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Essays and articles

Territories and Universities: The Meeting of Two Autonomies
(p. 291)

Carla Barbati

The article explores the relationships between regional and academic institutions, in view of their autonomy. Its aim is to identify possible developments in the light of the reforms that are affecting the university system. The central role that reforms assign to the Ministry of Education, University and Research – which is competent for the establishment and administration of new rules that university autonomy must observe – complicates possible scenarios, limiting the potential of the relations between the two autonomies. The author emphasises that if regional governments are to be acknowledged in their role as actors and stakeholders of the university system, it is necessary to redefine the organizational and functional solutions that shape the university system's regulatory framework and governance model at the state level.

The Relationship between Universities and Territory in Light of the New Autonomy Statutes (p. 311)

Enrico Carloni

The strengthening of the relationship between academic institutions and territory has often been highlighted in the public debate that preceded and accompanied the enactment of Law no. 240, 2010, regarding the reform of the university system. In this context, this article aims to verify, with reference to the new statutes of autonomy adopted in implementation of the reform, if indeed this report is a significant fact that distinguishes the

tasks, organization and overall governance of universities. The picture that emerges is, in hindsight, not without shadows; the “Gelmini” reform does not really seem to have allowed academic institutions to develop closer relationships with their territory and local interests.

The Role of the University in Regional Innovation Policies (p. 337)

Lorenzo Ciapetti

Over the last twenty years universities as institutions have been challenged by a series of rising expectations, in relation to their ability to affect the dynamics of innovation not only nationally but also regionally and locally. The current phase of administrative decentralization in Italy, after the reform of Title V of the Constitution, allows regional governments to build mechanisms for the promotion of research and the transfer of knowledge held by universities to the economic system, but not all regions possess the same ability to develop innovation policies. The article explores, through data collected for a recent research project on the establishment of a “mechatronics innovation hub” in Emilia-Romagna, weaknesses and opportunities linked to the connection between research and businesses. The results of the case study show this type of action can be effective and efficient only if it involves universities, institutions, and businesses in a comprehensive strategy and includes them in a multi-level governance approach.

University Quality and Mobility of Italian Graduates: Empirical Evidence and Policy Proposals (p. 363)

Daria Ciriaci and Andrea Nuzzi

This article draws on an analysis of the mobility of students graduates from the two main Italian macro-areas (Centre-North and South) to discuss the market failures that might lead students to make choices, as well as the potential sub-optimal intervention tools in the hands of Italian policy makers to address them. Emphasis is placed on the influence that socio-economic regional context, family origins, and university quality have on students’ choice of where to study and where to live after graduation. Investment in education, especially if it involves migration, in fact, is not only large, but it is characterized by an uncertain return. Specifically, one may create situations in which the budget constraint for the student is

so stringent as to determine the choice of not moving to other cities where there are higher quality universities or universities which fit better with his/her abilities. In this perspective, financial support offered to university students during their studies is justified to help solve problems related to the budget constraint of those who wish to study in top universities – regardless of location. On the other hand, encouraging universities to improve the quality of research and education offered to students can contribute both to improving the quality of human capital that is formed therein reviving the “brain exchange” within the country, and attracting top talent.

Territorial Features of the Italian University Education Context, Demand, and Supply (p. 399)

Andrea Cammelli and Angelo di Francia

The article provides a brief overview of the context, demand, and supply of Italian higher education, with particular emphasis on its regional characteristics. More specifically, the article examines the educational levels of the national population, the changes introduced by Bologna Process reforms on the university system, the territorial distribution of higher education students and degree-earners, field of study preferences ensuing from enrolment choices, territorial differences and mobility concerning graduates' post-degree occupational outcomes.

The System of University and Research in Spain: A Territorial Perspective (p. 423)

Laura Diez Bueso

This article proposes a reflection on the Spanish university system in a territorial perspective, while also addressing selected aspects of the country's science system in the same perspective (as regards universities alone). The study begins by exploring the division of powers among the state, autonomous communities, and universities. The article identifies which territorial level is competent in various fields and also gives an account of the main features of pertinent regulations. The second part of the study analyzes the scientific system in all its university aspects, focusing primarily on its governance system. Having described both systems from a legal standpoint, the article concludes with a brief reflection on the main features of public policies implemented in recent years for universities and research and highlights their strengths and weaknesses.

University “Community” in Brazil: An Institutional Innovation in Search of an Adequate Legal Framework (p. 443)

Joao Pedro Schmidt

The so-called communitarian universities in Brasil are a significant institutional innovation in its national system of education. They have been created and managed as non-profit organizations both by civil society and regional/local public authorities. They feature strong autonomy and widespread acceptance in civil society, in that they promote local economic development and achieve high quality performance. But these institutions suffer from a lack of proper legal definition insofar as legislation and administrative cultures in Brasil continue to be afflicted by a public/private separation.

Notes and comments

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