

CENTRE FOR HIGHER EDUCATION AND EQUITY RESEARCH (CHEER)

Troubling Widening Participation in Higher Education Internationally

Monday 8 February, 1-3pm

Room G31, Jubilee Building, University of Sussex

Three presentations interrogating some of the complexities of widening participation policies in higher education in relation to ethnicity, eg. the Roma community in Serbia, socio-economic status in Chile, and gender in Sweden.

Trajectory of Widening Participation in Chilean Higher Education: Trends, Policy, Discourse and Subjectivities

Daniel Leyton, Doctoral researcher, CHEER

Access to higher education in Chile can be explored in relation to the imposition of market principles, such as privatisation, competition, commercialisation and corporatization, and, on the other hand, by the rising of social movement for public education and de-commodification of higher education.

Against this backdrop, Daniel will present a historic trajectory of widening participation in higher education in Chile in relation to principal policy technologies, modes of participation, aspirations, and classed students' experiences.

Daniel will also develop some ruminations on the conditions making possible a policy attachment to a neoliberal regime of truth underpinning the trajectory of widening participation policy.

Widening Participation: Roma Students in Serbia

Tanja Jovanovic, Doctoral researcher, CHEER

In this presentation, Tanja will discuss the successes and challenges of Serbia's widening participation policies to increase the number of Roma students in higher education.

In the recent past there has been interest in supporting and improving access to knowledge in what is often referred to as knowledge-based societies. However, while the EU has this policy agenda, implementation and monitoring at country level is unclear and there are different approaches and interpretations of widening participation. In Serbia, policies relating to widening participation are only implemented through attempts to address discrimination based on ethnicity with affirmative action policies. While there has been some success in increasing participation of ethnic minorities, there has been little progress reaching students without access to information on affirmative action policies - including the Roma community.

Widening Participation in Sweden from a Gender Perspective

Caroline Berggren, Associate Professor, Department of Education and Special Education, University of Gothenburg, Sweden. Also Visiting Academic, CHEER.

Overall, Sweden has been very successful in decreasing social class differences regarding access to higher education among women. Despite this, the financial benefits of having a degree are low for women who study traditional female professional education. For men, the labour market seems to offer more alternatives - with or without a higher education credential.

In her presentation, Caroline Berggren will discuss how gender regimes, the organisation of the educational system, and labour market structures influence the composition of the student body in higher education.

She will also question how, if higher education is the tip of the educational iceberg, to what extent can policies about widening participation make a difference.



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