

1. Record Nr.	UNINA9910808365103321
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Titolo	Higher education financing in the new EU member states : : leveling the playing field // Mary Canning, Martin Godfrey, Dorota Holzer-Zelazewska
Pubbl/distr/stampa	Washington, D.C. : , : World Bank, c2007
ISBN	1-280-94034-4 9786610940349 0-8213-7150-9
Descrizione fisica	ix, 32 pages : illustrations ; ; 26 cm
Collana	World Bank working paper ; ; no. 112
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Disciplina	379.118094
Soggetti	Education, Higher - Economic aspects - European Union countries Universities and colleges - European Union countries - Finance
Lingua di pubblicazione	Inglese
Formato	Materiale a stampa
Livello bibliografico	Monografia
Note generali	Description based upon print version of record.
Nota di bibliografia	Includes bibliographical references (p. 31-32).
Nota di contenuto	Contents; Acknowledgments; Executive Summary; 1. Introduction; 2. Higher Education Systems in a Comparative Perspective Scale and Impact of Higher Education; List of Figures; List of Tables; 3. Directions for Further Reform; 4. Conclusions; References
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