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Sommario/riassunto	This paper summarizes the experiences to date of the new EU countries (the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia, and Slovenia-the EU8) in the reform of higher education systems in a period of growing demand; changing patterns of access; rapid expansion and increased participation rates; and an apparent dilution of average quality. The study discusses the growing experience with a variety of financing mechanisms in EU8 countries, drawing on detailed country case studies, and seeks to develop some useful lessons from experience, mindful that each country will con