

FICCI-EY Knowledge Paper reveals India's vision to build high-quality, equitable, affordable and exemplary higher education model

HRD Minister releases Knowledge Paper at FICCI Higher Education Summit 2014

NEW DELHI, November 13, 2014. Ms. Smriti Zubin Irani, Union Minister for Human Resource Development, Government of India, today released **FICCI-EY Knowledge Paper** on the theme '**Higher Education in India: Moving towards Global Relevance and Competitiveness**' at the inaugural session of **FICCI Higher Education Summit 2014**.

The knowledge paper reveals India's vision to build a 21st century model for higher education that is of high-quality, equitable and affordable, and be a model of a higher education system that is not just the best in the world but the best for the world.

The paper suggests key imperatives to realize this vision such as developing higher education institutes with an international outlook and global impact; providing world-class teaching, research and conducive learning environment; relaxing complex regulatory requirements; incentivizing transnational education; developing skilled, job-ready and productive graduates; enabling higher education graduates with global skills, who can be employed by or serve workforce-deficient countries; developing research-focused universities that deliver high-quality research output and research-focused graduates; increasing R&D funding by Government, promoting increased industry participation in research and innovation and creating a conducive educational, financial and regulatory ecosystem to promote entrepreneurship.

It notes that the global economy is undergoing structural transformation. There will be need for a workforce of 3.3 billion by 2020, increasingly in the services and capital intensive-manufacturing sectors. The phenomena is also expected to play out in India – by 2020, 90% of India's GDP and 75% of employment is expected to be contributed by the services and manufacturing sectors. Technological advancement will make several jobs redundant while also creating new job roles. This structural shift in employment will increase demand for sophisticated workers, innovators, and thinkers who can thrive in a globally-connected and dynamic economy. India, with its large workforce and increasing pool of higher education graduates, is strategically positioned to reap the benefits of this shift. However, the 'demographic dividend' will be squandered unless India is able to create a "globally relevant and competitive" higher education system that serves the requirements of both the domestic as well as global economy.

While the Indian higher education system has made considerable progress in terms of capacity creation and enrolment especially in the last decade, it lags significantly in terms of "global relevance and competitiveness". The FICCI-EY paper highlights the following gaps in the system:

- ▶ **Low employability of graduates**, driven by several factors including outdated curricula, shortage of quality faculty, high student-teacher ratios, lack of institutional and industry linkages, and lack of autonomy to introduce new and innovative courses.
- ▶ **Low impact research output and patents filed** given relatively low government and corporate spending on research, insufficient doctoral students, missing research focus and culture in most institutions, and lack of international research collaborations

- ▶ **Limited focus on entrepreneurship** on campus as reflected in the fact that there are few institutes that offer programs in entrepreneurship and have active incubation / entrepreneurship cells
- ▶ **Complex regulatory requirements and hurdles**, poor institutional governance standards, and lack of professional management While we acknowledge that the Government has proposed and is also taking several measures to improve the system on the above aspects, there are some steps it could take to make the Indian higher education system a role model for other emerging systems. Institutions, on their part, would need to adopt a transformative and innovative approach across all levers of higher education: from curricula and pedagogy to the use of technology to partnerships, governance and funding, to become globally relevant and competitive. In this report, we have looked at some world-class institutions and country systems that could hold important lessons for government and institutions.

To make India “globally relevant and competitive”, the paper recommends that higher education in the country needs to be promoted as follows:

- ▶ **India prominently placed on the global higher education map** in terms of more globally-reputed Indian institutions, significant student and faculty mobility, presence of / collaborations with quality international institutions
- ▶ **India as a hub for talent** that is able to drive competitiveness of the Indian economy and is fit to work in or serve international markets
- ▶ **A culture of research, innovation and entrepreneurship** that can power high economic growth in the country.

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