GLOBAL OVERVIEW OF THE INCLUSION IN HIGHER EDUCATION DURING AND POST COVID-19
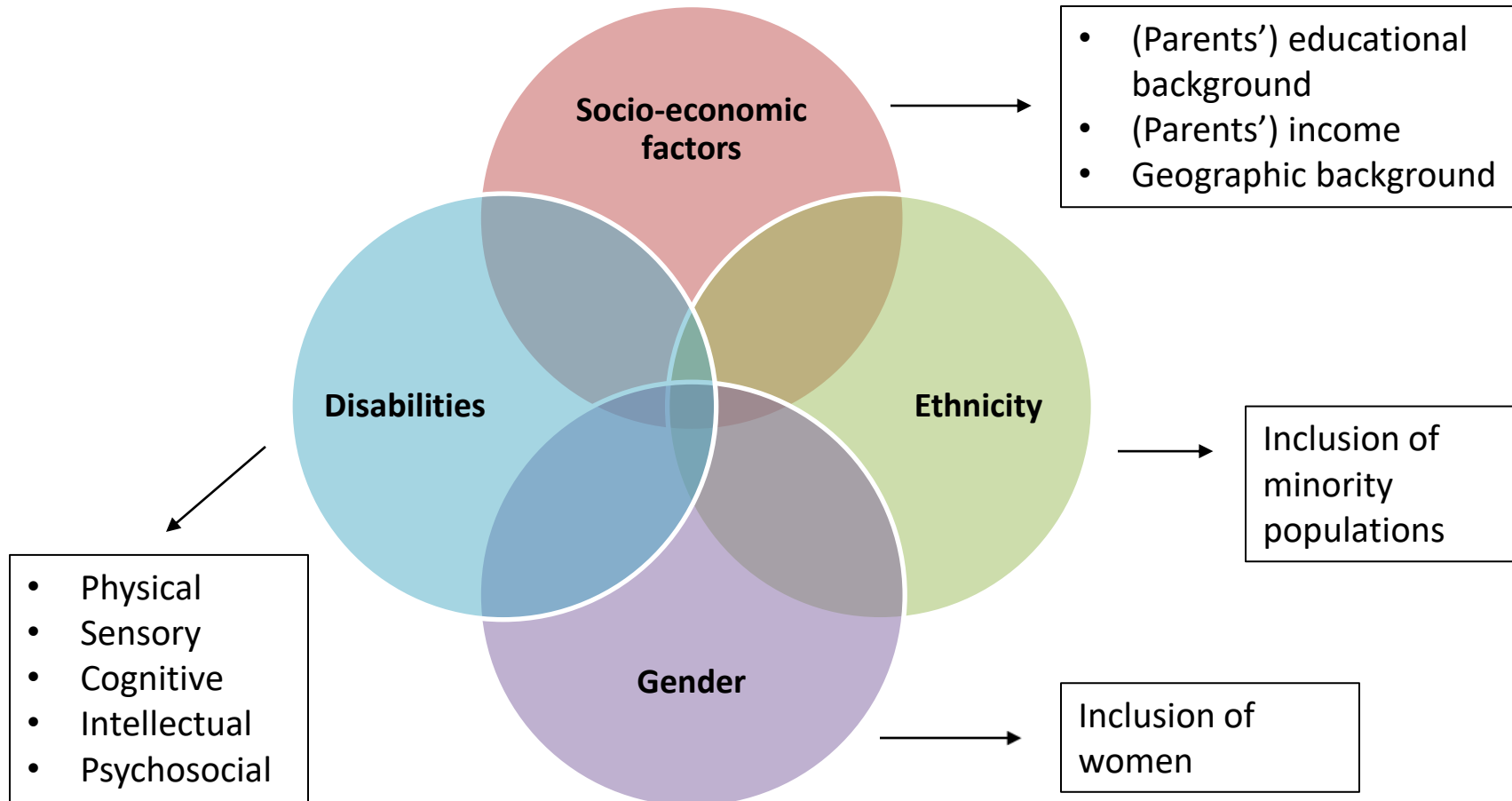
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Diego Ambasz & Lucia Brajkovic
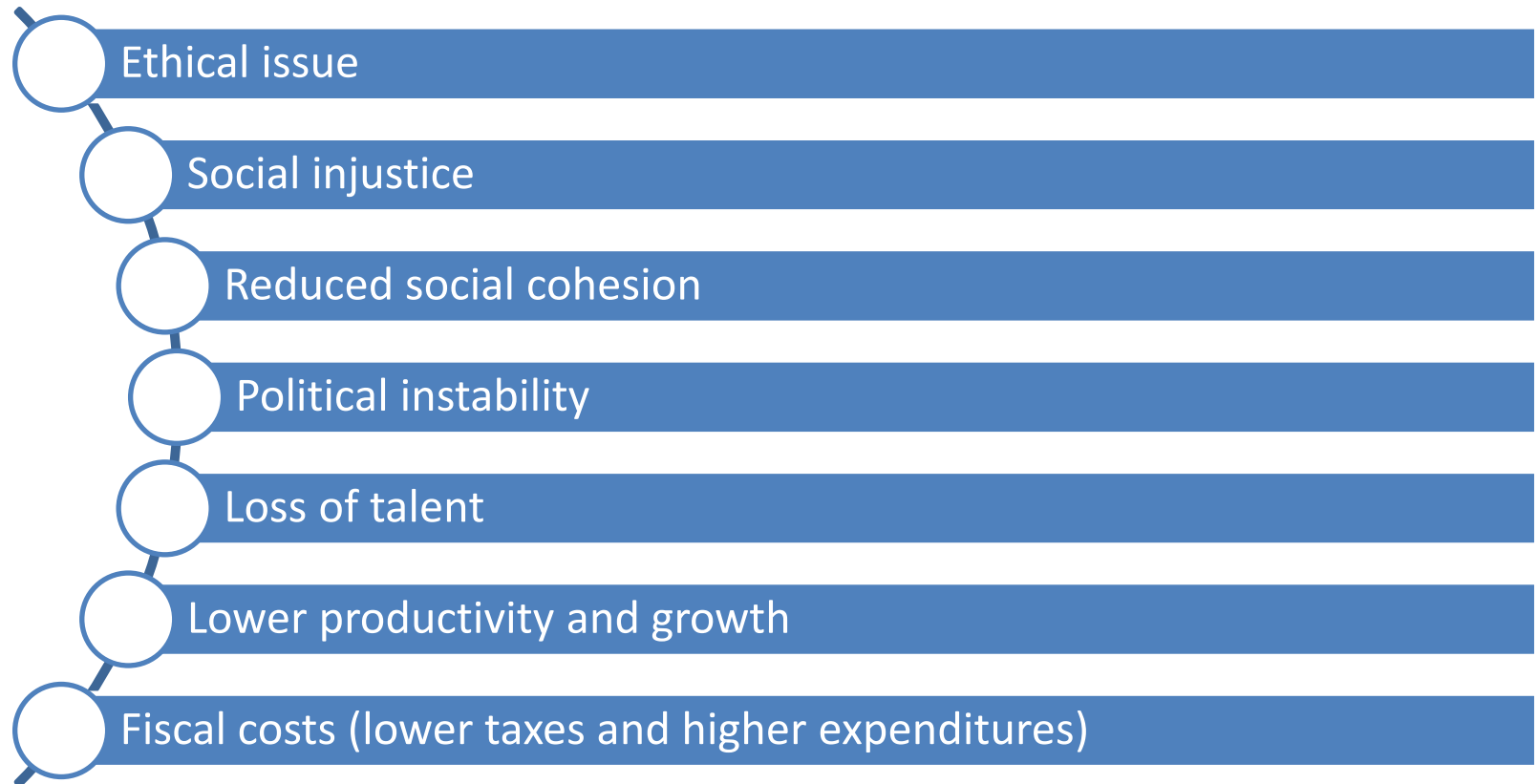**Zagreb, July 7, 2021**

Content

- Dimensions of inclusion and effects of exclusion

- Exclusion and inequity in higher education

- Effects of COVID-19 and country responses (United States, Russian Federation and China)

- Providing support at national and institutional levels

- Promoting equity

- Shared responsibility going forward

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Key dimensions of inclusion

- (Parents') educational background
- (Parents') income
- Geographic background

Socio-economic factors

Disabilities

Ethnicity

Gender

Inclusion of minority populations

Inclusion of women

- Physical
- Sensory
- Cognitive
- Intellectual
- Psychosocial

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Societal effects of exclusion

- Ethical issue
- Social injustice
- Reduced social cohesion
- Political instability
- Loss of talent
- Lower productivity and growth
- Fiscal costs (lower taxes and higher expenditures)

Individual effects of exclusion

Impossible to develop talents

Reduced social participation

Lower income

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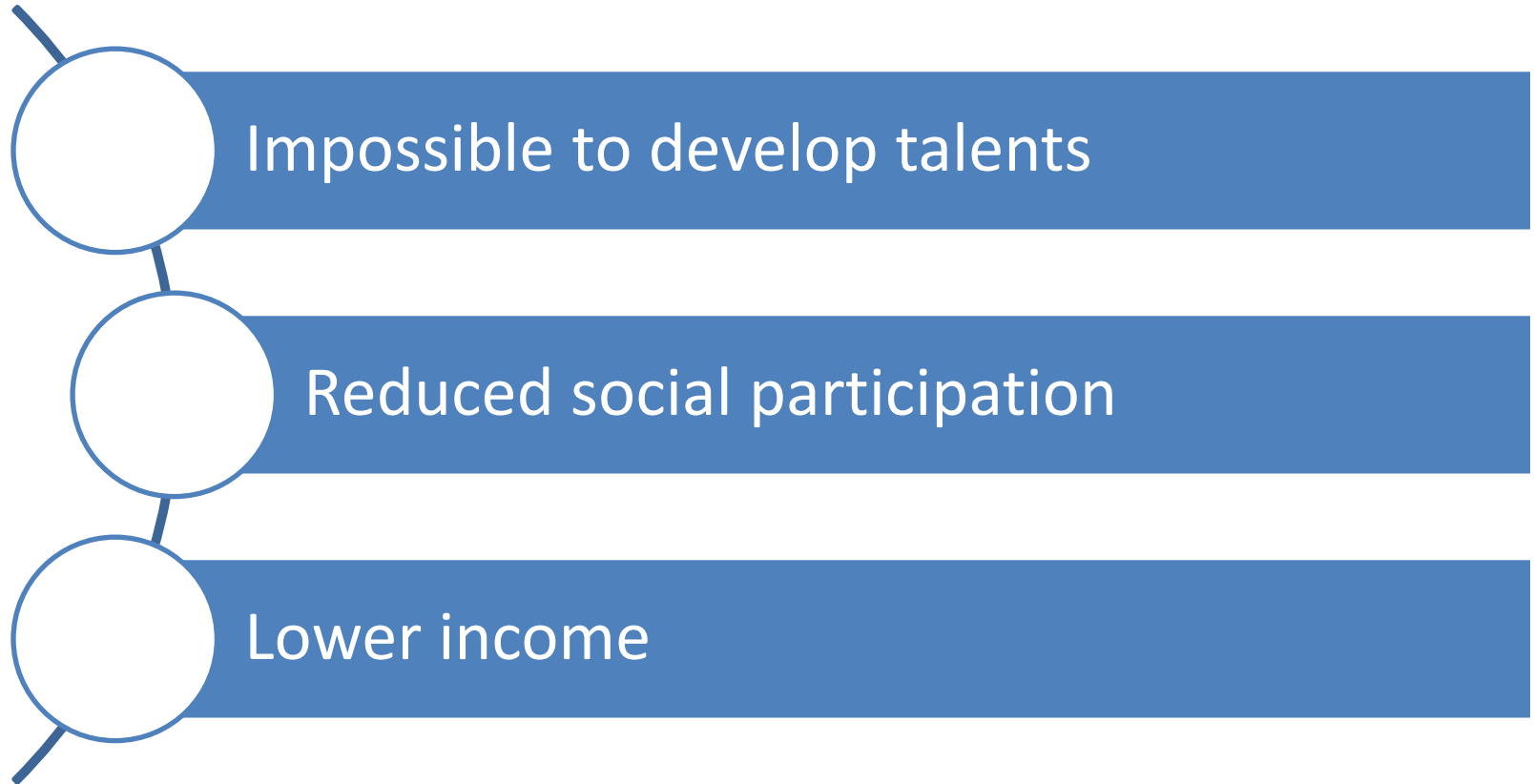
Inequity in higher education

- Effects of exclusion at lower educational levels

- Financial barriers

- Non-financial barriers: accessibility, information, preparation, motivation, social capital, discrimination

- ➤ Differences in access
  - Likelihood of enrolment
  - Type of institution
  - Discipline
- ➤ Differences in retention and graduation rates
- ➤ Differences in labor market success

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Exclusion due to the COVID-19:
Internet coverage issues worldwide

- Australia: 13% of households without high-speed connection

- USA: 6% (33% of low-income households) without high-speed connection

- France: 50,000 had dropped out by June 2020 for lack of connection (4%)

- 30% of LAC students without computer or Internet connection

- India: 15% with power, Internet and devices

- 55% of African academics and students with no Internet access

The case of United States

- Need to redefine and better understand the **complex realities** of most college-students

- **CARES Act** may have inadvertently created inequities due to its out-of-date understanding of college students as predominantly middle class, 18–21 years old, attending college full time.

- **Community colleges and public regional universities now serve as the primary entry points** to higher education for the majority of students from minoritized populations.

- Many **attending part time** while working and balancing family responsibilities.

Black Americans and Latinos are more likely than white Americans to have changed or canceled their education plans.

	Latino	Black	White
Canceled	21%	15%	11%
Changed	29%	27%	15%

Canceled   Changed
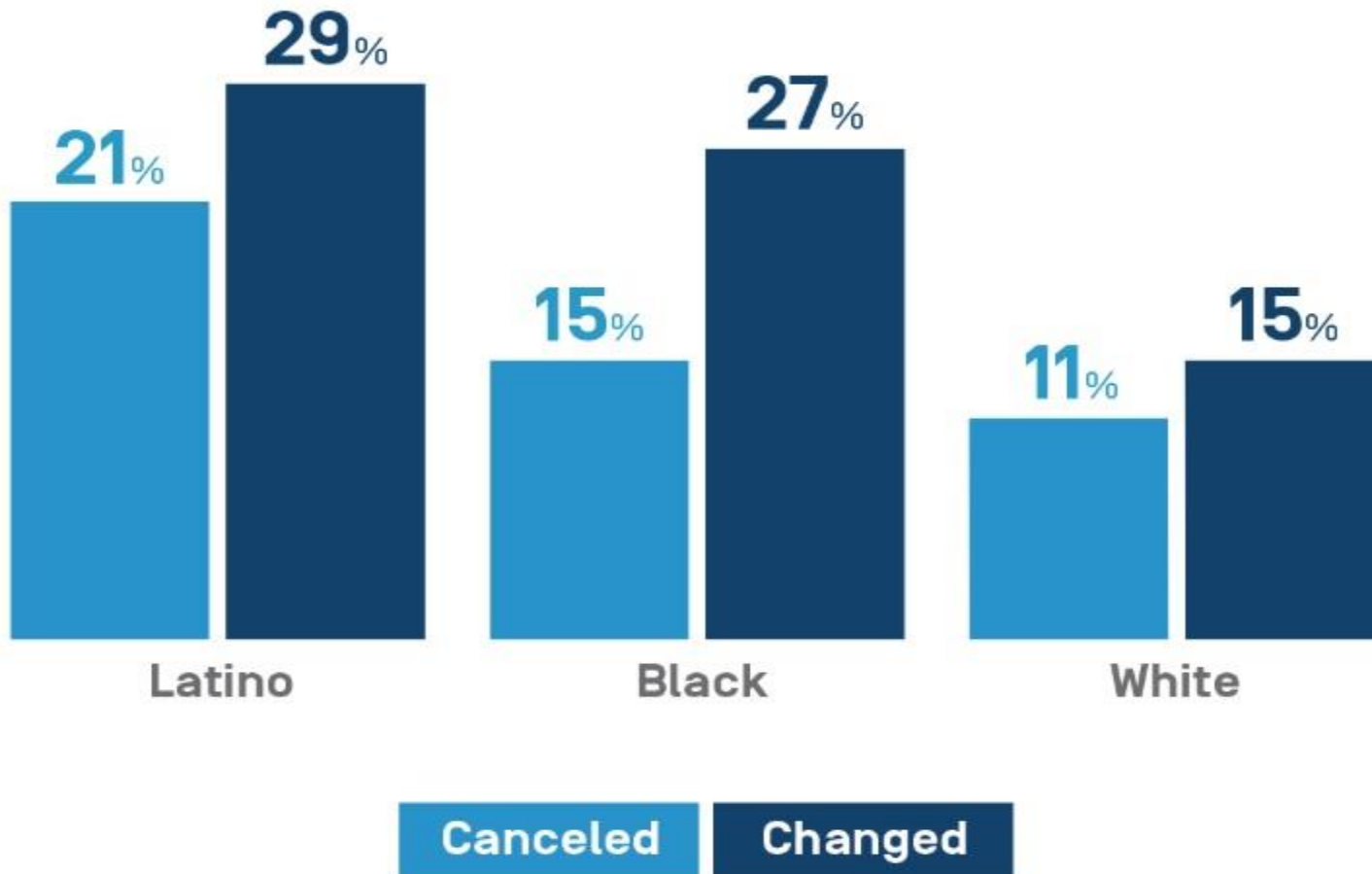
The case of United States

- Time for federal, state, and institutional policies to better reflect an understanding of the **"new majority"** student experience.

- Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF) has made approximately **$76 billion dollars** available to HEIs.

- The U.S. Department of Education acknowledged that **one-size-fits-all approach will not work** in responding to and recovering from the pandemic - IHEs need to make responsible decisions in the best interests of their respective student populations and communities.

The case of Russian Federation

- The Russian Parliament is planning to introduce an **update to legislation on distance learning** for all levels of education.

- The government has provided **operational support to HEIs**, students, and teachers to help in the shift to mixed and distance learning formats.

- In 2020 **all universities reporting to the federal Ministry** have transferred to an online format.

The case of Russian Federation

- Online resources have been launched:
  - ➢ Situation center and a support line;
  - ➢ YouTube channel for online broadcasts of meetings and workshops;
  - ➢ Telegram channel @minobrnaukiofficial;
  - ➢ Website for universities "Keep learning, Keep teaching" with methodological support;
  - ➢ Online platform established by the Agency of Strategic Initiatives, The University 2035, provides additional methodological support to universities.

The case of Russian Federation

- The Ministry of Education piloting a new service for prospective students apply to university programs online using the [state portal Gosuslugi](#).

- **State accreditation prolonged** for one year for those universities whose accreditation expired between March 2020 and December 2020.

- **More than 100 universities provided jobs for students** who have lost their income due to the pandemic.

The case of China

- China has been at the forefront of adapting its education system to an online format.

- the Chinese government issued a **specific action plan on Artificial Intelligence (AI)** for higher education

- Government initiative to "ensure learning is undisrupted when classes are disrupted" - a significant shift in transitioning from traditional face-to-face education to an e-learning model.

- **Rapid reaction of the government** – by 2 February 2020, 22 online education platforms were mobilized uploading 24,000 courses, reassuring the continuity of studies for 38 million home-based higher education students.

Support at national level

- Financial aid (emergency grants, moratorium on student loan repayments)

- Increased broadband capacity and subsidized connection prices

- Capacity building for online teaching

- Flexibility in QA and assessment/examinations

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Support at institutional level

- Financial aid (emergency scholarships, reduced tuition, zero tuition) - Donation/loan of laptop - Free/subsidized internet plans

- Strong teaching and learning services

- Flexibility in assessment

- Collaboration across departments and networks

- Academic and psychological support

Contribution of universities around the world

- Research (epidemiology & modelling, genome sequencing, Covid-19 tests, treatment, vaccine)

- Production of medical products (antibacterial soap, gloves, masks, stretchers, home diagnostic tools)

- Donation of equipment (ventilators)

- Use of university buildings as hospitals or quarantine camps

- Involvement of medical and nursing students

- Medical advice to government and the public

Promoting equity: entrance and admission

➢ <u>Outreach programs</u> to disadvantaged groups

➢ Better and more easily accessible <u>information</u> on study possibilities and career prospects

➢ <u>Advice and guidance</u> on study decisions

➢ Fair and equitable <u>selection and admission procedures</u>

➢ Better link between admission and the <u>needs of students and the labor market</u>

➢ Low costs of <u>changing study paths</u> later on

➢ <u>Collaboration</u> between schools, universities and policy makers

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Promoting equity: learning environment and retention

➤ <u>Accessibility</u> of premises and learning material

➤ <u>Flexibility</u> of provision

➤ <u>Bridge programs</u>

➤ Adaptation of <u>course design</u>

➤ Academic and psycho-social <u>guidance and counselling</u>

➤ <u>Policies on sexual harassment</u> and assault

➤ Targeted <u>financial support</u>

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Promoting equity: labor market transition

➢ Targeted <u>career support</u>

➢ <u>Role models</u> for students

➢ <u>Mentoring</u> programs

➢ <u>Networking</u> support

➢ Reducing <u>information asymmetries</u>

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Shared responsibilities going forward

➢ Collective duty to <u>understand situation</u>

➢ Promote <u>collection and use of data</u>

➢ <u>Drawing consequences</u> from analysis

➢ <u>Implementing necessary strategies</u>, policies and measures