

**International Conference „Benchmarking in Higher Education“ in Hannover,  
HIS GmbH, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of September 2012**

## **Increasing interest of European universities in successful Benchmarking-projects**

**What are the advantages generated by the implementation of benchmarking in the higher education sector? In what way does benchmarking contribute to the further development of university's processes and structures and how should a benchmarking-project ideally be arranged? These are only some of the questions, the Higher Education Information System (HIS) was eager to answer during its first International Benchmarking Conference held at the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of September in Hannover.**

Two keynote speakers introduced 45 participants from eleven European countries to the subject and presented various aspects of benchmarking techniques. Besides defining the main topic which dealt with the issues what benchmarking basically can be used for and which benefits can be achieved, simultaneously the audience gained insight into side-effects of the benchmarking method. Furthermore international speakers discussed the increasing importance of benchmarking concerning political decision-making processes and its perspectives of application at European level.

Another focus of the conference lay on already successfully established benchmarking projects in different European countries. The participants were able to access the wide knowledge of the speakers who provided information on running as well as finished projects. Due to the high degree of practical experiences shown, methodical approaches and advantages of benchmarking were effectively illustrated.

The intense communication between participants of the conference revealed that depending on targets pursued, quantitative as well as qualitative aspects have to be considered at variable rates. Moreover it became clear that benchmarking is not only a method of systematically comparing different institutions. Instead benchmarking, if consequently and sustainably applied can also provide an

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essential input concerning the improvement of university-based processes and structures and additionally foster qualitative and organisational development within universities.

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Benchmarking in Higher Education: (f. l.) Dr. Tim Jäkel (German Research Institute for Public Administration, Speyer), Lene Mejer (European Commission, Brussels), Prof. Dr. Thomas Doyé (Ingolstadt HAW) and Dr. Harald Gilch (HIS, Hannover), Dr. Christiane Gaehtgens, (impact-consulting, Potsdam).

Although benchmarking has numerous opportunities of application, it also has to face challenges at the same time. The International Benchmarking Conference “Benchmarking in Higher Education” identified approaches and solutions how to successfully face these challenges.

The [presentations](#) are also available online.

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