PUBLIC SELECTION BASED ON QUALIFICATIONS AND INTERVIEW FOR THE AWARDING OF NO. 1 GRANT LASTING 12 MONTHS FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH IN ACCORDANCE WITH ART. 22 OF LAW OF 30.12.2010 NO. 240 AT THE CENTRE CCSE - CISAlpino Institute for Comparative Studies in Europe OF THE UNIVERSITY OF BERGAMO, ACADEMIC RECRUITMENT FIELD 09/B3 BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT ENGINEERING - ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE ING-IND/35 – BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT ENGINEERING (CUP: F12F16000040001)

announced with decree of the Rector Rep. no 312/2018 of 07.05.2018 and posted on the official registry of the University on 07.05.2018

RESEARCH PROJECT

"Financing mechanisms of higher education systems "

Research structure: Centre CCSE - CISAlpino Institute for Comparative Studies in Europe
Duration of the grant: 12 months
Scientific Area: 09 - Industrial and information Engineering
Academic recruitment field: 09/B3 - Business and management engineering
Academic discipline: ING-IND/35 - Business and management engineering
Tutor: Prof. Stefano Paleari

The global economic downturn and the consequent crisis of welfare states have plunged most of the Western governments in a new era of public-spending cutbacks and austerity (Nelson and Balu 2014). Western countries started to reform the funding system of their public policy sectors to save money, increase efficiency, and oblige public bureaucracies to act more responsively towards their citizen-users (Pollitt and Bouckaert 2011). Budget reforms have been consequently widespread and driven by the pressures to restrain the growth of public expenditure for macro-economic reasons, and to increase efficiency and effectiveness in the use of public money. However, tensions between pressures for change and historical legacies are evident in reforms approved in most countries.

Among public policy sectors, higher education has been one of the most shocked by budget cuts (European University Association 2014). This particularly occurred in Southern European countries (Paleari et al. 2015). The Italian HE system is among those having faced the most severe cut of governmental funding (ANVUR 2016) despite Italy was already the OECD state with the lowest percentage of public expenditure on tertiary education as a share of overall national state public expenditure (OECD 2015).

The objective of this project will be that of analyzing the undergoing changes in the higher education systems at different level: at a macro level, different reforms taking place around the world will be compared. A special focus will lie on the quasi-experimental evaluation of differing political measures. At a meso level, institutional choices will be analyzed, relying on the recent availability of large database providing information on financial sources (i.e. the European Tertiary Education Registry, ETER). The institutional analysis will also include the evaluation of differing strategic choices of universities and the impact on their positioning. At a micro level the project should focus on individual university members and their reactions on exogenous interventions (by policies, incentives, etc.) in terms of teaching, research or innovating activities.

As far as institution analysis are concerned, a peculiar attention will be dedicated to crowdfunding – an open call for money from the general public – which has become a major source of funding for entrepreneurial, artistic, and social projects. More recently, scientists and policy makers have suggested that crowdfunding could also be valuable to support scientific research and some universities actively encourage their researchers to start crowdfunding campaigns. The idea is that crowdfunding can attract funds with philanthropic motivations as well as more return-oriented investments. Despite the hopes, however, the potential of crowdfunding for scientific research is not clear. For instance, scientific research is often risky, while members of the crowd may have a preference for projects that are likely to succeed. Analysing the potential of crowdfunding to support scientific initiatives is one of the main goals of this project.