



Reform 101: On higher education

Posted at: 30/06/2018

Highlights

- The provisions of the new Higher Education Commission of India (HECI) Bill drafted by the Centre have far-reaching implications for the expansion and quality of human resource development, at a time when access to skill-building and educational opportunity are vitally important.
- There were 864 recognised universities and 40,026 colleges in the country in 2016-17, while the gross enrolment ratio of students was only about 26%.
- Among the key questions that need resolution is the future role of multiple regulatory bodies that currently exist for engineering, medicine and law; the **Yash Pal Committee** had recommended that they should be brought under the ambit of a single commission.
- There is a case to include other professional education streams as well, including architecture and nursing. The aim should be to set academic benchmarks for each stream, with sufficient autonomy to innovate on courses and encourage studies across disciplines.
- Among the more contentious issues arising out of the draft Bill is the Centre's decision to shift grant-giving powers for higher education institutions to the Ministry of Human Resource Development or a separate body.

What needs to be done?

- Reform should lead to the creation of an agency that has the intellectual corpus to help universities and colleges adapt, and the vision to plan for public funding in the emerging spheres of activity.
- Yashpal committee report

Source: The Hindu

