

Call for papers for a Special thematic issue

Internationalization in higher education during Covid-19

At the occasion of the EMUNI conference titled “Higher Education in the COVID Era: Shaping the Future of Euro-Mediterranean Institutions”, International Journal of Euro-Mediterranean Studies (IJEMS) is looking for articles for a special-thematic issue exploring the impact of the COVID era on internationalization processes at universities.

Important dates:

Expression of interest by abstract submission: **19 November 2021** (appreciated, but not compulsory)

Deadline for paper submission: **14 March 2022**

Revised paper submission: **August 2022**

Special issue will be published in **December 2022**

About the topic:

Like so many others, the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic has shaken up also the higher education sector. The most obvious impact has been a significant acceleration of the inclusion of ICT into learning and teaching. This has opened the discussion over the efficacy and desirability of such processes at the cognitive and skills levels of the students. Perhaps less examined are the many ways in which higher education has used and benefited from digital technologies in enhancing the opportunities for internationalisation. Thus, the pandemic should also be reviewed in light of its impact on the internationalisation of education and research, as these remain an imperative for every higher education institution in today’s globalised world and knowledge economy, as well as a priority for international cooperation, including in the Euro-Mediterranean region.

When effective, internationalization improves quality of the education and research activities, extends opportunities, saves costs and facilitates intercultural understanding. This has benefits for the society at large, as human capital and innovative knowledge production are crucial for economic performance and societal wellbeing, and underscore peaceful regional cooperation. The internationalisation premise was the very driver of the establishment of the Union for the Mediterranean (UfM) in 2008 and its two academic arms, the Euro-Mediterranean University (Slovenia) in 2008, and the Euro-Mediterranean University Fes (Morocco) in 2012. It is believed that multilateral

partnerships in the strategic area of (higher and vocational) education and research have a strong potential for regional integration and cohesion among EuroMediterranean countries.

At the intersection of internationalisation and digital transition, the potential benefits and shortcomings of utilisation of ICT tools remain ambiguous. On the one hand, visiting lectures, webinars and participatory digital events have widened the opportunities for exchange and expanded collaboration among institutions. As most events taking place online are free, their accessibility is almost unlimited. On the other hand, this kind of exclusively virtual events have limited benefits on the development of interpersonal skills and intercultural experience that lie at the heart of the internationalisation efforts. Another aspect is that the capacities of professors and researchers to perform in the digital world differ. The emergent opportunities are widening the gap in the use of online resources for individuals, institutions and countries, raising concerns of the formation of new forms of inequality due to varying internet infrastructure and skill set of the faculty in how to use resources effectively.

The objective of the special thematic issue is to take stock of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and its management onto higher education, at both institutional and regional scales.

The special issue is inviting contributions relating to:

- Emerging strategies and models of internationalization during Covid-19
- Impact of Covid-19 crisis on the internationalization of an institution, including the measurement methods
- Drivers and barriers to internationalization in the Euro-Mediterranean region
- Benefits of international cooperation for higher education or research
- Policy approaches to increasing cooperation among Mediterranean higher education institutions

Submissions:

We welcome submissions <https://ijems.emuni.si/> on a rolling basis and no later than by the indicated deadline.