



# **NORDIC UNIVERSITIES AND INDIA'S NEP 2020**

**New Trajectories for  
Internationalisation**

**27TH APRIL 2021**

**12:00 CET/13:00 EET/15:30 IST**



# PROGRAMME



## WELCOME REMARKS

Christabel Royan, Director, Nordic Centre in India

## INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IN TECHNICAL/ VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Professor Anil Sahasrabudhe, Chairman, All India Council for  
Technical Education

## NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 (HIGHER EDUCATION)

Professor N V Varghese, Vice Chancellor  
National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration

## INTERNATIONALISATION IN CONTEXT OF NEP 2020

Professor Pankaj Mittal, Secretary General, Association of  
Indian Universities

## NORDIC COMMENTS

Dr. Uwe Skoda, Chairperson, Nordic Centre in India

Hilde Haaland-Kramer, Head of Section for Global  
Cooperation, Diku, Norway

## CONCLUDING REMARKS

Prof. D P Singh, Chairman, University Grants Commission

## VOTE OF THANKS

Unit for International Cooperation, NIEPA

**USE AN ANTI-VIRUS PROGRAM.**

# CONCEPT NOTE

The Nordic Centre in India (NCI) and the Unit for International Cooperation (UIC), National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi, in consultation with the Ministry of Education, Government of India are jointly organising a Webinar on India's National Education Policy (NEP 2020). The theme of the Webinar is 'Nordic Universities and India's NEP 2020: New Trajectories for Internationalisation' and is scheduled to take place on 27 April 2021.

The Webinar is a follow up to the first "Nordic-India Higher Education Summit" jointly organised by the Nordic Centre in India (NCI), New Delhi and National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi on 31 October 2019 at NIEPA, New Delhi. The Summit in 2019 set a positive tone by underscoring the need to accelerate Nordic-India higher education and research cooperation. It brought together more than 70 educationists and policymakers from India and Nordic countries, including 33 international participants from the five Nordic countries and involved extensive day long discussions between Indian and Nordic bureaucrats, policy makers, university leadership, international office representatives, Nordic embassy representatives, and researchers.

This webinar aims to renew the discussion by contextualising complementary internationalisation goals of both the Nordic region and India against the backdrop of the National Education Policy 2020. The Webinar will once again bring together policymakers, academicians and experts from the education sector from India and Nordic countries.

It will introduce concerned policymakers and academicians from Nordic countries participating in the webinar with the internationalisation goals and strategies of the Government of India in the context of NEP 2020. The outcome of the webinar would be the resultant valuable exchange of information between the two sides to begin with. It would also facilitate the sharing of each other's expectations, priorities and strategies required for enhancing cooperation in the field of higher education and research as the implementation of NEP gains momentum.



Internationalisation of higher education in India has been an important policy focus area of the Ministry of Education (formerly MHRD). India understands the important role played by internationalisation in enhancing the quality of its students as well as that of its Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). Its role in enhancing a country's global image and soft power has also been recognized for long and reiterated in the NEP. The Policy is especially cognisant of the role of internationalisation of higher education in building a knowledge economy and society and in achieving global standards of quality in all respects.

In the past few years, the Ministry of Education (MoE) has launched several flagship schemes to promote and facilitate international academic research collaborations and student and faculty exchanges. For instance, SPARC (Scheme for Promotion of Academic and Research Collaboration) was established on 13 August 2018 wherein 28 countries were identified as partner countries for carrying out various research collaborations under the Scheme, including Nordic countries. The programme also involves students, researchers and faculty exchanges, workshops and publications. 394 projects have been approved under the Scheme till date. Another important programme is the GIAN (Global Initiative of Academic Networks) in higher education that was initiated earlier on 30 November 2015. It seeks to garner the best international experience into India's systems of education, enable interaction of students and faculty with the best academic and industry experts from all around the world. The Programme involves hosting of short duration courses by foreign faculty members. A total of 2,101 courses have been approved under GIAN till date out of which about more than 1500 courses have already been conducted. VAJRA (Visiting Advanced Joint Research) is another scheme which aims to promote India as a research destination for overseas scientists and academics.

One of the important proposals in the NEP 2020 is its emphasis on promoting India as an attractive global study destination for students and researchers. The Study in India (SII) Programme is an important initiative that was launched in April 2018 to attract international students to choose India as their education destination. Ayurveda, Buddhism and Yoga are being offered through the Programme to welcome international students for both short-term and long-term academic stays and scholarships provided for the same.



According to the SII website: The programme is currently offering approximately 55,000 seats with more than 35,500 fee waivers and 2,000 scholarships, with each scholarship valued at INR 250,000. National Institutional Ranking Framework (NIRF) and National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)-certified institutions in the country under the initiative offer tuition fee waivers from 25% to 100%. As a further step towards becoming a “global study destination providing premium education at affordable costs”, the NEP envisages improved student support systems (for eg., setting up of “International Students Office at each HEI hosting foreign students”) and improved infrastructure for international students.

The Policy envisions India taking a lead role in quality research and innovation in the 21st century, whereby it transforms itself into an “enlightened knowledge society and one of the three largest economies in the world”. In this context, the Policy understands the need for linkages with international trends and draws lessons from the best practices globally. With this in mind, the Policy sets the stage for the establishment of the National Research Foundation (NRF). The NRF is expected to “enable a culture of research” and innovation in the country through the competitive funding of research in all disciplines.

The role of “knowledge creation and research” in the economic and social uplift of not just the given country, but also others around the globe is acknowledged by the NEP. Based on this understanding, a number of changes to enhance the existing system of higher education and research in India have been proposed. It particularly calls for equal emphasis on arts and innovations along with innovations in the sciences and social sciences as it underscores the importance of “multidisciplinary university settings” as well as “holistic education”. The aim eventually is to achieve broader goals like imbibing interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary approaches both in the curricula as well as the orientation of the institutional structure. The same would lead to dissolution of discipline led barriers that divide the fields of study, namely natural sciences, with those of arts, humanities and social sciences. This may fall within the ambit of “internationalisation at home” that is mentioned in the NEP briefly.



A number of enabling regulations are also being envisaged under the aegis of NEP 2020 to facilitate internationalisation goals. The NEP specifically mentions that “relevant mutually beneficial MOUs with foreign countries will be signed”. Currently, the Ministry of Education (MoE) is working towards putting a system of International Credit Transfer mechanism in place to reduce the barriers in academic mobility. The proposed Academic Bank of Credit would serve as a repository of qualifications acquired and prior learning, reinforcing flexible pathways to learning with multiple entry and exit points. Further, the University Grants Commission (UGC) has recently placed in the public domain a notification on 17 February 2021 inviting suggestions on the “Draft UGC (Academic collaboration between Indian and Foreign Higher Education Institutions to offer Joint Degree, Dual Degree and Twinning Programme) Regulations, 2021”. The budget announcement of 2021 has interestingly proposed for a regulatory mechanism to permit dual degrees, joint degrees and twinning arrangements.

An important policy intervention of the NEP with long lasting implications for internationalisation is the proposal to promote institutional mobility. The NEP-2020 states that “High performing Indian universities will be encouraged to set up campuses in other countries, and similarly, select universities (e.g., those from among the top 100 universities in the world) will be permitted to operate in India”. Currently, the Indian government does not allow setting up of independent branch campuses in India. India’s commitment under the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) also does not support delivery of education through Mode 3. NEP-2020 specifies that “A legislative framework facilitating such entry will be put in place, and such universities will be given special dispensation regarding regulatory, governance, and content norms on par with other autonomous institutions of India”.

The NEP 2020 envisions new governing structures and highlights the importance of institutional autonomy. The emphasis is on “light but tight regulation” through creation of new structures for governance under a new body, the Higher Education Commission of India (HECI). The new structure will have four verticals under the HECI, namely, National Higher Education Regulatory Council (NHERC), National Accreditation Council (NAC), Higher Education Grants Council (HEGC) and General Education Council (GEC).



Furthermore, the NEP resolves to shift the orientation of school and higher education mainly from the existing approaches to teaching and learning at all levels to new approaches with an emphasis on global standards. Notably, one of the major focuses in NEP is on improving quality and enhancing the achievement levels of students at the school level. Improving access to education through open access resources and acknowledging the need of providing access to digital resources form an important element in the NEP 2020. The expectation is to blend traditional teaching processes and online teaching methods to enhance quality of delivery and focus on global competencies. The development of curricula that is internationally relevant would be a step in that direction.

It is pertinent that many Nordic countries have outlined their priorities for the next five to ten years in order to overcome the present as well as future challenges. Nordic countries recognise the important role of universities in contributing to knowledge creation and promoting groundbreaking research. The overall goal of academia has been defined to respond to the needs of society and promote well-being. Nordic institutions, as outlined in their strategic goals expect the universities to be a key player in enhancing competitiveness in the economy. At the individual level, the aim is to provide flexible and personalised student paths suiting everyone's requirements. For many Nordic institutions, leadership development and achieving a status wherein they can play a global role, is a defined target. Overall, institutions wish to make universities an attractive study and research destination.

Given the aims and complementary interest shared by both the Indian and Nordic institutions, it is opportune to revisit and renew the discussion that started as a part of the Nordic-India Higher Education Summit in October 2019. Both have a lot to learn from each other, and the scope for cooperation in the field of higher education and research is immense.



# Major Objectives

The major objectives of the Webinar are:

- To introduce the NEP 2020 to policy makers in Nordic countries
- To analyse how NEP 2020 makes India a preferred destination for international cooperation in higher education and research
- To understand how the NEP 2020 will affect management of technical education and how it would enable promotion of innovation and partnerships
- To comprehend the realignments of Indian universities in internationalisation goals and ambitions in the context of the NEP 2020.

# Major Themes

The major themes of the Webinar are:

- Highlights of India's National Education Policy 2020
- Internationalisation in the context of NEP 2020
- International Collaboration in Technical/Vocational Education

# Expected Outcomes

It is expected that the Webinar would enable better cooperation between Indian and Nordic policymakers at one level and between the institutions at another level. Further, it would familiarise Nordic institutions with India's National Education Policy and provide them with direction on how to further foster cooperation with India as it overhauls its higher education and research ecosystem.





# Contact Persons

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