



KEVÄTPÄIVÄT 2015

Session 2.3. Transforming the world map of education – cooperation with the BRICS countries

Chair: *Juha Ketolainen*, Assistant Director, CIMO

Panelists:

Arne Haugen, Senior Adviser, SIU, Norway

Tiina Vihma-Purovaara, Counsellor of Education, Ministry of Education and Culture

Mads Flyvholm, Special Adviser, Center for Educational Policy, the Danish Ministry of Higher Education and Science

Kiruthika Srinivasan, Coordinator for International Projects, Aalto University

The session provided a platform for benchmarking educational cooperation with the BRICS countries in the Nordic states. The BRICS countries are among the biggest and fastest-growing emerging markets, also in education, and this provides new possibilities for Nordic cooperation as well.

Senior adviser Arne Haugen presented a recent comparative study on educational and research cooperation with the BRICS countries in the Nordic countries. Please, find the publication [here](#) (in Norwegian). The goal of the study was to increase knowledge about BRICS countries as well as identify out what kind of approach different countries have with the BRICS, where operational environment is very different compared with the Nordic one. The focus of the cooperation is slightly different in each Nordic country, and this was something that the study also revealed: in cooperation with the BRICS you will have to define your goals as sharply as possible.

Special Adviser Mads Flyvholm gave an insight to the BRICS cooperation in Denmark. For the moment, almost all HEIs have some kind of cooperation with the emerging economies, primary focus being on student mobility. Denmark is investing for the future: the government has established six innovation centers around the world, with the aim of, e.g., helping the Danish HEIs to establish connections in the emerging economy countries.

Counsellor of Education Tiina Vihma-Purovaara told how the Ministry of Education has facilitated information sharing by organizing roundtable discussions concentrating on BRICS. Participation of Finnish HEIs in the Team Finland visits was considered very important.

With the help of the Finnish contact person in Beijing Finland has now more strategic and coordinated way of collaborating with China; better understanding on current issues as well as positive joint initiatives based on new contacts. This kind of presence in BRICS countries was considered essential and Mrs Vihma-Purovaara wished that similar contact points could be established in the future also in Moscow.

Coordinator for International Projects, Ms Kiruthika Srinivasan from the Aalto University gave an institutional perspective on collaboration with India (Aalto University's cooperation with the Indian IIT consortium). Ms Srinivasan emphasized that a consortium approach gives you better visibility as well as finances. Attracting industry partners is inevitable and close institutional engagements play an important role in cooperation with India. Indian leadership has declared the current decade (2010-2020) as a Decade of Innovation when there is great pressure on development as well as huge investments on education and research. Nordic countries are ranked high in innovation and this could provide enormous possibilities. However, despite the broad possibilities, it is important to define your focus.

Session report by Outi Jäppinen, CIMO