

Integration of cultural diversity in Belgium: The case of UCL

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600 Years of Experience

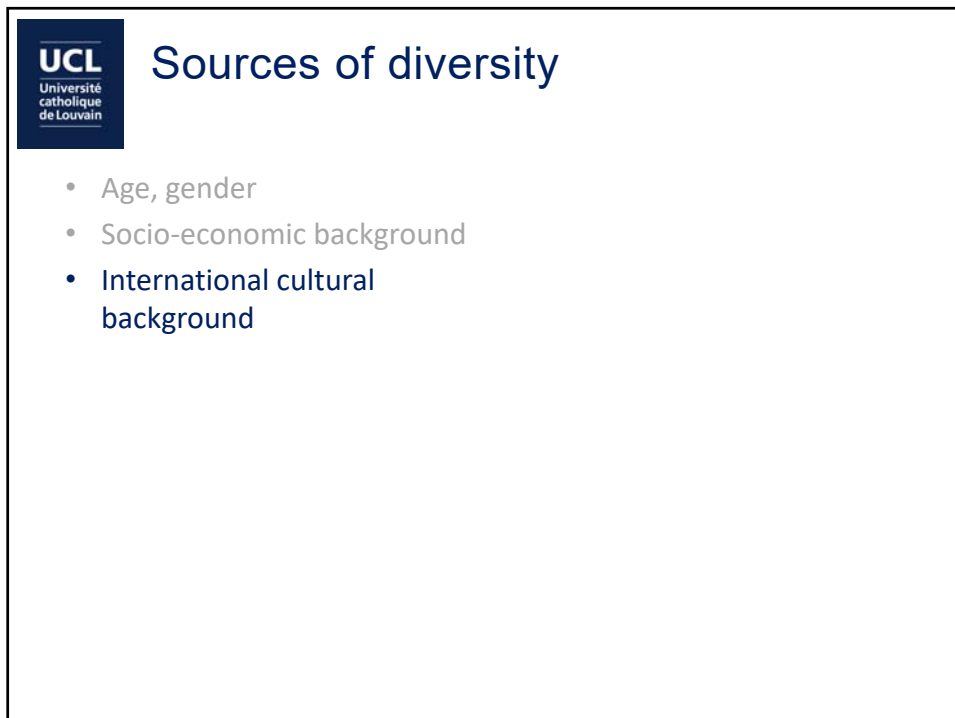
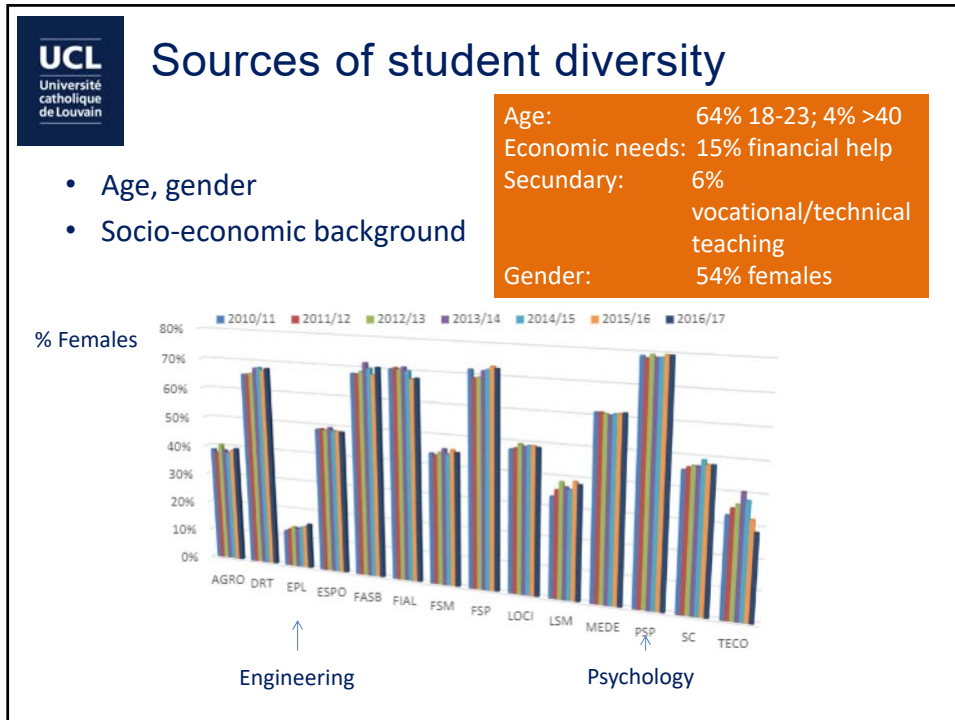
- 1425 >> Fondation in the city of Leuven
- 1968 >> UCL moves to Louvain-La-Neuve
- 2018 >> 7 campuses, 2 university hospitals, 2 Science Parks, 30 000 students, 6 000 staff

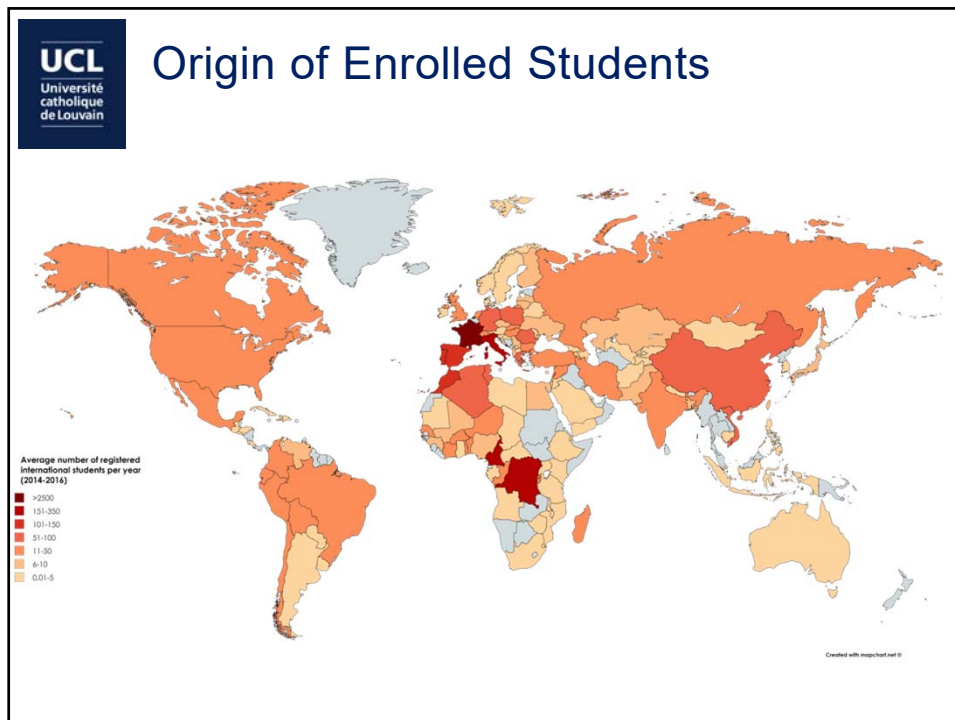


Content

1. Diversity at UCL and **how** we manage it
 - Exemples
 - Project for students with special needs
 - Access2University program for refugees
2. **Why** we care about diversity
3. Opportunities and challenges

1. DIVERSITY AT UCL AND HOW WE MANAGE IT





UCL
Université
catholique
de Louvain

Sources of diversity

- Age, gender
- Socio-economic background
- International cultural background
- Professional experience
- Disability

Project for students with special needs (PEPS program, linked to inclusivity decree)

UCL
Université catholique de Louvain

At UCL, 1.2% of the student population has special needs (n= 360 students) of which 69% have a disability:

Traditional beneficiaries 15%	Emerging beneficiaries 85%
Visual impairment Hearing impairment Mobility disability	Learning disorders ADHD (attention deficit hyperactivity disorder) Diseases Mental health disorder Varia

- and 31% are athletes, entrepreneurs or artists (mostly athletes in fact)
- whatever the nature of the special needs, there is only one status: PEPS: Project for students with special needs

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- whatever the nature of the special needs, there is only one status: PEPS: Project for students with special needs
- Procedure:
 - Students request the PEPS status via a special university commission (independent of the Faculty). In case of disagreement, the student can contact the ARES commission.
 - Once the status is received, the student is accompanied by a teaching assistant who establishes with the student an individualized support plan and who is the liaison person between the student and the faculty to implement the plan.
 - The full team includes 1 psychologist, 7 teaching assistants, 1 social carer and 1 administrative support

Sources of diversity

- Age, gender
- Socio-economic background
- International cultural background
- Professional experience
- Disability
- Refugees

Special program for refugees
(Access2University)

Higher Education in Emergencies

*“Most of the building blocks for an effective response are available; they only need to be assembled into a **comprehensive framework and coherent policy.**”*

Boosting Higher Education Opportunities in Emergencies, initiative promoted by Jorge Sampaio former President of Portugal

Integration of
Bachelor and Master
students (refugees)

Access2University

Distance learning in
Refugee camps

Hosting of scientists
at risk

Access2University



Access2University

Selection based on Language level and study motivation

LANGUAGE

- In class¹
- On-line²
- Conversation tables²
(« tandem citoyens »)

¹ Teacher-led
² Student-led

Migrakot



REGULAR COURSES

- Registration to at least one regular course
- Optional registration to other courses & MOOCs¹
- in line with study project

¹ Student-help

INDIVIDUAL COACHING

- Help with future admission
- Integration in student university life¹
- Health coaching if necessary
- Study orientation

¹ Student-help

Access to a regular programme

1. WHY WE CARE ABOUT DIVERSITY AT UCL

Reasons for integration

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- Social responsibility (inclusivity) → Providing access and helping succeed

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Reasons for integration

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- Social responsibility (inclusivity)
- Pedagogical opportunity (intercultural experience)

Informal activities

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Informal activities

Structured extracurriculum activities

Citizen tandems



« In my opinion this activity is very important to improve French and also for the intercultural integration, and also develop an international mindset by establishing friendships like we did in this activity. Because it increases the confidence of the person and encourages her to share and succeed. This tandem is very important for someone who starts a new life, with others, just connecting, integrating, live life. The world in one and one is the world. »
(Access2University student)

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Informal activities

Structured extracurriculum activities

Structured intracurriculum activities
(explicit intercultural learning outcomes)

Why structured intracurriculum activities ?

- Many **competing** extracurriculum activities for students, only those already interested by intercultural experiences volunteer...
- Importance of the structured setting to foster **reflective thinking** about intercultural skills (not just curiosity)
- Importance of making diversity an « **asset** » to reach learning outcomes (example of student from Senegal)

3. OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

Opportunities and challenges

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- Collaboration with associations around the university
- Mobilization of the university community around humanistic values

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Challenges:

- Lack of funding for individualized support (time consuming)
- Size of the classroom
- Lack of toolkits for teachers

Thank you !