance to encourage community houses to attend), Monash University and the Frankston Mornington Peninsula Local Learning and Employment Network. Each of these was valued at \$1,000. Frankston City Council matched this sponsorship with a \$4,000 contribution. Significant in-kind was also provided by the Frankston Arts Centre and Black Tie Catering.

Organisations

Community Houses in Frankston, Mornington, Rosebud, Sorrento, Dandenong, Sandringham, Doveton, Keysborough and Elwood

Local training organisations - Skillsplus, Pragmatic Training and Jobco

Victorian Government - Higher Education & Skills Group

Secondary Education - Assistant Principals from Elisabeth Murdoch College, Careers Advisor from Flinders Christian College

Community organisations - Brotherhood of St Lawrence, Frankston North HIPPY program, Anglicare Communities for Children, Yooralla, Headspace, School Focussed Youth Services

LLENs – Frankston Mornington Peninsula and South East LLEN

Students – Chisholm TAFE and Secondary

Chisholm TAFE

Monash University

Local Government – Cardinia, Casey, Moonee Valley City Council, Brimbank, City of Port Phillip, Mornington Peninsula Shire

Independent consultants and careers practitioners

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A partnership event



Murder Mystery night - Friday 16 May, 6pm

A gruesome murder is set to take place at the Library Museum and members of the public are being asked to help solve the mystery. It's in support of National Law Week and promises to be an intriguing evening of fun and entertainment.

Further details at www.alburycity.nsw.gov.au and search: Crime Scene at the Library Museum

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AUSTRALIAN LEARNING COMMUNITIES NETWORK REGIONAL CONFERENCE TOWNSVILLE

CityLibraries Townsville was privileged to host one of three regional conferences of the Australian Learning Communities Network (ALCN). Other opportunities to engage with the keynote speaker Professor Michael Osborne from University of Glasgow were at sessions held in Frankston in Victoria and Canberra in the ACT. This was a new format for the ALCN as for many years the ALCN has held a biennial conference in one of the Australian capital cities. However the tyranny of distance in Australia has made attendance at conferences further south problematic for those living in northern Australia due to the cost of travel, accommodation and registration. Such costs have limited this type of professional development opportunity to a small number of individuals.

In planning the 2014 conference, the management committee of the ALCN decided to try something new. That is, hold a number of regional one day conferences in partnership with local governments so that more people in the regional areas could participate at minimal cost and communities in the regions could learn together. This time it was the keynote speaker who travelled the long distances in Australia.

The theme of the Townsville conference was *Communities learning together*. At City Libraries Townsville we believe that it is through working together to encourage participation in learning that we can build resilience in our communities to meet challenges that arise in our ever-changing world. Fostering networks and strengthening learning is one of our key roles. This involves nurturing a culture of lifelong learning through a variety of means including information sharing, research, workshops, and conferences.

In his keynote presentation, Professor Michael Osborne outlined responses to dealing with issues of youth and adult unemployment and an ageing population. He presented the traditional arguments for investment in lifelong learning, and the historic focus on economic and social benefits. However he also considered some of the wider benefits, and the important linkages between place, health, learning, qualifications and employment, focusing not only on formal education, but also non-formal and informal approaches. He emphasised the cause and effect nature of health and learning, that is, improved health leads to learning and learning benefits health and wellbeing leading to economic benefits as well as social.

Professor Osborne chaired a panel discussion on the topic *How can we enable opportunities for lifelong learning?* Four members of the Learning Communities Leadership Group, representing the community sector (Karen Loto, the Smith Family), state government (John Williams, Dept. Science Information Technology Innovation and the Arts), business sector (Sharyn Brown, Townsville Business Development Centre) and formal education (Professor Sally Kift, James Cook University) participated in a panel discussion offering a range of examples of how we might enable greater participation in lifelong learning from MOOCS (Massive Open Online Course) to encouraging an inclusive approach to the provision of learning opportunities and mentoring small business development. Their views stimulated a number of questions from delegates and lively discussion.

After lunch, the Learning Townsville Directory was launched by Teneale Grigg, Coordinator of the Community Information Centre. Learning Townsville will provide the community with a one-stop-shop for learning in Townsville. So if you are looking to learn something new you can go to the Learning Townsville directory hosted on council's website.

<http://webapps.townsville.qld.gov.au/CommunityDirectory>

Following the launch two facilitated workshops provided opportunities for us to learn some new skills. Fiona Sanders from Inclusion Works facilitate a workshop entitled *From Partnerships to Interdependence*. In this workshop delegates were taken through the process of how partnerships can lead to interdependence by making us aware of our individual strengths and the contribution that we can make to any partnership. In the workshop on Evaluating a Learning Community, Leone Wheeler provided a brief overview of evaluation forms and approaches used by learning community practitioners in Victoria to measure the impact of their work. Participants applied the Community Framework diagnostic tool, developed in 2013 as part of the Learning as a Driver for Change project, to strategies in the Townsville City Council's Lifelong Learning Strategic Action Plan.

Fifty two delegates registered for the conference and represented a range of sectors, including regional local government, the community sector, education, libraries, the disability sector and training provision. Delegates surveyed at the end of the day rated their overall satisfaction for the conference as either good or excellent. The majority of delegates surveyed also considered that it was a good idea to hold the ALCN conference biennially in regional centres. Delegates suggested future conferences could consider sessions on motivating learners, measuring outcomes, evaluation, sharing of ideas, network development and creating partnerships.

From feedback and conversations with participants, the ALCN Townsville Regional Conference was successful. While delegates differed on which session they found the most useful, all participants appeared to gain something from the day. Many offered suggestions for future conference topics. One delegate also posed the question "How do we continue the conversation? Health↔learning – how do we start to connect this?" This view was held by other delegates and there definitely was enthusiasm for the development of a learning network that would build on the energy stimulated by the conference. This and potential membership of Learning Cities 2020 has been referred to the Learning Communities Leadership Group for discussion at their next meeting.

Dr Judith Jensen
Coordinator
Lifelong Learning
Townsville City Council

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Australian Institute of Family Studies

A third of Australian mothers not working.

Media release - 20 November 2013

More than one third of Australian mothers with children under 15 are not in paid employment because they are caring for children, have health problems or face other barriers to employment, according to a research report released today by the Australian Institute of Family Studies.

Australia's maternal employment rate of 62 per cent is lower than many OECD countries and the research examined possible barriers to mothers taking up paid work.

The AIFS' report Australian Mothers' Participation In Employment drew on responses from 2,000 mothers in families around the country who had children under 15 years old, as part of the Household, Income and Labour Dynamics (HILDA) study.

AIFS Senior Research Fellow, Dr Jennifer Baxter said the majority of mothers who were not employed reported that they were not in the workforce because they were caring for children. "There are a lot of mothers saying that they are not working because they prefer to look after their children at home," Dr Baxter said.

"Regardless of whether they were lone or couple mothers, with very young children under five or even older school-aged children from six to 14, Australian mothers see caring for their children as a key priority.

"In addition, mothers who were not employed often had their own health problems or caring responsibilities that extended beyond the care of children and bigger hurdles when it came to re-entering the workforce. These issues were particularly marked for lone mothers," Dr Baxter said.

Key report findings include:

- The employment rate of mothers with children aged under 15 was 62 per cent in 2011.
- For lone mothers, the employment rate was 56 per cent and for couple mothers the employment rate was 64 per cent.
- The gap between lone and couple mothers' employment rates was greatest before children reach school age. The employment gap was greatest for mothers of children aged under three years (26 per cent employed for lone mothers and 46 per cent employed for couple mothers) or aged three to five years (44 per cent employed for lone mothers and 63 per cent employed for couple mothers).
- For mothers whose youngest child was aged six to nine, 67 per cent of lone mothers were employed and 74 per cent of couple mothers were employed.
- For mothers whose youngest child was aged 10 to 14 years, 74 per cent of lone mothers were employed and 83 per cent of couple mothers were employed.

Dr Baxter said that mothers who spent less of the previous year in employment had on average poorer mental health, more long-term health conditions, were more likely to live in rental accommodation and to face more difficulties accessing social supports.

"Mothers who had not been employed for most or all of the previous year were more likely to say that they had no one to lean on in times of trouble and to say they often needed help from other people but were unable to get it," Dr Baxter said.

"Women who spent more time out of employment in the previous financial year also held more traditional attitudes about work and family values and tended to have a preference for mothers to remain out of the workforce.

"The study showed that caring for children is the predominant factor in explaining mothers' reasons for not being employed. But among mothers who have older children, an increasing proportion of those who are not employed have barriers to employment including those related to their own health, caring responsibilities and relatively low levels of education.

"Providing opportunities and supports for mothers to enter employment as their children grow older needs to take account of the diverse characteristics of mothers, and allow for those who may face particular challenges to overcome, including those with poorer mental health or social supports, or more traditional views about mothers' role in the home."

[Read Australian Mothers' Participation In Employment](#)

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Brimbank Community Learning Strategy 2014-17

At the Council meeting held 18th February 2014 Council endorsed the Brimbank Community Learning Strategy 2014–17.

The Brimbank Community Learning Strategy supports learning in all life phases and is a long term approach to improving the social and economic outcomes of individuals and the community. It provides an integrated framework for the creation of a community of lifelong learning in Brimbank.

Download [Brimbank Community Learning Strategy 2014-2017 \(2MB\)](#) Copies are also available at our [Customer Service Centres](#) and [Brimbank Libraries](#)

For further information contact our Learning Coordinator, Libraries & Learning on 9249 4177 or Email: learning@brimbank.vic.gov.au.

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What is Community Hubs?

Community Hubs is a national program that links families and their preschool children to services and support, learning opportunities and the wider community.

Meeting local needs

Community Hubs brings local information and services spanning education, health, community and settlement into a familiar and friendly place. Often, this is a primary school or other community space that is already part of everyday life for families and their children. For mothers, fathers and carers, accessing services, assistance and training is easier when delivered in settings that they are already familiar with.

Community Hubs is funded by the Australian Government in partnership with the Scanlon Foundation, the Migration Council Australia and Refuge of Hope.

Building connections

Being part of a Hub can help families create friendships and support networks, and give a sense of belonging. Mothers, fathers and carers can also undertake volunteer work, education and training that can lead to employment.

For many preschool children, their Hub will be their first interaction with their future primary school. Being a part of a Hub can help them to feel at home in their school environment and more prepared to start school.

Who are Community Hubs for?

Community Hubs are open to all families, mothers, fathers and carers in their area. Community Hubs are located in areas that have lots of families from low socioeconomic, refugee or migrant backgrounds. Many of the activities available can be of particular benefit to families who might face extra challenges linking with services and support, learning opportunities or the wider community.

Every Community Hub is different

While there is a common philosophy behind Community Hubs, every Hub is different. That's because every location and family is unique. Community partnerships play a vital role in creating a Hub that is right for the time and place.

www.communityhubs.org.au

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GLOBAL UNIVERSITY NETWORK for INNOVATION

Higher Education in the World Report 5: Knowledge, Engagement and Higher Education: Contributing to Social Change.

Published by Palgrave MacMillan Edited by GUNi Guest Editors: Bud Hall (Canada) and Rajesh Tandon (India)

1. A Ground-Breaking Publication

Rajesh Tandon, Guest Editor “What kinds of knowledge, knowledge epistemologies and knowledge ecologies are required to transform the world into a place of peace, happiness, just and equity for citizens of the world?’

Pauline Gonzalez-Pose, UNESCO , “...This report brings to the forefront ...issues...on how to transform higher education to exercise its social responsibility to citizens and society locally and globally:

David Malone, Rector of the United Nations University, “The 5th GUNi Higher Education in the World is a major contribution to exploring the vital role that can be played by higher education in driving social change”

The 5 GUNi World Report looks at critical dimensions in our understanding of the roles, and potential roles, of higher education institutions (HEIs) as active players in contributing to social change and the creation of another possible world. The first aim is to look at our changing understandings about who the agents of knowledge creation are and how the creation, distribution and use of knowledge are linked to our aspirations for a better world. The Report offers us elements of a vision for a renewed and socially responsible relationship between higher education, knowledge and society. The second aim is to provide visibility for and critically examine one of the most significant trends in higher education over the past 10–15 years: the growth of the theory and practice of engagement as a key feature in the evolution of higher education.

The report is a product of three years research, consultations, academic seminars and an international conference. The overall work was led by the GUNi team, with Cristina Escrigas as the Executive Director. Rajesh Tandon of India and Budd Hall of Canada, the jointly appointed UNESCO Chairs in Community-Based Research and Social Responsibility in Higher Education served as Guest Editors of the report.

Seventy Six authors, specialists and scholars from all continents contributed to this most comprehensive report ever done on the global dimensions of community university knowledge partnerships and engagement.

GUNi’s mission is to strengthen higher education’s role in society, contributing to the renewal of the visions, missions and policies of the main issues of higher education across the world under a vision of public service, relevance and social responsibility. The Report is a collective work published as part of the GUNi series on the social commitment of universities. It is the result of a global and regional analysis of higher education in the world, with a specific subject chosen for each edition.

The report reflects on key problems and challenges that higher education and its institutions are facing in contemporary society. The objective of the Reports is to contribute to the renewal of ideas, while generating visions and promoting reflection in regards to the contribution of higher education and knowledge to society.

2. Objectives of the Report

The report covers a range of different objectives to make the more comprehensive analysis of community- university engagement nowadays:

The aims of Higher Education in the World 5 are to:

- a) Illustrate, describe and analyse the current concept of community university engagement and social responsibility in both levels, global and regional, around the world.
- b) Illustrate how HEIs have linked knowledge with society. Presenting the different practices, mechanisms and structures, including the impact of engagement in teaching, learning, research and institutional activities.
- c) Identify differences and similarities within the different world regions. Illustrating peculiarities among countries and providing a current territorial and thematic map about how HEIs are engaged with society.
- d) Identify how the social actors are involved in the engagement practices and interact with HEIs, including leadership, participation and decision making process.
- e) Propose steps for advancing the contribution of higher education to building a more just, equitable and sustainable society.
- f) Offer a tool box for higher education practitioners through examples of good practices, innovations, relevant experiences and/or projects to move forward.

3. Structure of the Report

The report is structured into six sections: (1) The context, (2) Global Issues on Knowledge, Engagement and Higher Education, (3) Research on Knowledge, Engagement and Higher Education. (4) Regional Developments, (5) Future Visions and Agenda for Action and (6) Further Reading

PART I. THE CONTEXT

This part is dealing with the context of the world's current situation and the main trends and facts of the higher education systems around the world.

PART II. GLOBAL ISSUES

This part presents a current analysis of the global issues on knowledge, engagement and higher education. The section is structured as follows:

II.1 Community University-Engagement

II.1.1 Definitions, meanings and policy frameworks of community-university engagement worldwide

II.1.2 Current ways and practices of engagement

II.1.3 Institutional structures supporting community-university engagement. Dynamics in partnerships and main networks

II.2 Knowledge in a new era

II.2.1 The use of knowledge for a re-conceptualized human progress

II.2.2 Changes in the way we handle, use, build and understand knowledge

II.2.3 All the knowledge counts: The value of indigenous knowledge

II.3 Knowledge for and with society

II.3.1 Knowledge democracy, collective intelligence and cognitive justice

II.3.2 Community and civil society as sources of knowledge

II.3.3 Knowledge and political decision-making: The governance of intelligent territories

II.4 University social responsibility

II.5 Engagement beyond the third mission

II.6 Rebuilding the engaged university

PART III. RESEARCH on Knowledge, Engagement and Higher Education

Results from the research on knowledge, engagement and higher education carried out by GUNi analysing more than 300 experiences all around the world.

PART IV. REGIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Report includes an analysis of the state of the art of all world regions: North America & Canada, Latin America & Caribe, Europe, Sub-Saharan Africa, Arab States and Asia & the Pacific. This part illustrates how the different regions have linked higher education with society through engagement. Each region is complemented with a sub-regional analysis, a selection of trending topics, a reference to the networks related to community engagement in each region and a selection of good practices. Therefore, each chapter includes:

- Regional chapter
- Inside view (Sub-regional or country analysis)
- Spotlight issues on the region
- Regional networks on the topic
- Good practices

PART V. FUTURE VISIONS AND AGENDA FOR ACTION

This section includes a final article compiling the main ideas presented by the different authors complemented with a proposal of further steps for advancing the contribution of higher education towards the co-creation of knowledge and its engagement with society.

PART VI. FURTHER READING

4. Forthcoming Launches of the report

Launches of this ground-breaking report that we are aware of at the time of writing are planned for the UK, Canada, Spain, Korea, Malta, USA, Hong Kong, Ireland and India. See specific document to know more.

5. How to order the report

The report can be ordered directly to Palgrave:

<http://us.macmillan.com/book.aspx?isbn=9780230535565>

Or in the GUNi web site: <http://www.guninetwork.org/>

6. Previous editions

GUNi has previously published four issues of the Higher Education in the World report (2006, 2007, 2008, 2011), plus a synthesis (2009) committed by UNESCO for the II World Conference on Higher Education held in Paris in 2009. Higher Education in the World 1: The Financing of Universities

Higher Education in the World 2: Accreditation for Quality Assurance - What is at Stake?
Higher Education in the World 3: Higher Education - New Challenges and Emerging Roles for Human and Social Development

Higher Education in the World 4: Higher Education's Commitment to Sustainability - from Understanding to Action.

Higher Education at a Time of Transformation: New Dynamics for Social Responsibility (Synthesis of 1-2-3 reports).

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Mapping Social Cohesion 2013 - recent arrivals report

Andrew Markus | Scanlon Foundation

24 March 2014

Mapping social cohesion 2013 - recent arrivals report

Recently arrived migrants arrivals report relatively high levels of discrimination, finds this survey on social cohesion in Australia.

Summary:

The Recent Arrivals survey was conducted in 2013 as an extension to the Scanlon Foundation Social Cohesion Research Program, with additional funding from the Australian Government to increase sample size.

The objective of the survey is to further understanding of the current immigration program, particularly the attitudes and outlook of skilled and highly educated entrants. It considers both the experiences in Australia and the nature of ongoing contacts with former home countries.

The survey was completed by 2,324 respondents, two thirds of whom arrived between 2000 and 2010. The sample best represents the highly educated segment of the immigrant population, in keeping with the survey objective to further understanding of recent immigrant intakes that are characterised by an increasing proportion of skilled and highly educated entrants. The sample also includes significant numbers of those who gained entry under the family migration program (20%), those who have no post-school qualifications (13%), and those who do not have permanent residence (9%).

Views of life in Australia

A key and consistent finding is the high level of satisfaction of the recent arrivals: with regard to present financial circumstances, 43% are satisfied, another 25% 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied', a combined 69%; 70% agree with the proposition that in Australia 'in the long run, hard work brings a better life', while another 17% 'neither agree nor disagree'.

When asked for their views on life in Australia, 81% indicate that they are satisfied; 64% indicate that they are 'very happy' or 'happy', a further 24% that they are 'neither happy nor unhappy', a combined 88%.

Only a small minority indicate dissatisfaction, matching or below the level of dissatisfaction obtained by the 2013 Scanlon Foundation national survey, which provides the basis for contextualising the Recent Arrivals survey: 10% of recent arrivals indicate that they are 'struggling to pay bills' or are 'poor'; 8% are 'very dissatisfied' with their present financial circumstances; 11% disagree with the proposition that in Australia hard work brings a better life; and just 5% indicate that they are dissatisfied with life in Australia.

There are, however, other indicators which point to differences between recent arrivals and the Australian population.

Personal trust is considerably lower: 31% of recent arrivals agreed that most people 'can be trusted', 45% in the national survey.

Trust in institutions is lower, and in a finding that is contrary to the general pattern of increasing approximation to the Australian average with increased length of residence, trust in several institutions is lower amongst immigrants who arrived in the 1990s than those who arrived more recently: the lower levels of trust are indicated for the legal system, Centrelink, the Department of Immigration, employers, and federal parliament.

Recently arrived immigrants do not find Australian people to be caring, friendly, or hospitable, a finding in contrast with those of earlier surveys. Recent arrivals report relatively high levels of discrimination on the basis of their 'skin colour, ethnic origin or religion over the last 12 months'. This is the reported experience of 41% of non-English speaking background immigrants who arrived between 2000-10, compared to the national average of 16%.

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National Centre for Vocational Education Research

Parental influences drive young people's educational aspirations

Media release: 2 April 2014

Parental influence is a critical driver in influencing young people's educational and occupational aspirations, according to new research.

Published by the National Centre for Vocational Education Research (NCVER) *The factors affecting the educational and occupational aspirations of young Australians*, examines the ways in which background characteristics influence young people using data from the 2009 cohort of the Longitudinal Surveys of Australian Youth (LSAY).

The major elements of the study involved understanding the aspirations to complete Year 12; to commence university study in the first year after leaving school; and occupational aspirations at aged 15 about the job they expected to have at age 30.

Mr Rod Camm, NCVER's Managing Director, said academic performance, immigration background and whether their parents expect them to go to university are the critical factors to completing Year 12.

"Students whose parents want them to attend university are four times more likely to complete Year 12 and 11 times more likely to go on to higher education compared with those whose parents expect them to choose a non-university pathway.

"But where there is a discrepancy is that the job aspirations of a 15-year-olds are often somewhat unrealistic. By age 25 – the cut-off for data analysis – a significant proportion of young people fall short of what they set out to achieve occupationally. However, this does not mean they cannot still achieve their desired occupation at a later date," said Mr Camm.

Mr Camm said the study highlights how critical parental influences are in driving young people's educational and occupational aspirations.

"The findings complement prior research which identified parents as the primary information resource for discussing career and post-school transition options," said Mr Camm.

Mr Camm added the higher education plans of peers also have a strong influence.

"Students whose friends plan to attend university are nearly four times more likely to plan to attend universities themselves," he said.

Copies of *The factors affecting the educational and occupational aspirations of young Australians*, by Sinan Gemici, Alice Bednarz, Tom Karmel and Patrick Lim, are available from www.lsay.edu.au/publications/2711.html

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Perspectives on regional Australia: change in regional educational attainment, 2001 to 2011

*Australian Bureau of Statistics *

Commonwealth of Australia

12 May 2014

Perspectives on regional Australia: change in regional educational attainment, 2001 to 2011

External Links icon

Using data from the 2001 and 2011 Censuses of Population and Housing, this release looks at the change in the rate of attainment of higher level qualifications in regions in the population aged 20-64 years old.

Summary

All regions in Australia experienced growth in the rate of attainment of higher level qualifications among their populations aged 20-64 years between 2001 and 2011. Regions which experienced high growth in higher level qualifications, also had different population characteristics.

This article focussed on three regions with large growth in the rate of attainment of higher level qualifications between 2001 and 2011. In all three regions, migration of people with qualifications into the region contributed to the increase in qualifications. In Brisbane - North, increases in higher level qualifications corresponded with population growth, particularly from migration from other parts of Greater Brisbane. In contrast, the increase in higher level qualifications in the population of Sydney - City and Inner South has been influenced by the attraction of younger people, particularly from overseas, into this inner city region. The increase in qualifications in South East Tasmania was influenced by in-migration of people with qualifications into the regions just outside the capital city, with migration of older people a particular feature.

**Click on the heading for the link for the full report (Between asterix)*

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Society at a glance 2014: OECD social indicators

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development

18 March 2014

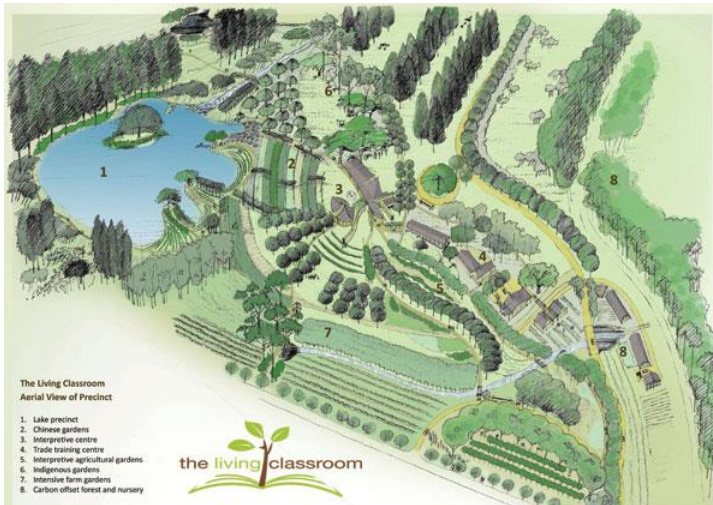
Society at a glance 2014: OECD social indicators

Income inequality and social divisions could worsen and become entrenched unless governments across the OECD act quickly to boost support for the most vulnerable in society, according to this report, which also finds that relative poverty in Australia is higher than the OECD average.

Executive summary: More than five years on from the financial crisis, high rates of joblessness and income losses are worsening social conditions in many OECD countries. The capacity of governments to meet these challenges is constrained by fiscal consolidation. However, cuts in social spending risk adding to the hardship of the most vulnerable groups and could create problems for the future. OECD countries can effectively meet these challenges only with policies that are well designed and backed by adequate resources. Having been spared the worst impacts of the crisis, major emerging economies face different challenges. However, the experience of OECD countries is relevant for emerging economies as they continue to build and "crisis-proof" their social protection systems.

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About the Living Classroom



The Living Classroom is an ecological “wonderland”, a research centre and showcase for the future of agriculture and for city and country living, an inspiration for regional, national & international visitors, a centre for education and for experimentation for all generations, and for all levels of learning.

The Living Classroom recognizes that we are entering a period of extraordinary change. It seeks to

chart a positive journey through that change, focusing on the opportunities which change will create.

The project will turn 150 ha of degraded town Common into a highly productive “food forest” – combining a wide range of agricultural activities with horticulture, aquaculture and forestry. It works with the synergies between these activities. Its focus is on food quality, and the connection between soil health, plant and animal health and human health.

The township of Bingara is utilizing “The Living Classroom” to become a “close loop” community – self-sufficient in food, and recycling all compostable waste (including treated sewage) back to the site.

The Living Classroom integrates the community’s Vision for the future of the town and Shire. It provides the glue for a four dimensional strategy– based on agriculture, education, tourism and regional conferencing. It builds on existing alliances to cement city to country connections, and introduces and educates children and their parents to the wonder of food.

The project demonstrates the power of Partnerships - between the local and experiential communities, with educational and research institutions, industry, and all levels of government. Our Vision for the Living Classroom lies in the journey – in the process of learning and of stimulation.

The journey will be continuous, as the project will constantly evolve.

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TIMEBANKING CONCEPT TO TAKE NSW BY STORM

Minister for Citizenship and Communities Victor Dominello today announced the expansion to 30 new communities of an innovative program allowing NSW volunteers to earn and exchange 'time credits' following the success of an Australian-first trial last year.

"The expansion of Timebanking comes after the 4,300 volunteers who registered to participate in a regional trial across the Hunter, Central Coast, Newcastle and Lake Macquarie contributed and exchanged more than 10,300 hours of service.

"It will give over half of the NSW population access to a Timebanking program in their community, encouraging greater participation in volunteering," Mr Dominello said.

Mr Dominello, joined by Member for Kiama Gareth Ward, announced the communities selected through a Registration of Interest process at the North Kiama Neighbourhood Centre: Albury/Wodonga, Auburn, Bega, Blue Mountains, Burwood, Cumberland/Prospect, Eastern Beaches, Sydney, Fairfield, Foster/Tuncurry, Hawkesbury, Hurstville, Kempsey, Kiama, Lower North Shore, Macarthur, Nepean/Penrith, Northern Beaches, Rockdale, Ryde, Shellharbour, South Eastern Sydney, Sutherland, Sydney, Tamworth/North West, The Hills, Northern Rivers, Wagga Wagga, Walcha, West Wyalong, and Wollongong.

Timebanking is a community program which allows for the voluntary exchange of services between members. In essence the 'Timebank' is a brokering service which connects like-minded volunteers and facilitates mutual benefit.

It enables people to earn and exchange time credits which are registered through a website – it is as simple as give an hour receive an hour.

Just one example of someone involved in the trial was Kate, who suffers from an illness and lives by herself. She joined Timebanking in January 2013 and earned 10 hours of credits by offering travel advice and tour details to other Timebank members. In return she has received support from other volunteers who have assisted her with gardening, cleaning and home maintenance.

"People interested in joining can visit www.timebanking.com.au to register their details and become enrolled as a member. I also encourage those organisations which benefit from the work of volunteers to join," Mr Dominello said.

Member for Kiama Gareth Ward said the introduction of Timebanking was recognition of a strong volunteering ethos among his local community. This is a great innovation based on a simple concept – it enables people to play to their strengths. "You might have a gentleman who is fantastic at mowing lawns but woeful at playing the piano. Timebanking allows him to get piano lessons from a teacher down the street in exchange for volunteering his time to help someone with lawn mowing and gardening.

“Many locals will already know of the great work of the North Kiama Neighbourhood Centre and I encourage them to get in touch with its staff to discuss how Timebanking might work for them and register online,” Mr Ward said. Mr Dominello said newly redeveloped Timebanking software was now in use and the first Timebanking host organisations like North Kiama Neighbourhood Centre had begun rolling out the program in new communities. It makes sense for organisations with strong community affiliations and local volunteer networks to have access to Timebanking.

“These host organisations will support recruitment of volunteers and help broker support for those people who need it from local volunteers offering assistance.

“Further Timebanking host organisations will come online in coming months and all new sites will be operational by mid-June.

I am delighted to see something grow from a ‘good idea’ and rapidly develop into a force for positive recognition and support in so many communities. Volunteers in our state deserve it,” Mr Dominello said.

More information is available at:

<http://www.volunteering.nsw.gov.au/volunteers/timebanking> or by calling (02) 8762 9825.

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Turning around troubled schools: it can be done.

Media Release: 22 February 2014

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Some of Australia's most troubled schools are turning around their performance to achieve remarkable results and serve as a model for low-performing schools across the country, a new Grattan Institute report has found.

Turning around schools: it can be done examines two secondary and two primary schools to show that all of them have succeeded by following the same five steps.

They are: strong leadership that raises expectations, effective teaching with teachers learning from each other, development and measurement of student learning, a positive school culture, and engagement of parents and the local community.

"People think turning around a school only happens with superhuman leaders and teachers- it doesn't," says Grattan Institute School Education Program Director Ben Jensen.

"Many of these schools have inspirational figures but the lesson of both Australia and overseas is that any school that rigorously follows these five steps can succeed."

Dr Jensen stressed that governments had a key role in supporting schools to make behavioural and cultural change, but they had to do more than simply focus on the five steps.

“Governments need to find a way to commit all parties – government, the education sector and schools – to lasting change” Dr Jensen said.

Governments and schools must develop the skills for change in the five steps for school turnaround, and then reinforce them with comprehensive evaluation and accountability mechanisms.

But Dr Jensen said these mechanisms had to focus on achieving change in the five steps, not just on test scores.

“If school turnaround is done well, it will make huge dent in inequality and enrich the lives of the students who need it most,” he said.

The four schools examined in the report are Ellenbrook Primary School in Perth, Ravenswood Heights Primary School in Launceston, Holroyd High School in Sydney and Sunshine College in Melbourne.

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