Topical Contributions and Outcomes

UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region: *Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness*

Editors
Jan Sadlak, Klaus Hüfner,
Remus Pricopie and Laura Grünberg

United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

CEPES

European Centre for Higher Education

Romanian Ministry of
Education, Research and Innovation

UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region:
Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness

Authors are responsible for the choice and presentation of the facts contained in their text and for the opinion expressed therein. These are not necessarily those of the organizations and the partners of the Forum.

UNESCO Forum on Higher Education
in the Europe Region:
Access*, *Values*, *Quality and Competitiveness
[convened in the context of the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education]

organized by
Government of Romania
Represented by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation
and
UNESCO-European Centre for Higher Education

in collaboration with
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the European University Association (EUA), the European Students' Union (ESU),
and Education International (EI)

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Preface

UNESCO-CEPES and the Government of Romania, represented by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, organized on 21-24 May 2009 in Bucharest, the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region: *Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness*.

The event, organized in collaboration with the Council of Europe, the European Commission, OECD, the European University Association (EUA), the European Students' Union (ESU), and Education International (EI), was convened in the context of regional meetings preceding the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education: *"The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development"* (5-8 July 2009, UNESCO, Paris).

The quality of the papers and documents produced [in this regard special thanks are due to the Members of the Programme Committee of the Forum], the noticeable interest in the *Bucharest Message to the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education*, the high level representatives [including more than 450 participants from the countries of the Europe Region and other regions as well as international governmental and non-governmental organizations], the vivid and inspiring debates during the sessions, the media interest in the event allow us to consider the event as a success.

Following the Forum, UNESCO-CEPES received many messages of appreciation, including one from two graduate students of the University of Kassel in Germany, who stated that "All of them [their colleagues] were very interested in our presentation, and in reading the books and materials we brought from Bucharest", as well as the message below received from a group of pupils of the British School of Bucharest [future students of our universities – sic] who were invited to attend the meeting. Such comments symbolically emphasize the importance of such an event for university students of today and tomorrow.

To Mr. Sadlak,

Thank you for offering us such a great opportunity, by allowing our school to have a part in the Unesco forum on higher education. I found the forum highly interesting and the ideas pointed out in it, of high accuracy. It was an incredible experience to be able to witness the impressive speeches and opinions.

Thank you,
Mihnea Rusu, Bethan Rowlands, and Louisa Dascalescu

The Bucharest Forum provided strong evidence that the last decade was rich in new developments in higher education. It also was an opportunity to record the vast expertise, creativity and readiness in the Europe Region to look anew at the challenges facing higher education.

The event has received generous financial support foremost from the Romanian Government as well as from:

– Austrian Federal Ministry of Science and Research;
– German Federal Ministry of Education and Research;
– Ministry of Education of Finland;
– Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation – Portugal;
– DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service;
– the National Bank of Romania;
– Microsoft – Romania; and,
– Comunicare.ro – Romania.

The hospitality provided by the administration of the Palace of the Parliament where the *UNESCO Forum* took place as well as the assistance received from the students of the National School of Political and Administrative Studies (*SNSPA*) in Bucharest, should be acknowledged.

The present "publication" is composed of two parts – a selection of the main documents, topical contributions and outcomes of the UNESCO Forum and a CD-ROM with all the documents and texts of the Forum, including the written interventions from respondents and participants (papers or Power Point presentations) [they can also be accessed and downloaded from www.cepes.ro/Forum]. In this way, a testimony of the richness of ideas circulated on the occasion of this major regional conference in the area of higher education is offered to all those interested in the future of higher education in Europe Region and worldwide.

Forward
(based on the Forum Outline)

Context and content of the event

Background

Ten years ago, in 1998, in Paris, participants of the World Conference on Higher Education*: Higher Education in the XXI Century: Vision and Action (WCHE)*, met to reflect on the state of higher education and subsequently adopted the "World Declaration on Higher Education in the twenty-first Century: Vision and Action" and the "Framework for Priority Action for Change and Developments in Higher Education". This event was considered a milestone for setting the pace of higher education development at the global, regional and national levels in order to meet the challenges of the twenty-first century.

In preparation for this major event, a series of regional meetings took place, including the *European Regional Forum: European Agenda for Change for Higher Education*, organized by the Association of European Universities (CRE) and the UNESCO European Center for Higher Education (UNESCO-CEPES) in 1997, in Palermo, Italy.

Since 1998 many initiatives worldwide have been undertaken to continue reflections on the role and value of higher education. In June 2003, a five year assessment of progress achieved in the implementation of the WCHE Framework for Priority Action took place at the *Meeting of Higher Education Partners (WCHE + 5)* organized by UNESCO in Paris.

In line with the resolution adopted at the 34th Session of the UNESCO's General Conference in 2007, a *World Conference on Higher Education "The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development"* will be held from 5 to 8 July 2009 in Paris, at UNESCO's Headquarters, to take stock of developments since 1998 and to re-visit the framework for Priority Action.

Following a similar model to ten years ago, the forthcoming *World Conference on Higher Education "The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development"* will be preceded by a series of regional conferences organized to bring specific regional concerns, expectations and proposals to the World Conference.

In the Europe Region the **UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region: *Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness*** has been organized by UNESCO-CEPES and the Government of Romania, represented by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation, in collaboration with the Council of Europe, the European Commission, OECD, the European University Association (EUA), the European Students' Union (ESU), and Education International (EI). The Forum took place in **Bucharest, Romania, from 21 to 24 May 2009**.

This Forum should be seen in the context of other events and developments relevant to higher education in the UNESCO Europe Region [Europe, North America, and Israel], as well as the outcomes of projects and meetings organized by the partners of the Forum, including the following:

– the *EUA General Assembly*, Spring Conference, March 2008, Barcelona, Spain;

– the OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education, April 2008, Lisbon, Portugal;

– the 20th Anniversary of the Magna Charta organized by the Magna Charta Observatory of Fundamental University Values and Rights, September 2008, Bologna, Italy;

– "Let's go!" – the Education International and European Students' Union campaign to facilitate mobility of staff and students in Europe, October 2008, Lille, France;

– the E4 European Quality Assurance Forum, November 2008, Budapest, Hungary.

The UNESCO Forum reflected also on the outcomes of the *Ministerial Conference of the Bologna Process,* to be held from 28 to 29 April 2009 in Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium and paid due attention to relevant activities and findings of the World Bank, and other UN institutions, as well as other organizations such as the European Association for International Education (EAIE) and the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA).

Objectives, Documents and Outcomes

The UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region intended to review major developments and trends in higher education in Europe, North America and Israel, to offer a platform for dialogue among all actors and stakeholders concerned with the future of higher education in the Region and to provide, through its outcomes, inputs to the **2009 World Conference on Higher Education** ***The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development***. It aimed also to contribute to enhancement of academic collaboration [in the context of globalization, transatlantic cooperation and the Bologna Process].

The main documents for discussions during the plenary, topical and transversal sessions have been:

– ***The Forum Report – Ten Years Back and Ten Years Forward: Developments and Trends in Higher Education in Europe and North America*** [debated during the Forum and presented as an input to the global report at the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education];

– Four thematic papers on **Access**, **Values**, **Quality** and **Competitiveness** and a paper on **Internationalization of Higher Education**.

The documents and debates at the Forum have illustrated different national experiences in institutional and governmental policies, models and practices allowing the formulation of possible scenarios and policy recommendations for future action at the national, regional and international levels. This provided the basis for the elaboration and adoption [by acclamation] of the ***Bucharest Message to the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education – Experiences and Recommendations from the Europe Region***.

It also facilitated the further development of UNESCO-CEPES as part of an overall programme of the Organization.

During the preparatory stage, in order to assure an appropriate coherence between the above mentioned documents, a **Programme Committee** has been established consisting of organizers and partner organizations, as well as experts from the Europe Region (see Composition of the Programme Committee in the annexes).

A post-conference publication and dissemination of all major papers and contributions to the Forum has been also produced (this volume).

Forum Topics

The following four topics have been identified as being of specific strategic importance and regional relevance: ***Access***, ***Values***, ***Quality*** and ***Competitiveness***. Different organizations [with an acknowledged record of activities in the respective area] have functioned as "Facilitators" for each topic, both in the preparatory stages and during the Forum debates.

1. Access

The massification of higher education in the Europe Region is no longer a policy objective but a reality and a confirmation of universal aspiration. This new situation has prompted new challenges. The Forum has attempted to approach the complex problems of "mass access" in higher education in relation to issues of equity, quality and excellence, focusing on quantitative and qualitative trends and reflecting on new developments affecting access, such as the imperatives of lifelong learning, vocational considerations, international mobility, demographic transformation and migration.

When investigating the various implications of the expansion of higher education in terms of equity, participation, retention and success, the Forum will consider the existing comprehensive work undertaken in the area – such as, for example, that of the OECD in its *Thematic Review of Tertiary Education, 2008*. The Forum has continued the discussion proposed by the OECD concerning various policy development options for increasing access to higher education with due attention to equity issues – assessing the extent and origin of equity issues to diversifying criteria for admission, expanding distance learning opportunities; sustaining efforts to ensure gender parity at all levels of higher education; and placing an emphasis on the equity of outcomes[1].

2. Values

Education should produce knowing heads and honest hearts
Thomas Jefferson

It is a general view that in addition to academic development and professional training, higher education should encourage personal growth and social responsibility, educating students as citizens of a global society to uphold standards of civility and civic responsibility.

Values, ethics and moral responsibilities have for centuries shaped the European "idea of a university". A defining moment marking the modern expression of this idea was the *Magna Charta Universitatum* which was adopted in 1988. The recognition of "academic values" has also been part of higher education in other regions. Nowadays, they again need to be reasserted in the current context of research, teaching and governance in higher education as well as that of complex cultural and religious considerations and societal expectations in such areas as sustainable development.

The Forum reflected on existing experiences concerning the ways and means to complement pragmatic dominant approaches to higher education with humanistic concerns. In this regard it reflected on the main postulates of the *Bucharest Declaration on Ethical Values and Principles of Higher Education in the Europe Region*[2] which contains a call for suitable and effective means "to assure the balance between the nature of higher education as a public good and the commercialization of its services that preserve the core values of the academic ethos; to promote a system of governance of higher education institutions that allows for the assertions of the values of the collegiate model of institutional management and administration; to elaborate and enforce at institutional, national and European level codes of ethical standards for regulating scientific research that are both disciplinary and multidisciplinary oriented and to promote international cooperation on these kind of issues".

During the *Bologna Process Official Seminar on The Cultural Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area*[3] participants stated clearly that "the core values of institutional autonomy, academic freedom, collegiality/community and cooperation/exchange among institutions should be affirmed as necessary components of the European university's competitive advantage in the global market place and thus the instruments at the service of society".

The Forum intended to acknowledge views and commitments made by the international community, taking the discussions further and focusing on new values built in and shaped by higher education institutions today and the ways and means by which universities and academia can contribute to the building of a wisdom society.

3. Quality

Quality is not an act, it is a habit
Aristotle

Quality considerations have always been part of higher education. What is new is the context and measures which are being used in order to rise to this challenge. In addition, more than ever before the quality concern has been internationalized. This new context has brought about important initiatives. Naturally, the most important for the European context are those introduced under the agenda of the Bologna Process. The overall aim is the creation of a European Higher Education Area by the year 2010, but as is stated in the consecutive decisions adopted by the ministerial meetings of the participating countries [currently 46 countries are participating in the Bologna Process], the most important challenge today in Europe is the need for wider cooperation in order to develop regional and national standards and procedures for quality assurance, combined with the will to safeguard the diversity of higher education systems. Whether in different contexts and/or through the use of other organizational arrangements, the issue of quality remains equally pertinent to all countries of the Europe Region.

There is also a growing interest in the quality dimension of higher education from a variety of stakeholders. One of the signs of this development is the emergence of various national, regional and international ranking and league tables[4].

In the context of this growing attention to the quality and excellence movement in the Europe Region and the increasing academic as well as political nature of the debate on quality, evidenced by the growth of assessment activities that are, directly or indirectly, linked to resource allocation, the Forum aimed to distill potential useful ideas and good practices in promoting excellence in higher education and tackle issues of recent approaches and developments in quality assurance.

4. Competitiveness

Competing by being unique

One of the most visible changes since the 1998 WCHE is the more pronounced presence of competitiveness and attractiveness in higher education policies at the institutional, national and regional levels.

An important consideration for the introduction, under the Bologna Process, of convergent structures of programmes and degrees, mutual recognition of academic qualifications and periods of study[5], together with an increase in study programmes in international languages [in particular English], was the strengthening of the competitiveness and attractiveness of studying in European countries. This dimension of the Bologna Process is in line with much broader considerations of economic competitiveness such as that of the European Union under the Lisbon Strategy as well as the recognition of its reliance on research and innovation for which higher education plays a crucial role.[6]

The Forum discussed various ingredients that make higher education in the Europe Region today competitive by focusing on topics such as: competition for students, competition from new providers, competition for funding as well the complexity of assessing excellence, the challenges of measuring excellence in diverse higher education systems where institutions have distinctive missions, structures and processes, and the relations between competitiveness and cooperation and academic solidarity, as well as sharing experience on good practices already implemented in various countries in the area of improving competitiveness of the respective higher education systems and institutions.

In addition to the above mentioned four main topics of the Forum, the discussions of the meeting reflected upon a number of other aspects relevant for modern and performant higher education sectors and their respective institutions. A transversal session has been, for example, dedicated to the issue of *"Challenges for Internationalization of Higher Education in the European Region in a Globalizing World"*.

Participants

Representatives of all 52 Member States of the UNESCO Europe Region [Europe, North America and Israel] have been invited to the Forum. Among them:

– Ministers of Education/Secretaries of State responsible for Higher Education;
– Parliamentarians;
– Presidents and representatives of Rector's Conferences and other academic organizations;
– Representatives of Academies of Sciences and other research organizations;
– International, governmental and non-governmental organizations in the field of higher education and research;
– Representatives of the UNESCO National Commissions of the Europe Region;
– Selected UNESCO Chairs in the field of higher education;
– Invited speakers and experts;
– Representatives from other regions;
– The Media.

More than 450 people attended the event. In addition to participation in the sessions and events of the meeting, the Forum offered also opportunities for direct contacts between various stakeholders as well as to learn about the latest developments in higher education and research of the host country – Romania.

Notes

1. See Tertiary Education for Knowledge Society. OECD Thematic Review of Tertiary Education. Synthesis Report, 2008, OECD, volume 2, pp. 119-126.
2. Declaration adopted at the International Conference on "*Ethical and Moral Dimensions for Higher Education and Science in Europe*" (2-5 September 2004, Bucharest, Romania). See text on: www.cepes.ro.
3. Conference organized in the Vatican City, 2006 by the Holy See in collaboration with the Rector's Conference of Pontifical Universities, the Pontifical Academies of Sciences, UNESCO-CEPES, and the Council of Europe and under the patronage of the European Commission. See *Higher Education in Europe*, vol. 31, no. 4, 2006.
4. See, Sadlak, J., and Liu, N.C. eds. (2007), *The World-Class University and Ranking: Aiming Beyond Status* published by UNESCO-CEPES, the Cluj University Press and the Institute of Higher Education of the Shanghai Jiao Tong University: and *University Rankings: Seeking Prestige, Raising Visibility and Embedding Quality,* in: *Higher Education in Europe*, vol. 33, no. 2/3, 2008.
5. The Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region – *the Lisbon Recognition Convention*, for which UNESCO-CEPES and the Council of Europe assure a Co-Secretariat, provides a legal framework for this development in all countries which are signatories to this convention.
6. The *Lisbon Strategy*, also known as the *Lisbon Agenda* or *Lisbon Process*, is an action and development plan the aim of which is to make the European Union "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion, and respect for the environment by 2010". It was set out by the European Council in Lisbon in March 2000.

Bucharest Message

Bucharest Message to the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education – Experiences and Recommendations from the Europe Region

I. Preamble

A decade ago UNESCO organized its first world conference to discuss developments and issues of higher education. That meeting established the principles and objectives to move higher education forward toward the service of society. As indicated in the title of the conference – *Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century: Vision and Action* (UNESCO, 5-9 October 1998) – this global meeting of various stakeholders encouraged Member States and the higher education institutions to undertake reforms which inspired major transformations of higher education.

Today, it is appropriate to undertake another review of higher education as we enter the second decade of this new century. Such a reflection is even timelier as it is quite clear that if current and future global and regional challenges are to be met, the contribution of higher education is both expected and indispensable. The *2009 World Conference on Higher Education: The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development* (UNESCO, 5-8 July 2009) will reflect on the main aspects of the new dynamics "***in***" and "***for***" higher education.

II. Background, Context and Agenda of the Forum

As was the case a decade ago, several regional events have taken place in the run up to the *2009 World Conference on Higher Education* in order to be able to provide specific **"regional perspectives"** to the global meeting. In this context, the *UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region: Access, Values, Quality, and Competitiveness* took place in Bucharest, Romania (22-24 May 2009).

The meeting was hosted by the Romanian Government and co-organized by UNESCO's European Centre for Higher Education (UNESCO-CEPES) and the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation on behalf of the Government of Romania, and in collaboration with the Council of Europe, the European

Commission, OECD, the European University Association (EUA), the European Students' Union (ESU) and Education International (EI) as well as the Observatory of the Magna Charta Universitatum and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). The support received from governments and other institutions was essential in holding this important meeting, and this should be highly acknowledged.

The Forum brought together representatives from governments, institutions of higher education, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations and discussed present trends and the further development of higher education foremost in the Europe Region [the countries of Europe, North America, and Israel].

The work of the Forum was based on the report entitled *Ten Years Back and Ten Years Forward: Developments and Trends in Higher Education in Europe Region and North America* as well as thematic papers on four key topics – **access**, **values**, **quality**, and **competitiveness**, which were identified as being of strategic importance and regional relevance and which were prepared by top-level experts in the respective areas. In addition, the challenges of **internationalization** of higher education in a globalizing world were discussed as **a transversal theme** [all documents of the Forum are accessible on www.cepes.ro/Forum].

The debates were structured around the four key topics mentioned above, considering the necessity to undertake a stocktaking analysis of the past decade before developing ideas and proposals about the future development of higher education during the coming ten years. Obviously, the substance of the thematic papers is closely linked. In addition, the transversal importance of internationalization in the context of the four topical areas was dealt with in a special session in which representatives from other regions who participated in the Forum, have been able to discuss the Europe Region's experience which could also be of relevance to other regions, taking into consideration that higher education in the countries belonging to the Europe Region represents an important segment of the global higher education setting.

The most important development in the Europe Region during the last decade was the launching of the Bologna Process, when in June 1999, ministers responsible for higher education from 29 European countries met in Bologna, and signed the *Bologna Declaration,* and agreed on joint objectives which would result in the establishment of a *European Higher Education Area* (EHEA) by 2010. On a voluntary basis, the Bologna Process became a far-reaching process of reforms of higher education systems and of international recognition arrangements which today encompasses 46 countries. Its principal organizational instruments are a three-degree structure often referred to as the Bachelor's-Master's-Doctorate cycle, the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) to promote the most widespread student mobility and a *Diploma Supplement* which was developed jointly by the Council of Europe, the European Commission and UNESCO-CEPES. As it stands, with its objectives, action lines and values and on condition of their thorough and balanced implementation in the upcoming years, the Bologna Process is essential to facilitate greater comparability and compatibility of higher education systems in Europe.

Important progress has been made in facilitating academic mobility beyond the countries participating in the Bologna Process through the ratification by 48 States, of which 46 are Member States of UNESCO, of the joint *Council of Europe/UNESCO*

Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region [also referred to as the *1997 Lisbon Recognition Convention*].

The Bologna Process has led to the most intense reform measures of higher education in Europe; it has gone beyond a mere coordination of higher education policies set by national public authorities which acknowledge, for the first time, the need for a common frame of reference in the field of higher education in order to better address the societal needs of a region that shares values such as democracy, human rights and social justice, while promoting Europe's diversity in the international context. It can also be described as a first step in a region-wide higher education reform process that brings together all the main stake-holders of higher education – governments, higher education institutions, academic staff and students, employers, as well as key international governmental and non-governmental organizations in the field of higher education, including the Council of Europe, the European Commission, the European University Association (EUA), UNESCO-CEPES, the European Students' Union (ESU), Education International (EI), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and BUSINESS EUROPE. Together with the national authorities they form the Bologna Follow-up Group (BFUG) responsible for the preparation of the decisions taken at the biennial ministerial meetings. The most remarkable aspect of this process is how, within the relatively short time horizon of ten years, an increasing Europe-wide consensus has emerged on a voluntary basis and with the participation of such diverse constituencies. In this regard the participation of representatives of the academic community of staff and students, as key stakeholders, ensures that the process respects the diversity of higher education in Europe and therewith enables the ownership and grassroots implementation of the Bologna Process at all levels: **institutional**, **national** and **European**.

Most recently, the EHEA entered a new decade, the Bologna Process 2020. Having recognized that the full implementation of the Bologna objectives will still require efforts on the part of all stakeholders, additional operational goals were formulated for the next decade. Confronted with the demographic challenge of an ageing population in many countries, the members of the Bologna Process must undertake all measures to optimise their human resources. These goals include, *inter alia*, joint policies towards broadening access, designing lifelong learning strategies and enhancing the employability for graduates. Furthermore, the strengthening of the Europeanization and internationalization process through increased mobility of students, staff and researchers is a top priority. In this context, mobility is also considered to be an objective which paves the way to open and tolerant societies, while creating a conducive setting for cultural exchange and diversified, academically meaningful learning, research or teaching experiences. All these issues were reaffirmed in the Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve *Communiqué* which was adopted at the Conference of the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education (Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, 28-29 April 2009).

III. Experiences and Recommendations

We, the participants in the *UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region*, would like to share our collective experiences on the development of higher education in the last decade and present the following observations and non-binding recommendations:

Access and Equity

1. Access is taken in its broadest reading to encompass entry into, participation in, completion of higher education as well as achieving its outcomes. It comprises both absolute and relative levels of participation and is intimately linked to equity. It is therefore associated with the notion that equitable higher education systems are those that ensure that the achievement of educational potential at higher education level is not the result of personal and social circumstances, including of factors such as socio-economic status, gender, ethnic origin, immigrant status, place of residence, age or disability.

2. Increased participation in higher education has become a reality in many fields of study in the countries of the Europe Region. This quantitative growth emphasises and reflects the importance of higher education in the emerging knowledge-based society in which access to studies and advanced knowledge is essential for economic development, social cohesion and a functional democratic society. Despite this positive development, there is still a need to undertake measures to improve access to and completion of higher education, particularly for individuals from families with no tradition of higher education, social minorities, immigrant communities, low-income families and other disadvantaged groups. Undertaking of such measures would enhance equity of higher education systems. In this regard Member States are encouraged to undertake measures in accordance with their obligations and commitments under the *UNESCO Convention against Discrimination in Education* and the *International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights*.

3. The student body within higher education should reflect the diversity of the population in a given country or region. Access to higher education, including to higher-status institutions and post-graduate studies, should be widened by fostering the potential of students from underrepresented groups and by providing adequate conditions for the completion of their studies. This involves improving the learning environment, removing barriers to study, and providing adequate appropriate financial support for students to be able to benefit from study opportunities at all levels as well as to contribute to a timely completion of studies. It also entails making available extensive information about the benefits and costs of higher education and providing guidance and counselling services. This includes the importance of student support services and the key role of its professionals. Efforts to achieve equity in higher education should be complemented by actions at other levels of the educational system. In order to be fully effective educational policy needs to intervene much earlier.

4. Although participation of women in higher education has increased to the extent that almost everywhere in the Europe Region they now represent the majority

of students in first cycle programmes, their participation still remains uneven across types of institutions and academic disciplines, and among the ranks of higher education teaching personnel. Therefore, we call for further improvement in access for women to studies in science and engineering and to post-graduate studies, as well as to teaching and research positions.

5. The developments of the last decade confirm the importance of lifelong learning as a priority policy measure leading to more inclusive and flexible systems in which higher education systems will assure greater equality of educational opportunity at different stages of life, and thus contribute to personal development and employability.

6. The developments of the last decade also demonstrate that increased participation in higher education [also referred to as "mass higher education"] can be achieved but only in a concerted way with diversification in such areas as organization of study programmes, institutional missions, composition of academic staff as well as teaching practices and role of research. It is clear that there is a social responsibility that institutions of higher education, in collaboration with other stakeholders, need to assume for improving access and equity.

7. Equity objectives can also be achieved through the sharing of knowledge. A strategy of open educational resources by institutions of higher education would make the knowledge they produce accessible in a spirit of co-operation between regions.

Values

8. Institutions of higher education promote values essential for democratic society as well as for the cultural development of society and the personal development of individuals. For this very reason higher education cannot be separated from values and ethics. They are, together with academic freedom and institutional autonomy, key tenets of higher education. Without being grounded in such values academic staff cannot teach and students cannot acquire clear thinking, cogent communication, and an ability to make good judgment and to be socially responsible. The recent financial crisis has also illustrated that a lack of such qualities and competencies can bring about overwhelming negative consequences. Furthermore, only with academic freedom and institutional autonomy, are higher education institutions able to strive for truth and further knowledge in order to contribute to a sustainable development. Therefore, higher education institutions are encouraged to set up ethical committees as well as to adopt codes of conduct.

9. Knowledge-based societies are not only responsible for the production of new and relevant knowledge and technological innovations, but also for the critical evaluation of economic, social and cultural developments in society. This cannot be undertaken without clear commitments to civic values, democracy, justice and tolerance. We, therefore, confirm and recommend that those commitments, resulting in local and global citizenship, become integral learning outcomes for all students.

10. The quality of higher education builds upon a fruitful and collegial cooperation inside the academic community in both teaching and research. Therein, students should be considered as contributing partners, particularly with regard to its educational objectives, and as members of the academic community. Malpractice in higher education needs to be addressed and counteracted also by providing education

and training for such cases. The establishment of an international ombudsman for resolving conflicts related to principles and values of higher education could further help the informal resolution of conflicts.

11. Social responsibilities should be exercised by institutions of higher education in the context of academic freedom which includes the freedom of expression of academics within and outside their institutions, the freedom of teaching, conducting research and publishing results. It also includes students' rights. All of them are in line with *the Bucharest Declaration on Ethical Values and Principles of Higher Education in the Europe Region* which was adopted at the *International Conference on Ethical and Moral Dimensions for Higher Education and Science in Europe* (Bucharest, 2-5 September 2004).

12. As many higher education institutions are of a multi-disciplinary character, the support of all areas of study and research needs to be ensured, thus not only focusing on areas of immediate commercial interest. It is only by preserving a culture of diverse scholarship that a true knowledge-based society can be formed.

13. It is in this context that special attention should be paid to a compliance with the *1997 Recommendation Concerning the Status of Higher-Education Teaching Personnel* which requires the Member States to submit reports allowing the Director-General of UNESCO to prepare a comprehensive report on the world situation with regard to academic freedom and respect for the human rights of higher education teaching personnel. Additionally, the establishment of a global index on academic freedom should be supported.

14. Knowledge-based societies are not only responsible for the production of new and relevant knowledge and technological innovations, but also for the critical evaluation of economic, social and cultural developments in society. This cannot be undertaken without clear commitments to civic values, democracy, justice and tolerance. We, therefore, confirm and recommend that those commitments, resulting in local and global citizenship, become integral learning outcomes for all students.

15. Multipolarity in key societal areas – culture, religion, economy, communication, is a principal characteristic of the present world, where whole societies and individuals are confronted with contradictory forces, higher education institutions are one of key places where the unbiased and free search for a "greater good" for society and the individual can be undertaken. These values of higher education also need to be transmitted and promoted in society at large.

Quality

16. Although the notion of quality in higher education is high on the agenda of all countries within the Europe Region, it has been of particular concern in the context of the Bologna Process, specifically in relation to the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* introduced in 2005. The *Standards* represent a positive development and have been widely used throughout Europe. However problems of defining, measuring, judging and implementing quality still remain to be further discussed, especially with regard to external and internal issues of quality. Therefore, before judging the quality of higher education institutions, full transparency of the criteria applied must be

guaranteed keeping in mind the aim of developing and maintaining a quality culture and the enhancement of the effective functioning of higher education institutions.

17. The experience with regard to quality shows that it is a complex concept that must encompass all missions of higher education. Quality assurance and quality enhancement systems can only work if all stakeholders are involved and students and staff are seen as partners in the discussion, decision-making and implementation of a quality culture in higher education institutions.

18. In light of highly diversified and flexible types of provision of higher education, the increasing number of public and private providers, the growth in international student mobility, and the various forms of cross-border provision of higher education, the design and application of quality assurance systems have become a priority. Therefore, an important challenge is the need for wider cooperation in order to further develop such systems that assess the quality of teaching and learning as well as of research.

19. It should be noted that the *European Quality Assurance Register in Higher Education* (2008) is open to any quality assurance agency worldwide. It might provide greater scope for quality assessment activities in addition to national ones.

20. The *OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education* which provide an international framework to protect students, and guidance to key stakeholders on how to share the responsibility of assuring quality provision should be discussed, disseminated and mainstreamed in the design of national and institutional quality assurance systems.

Competitiveness

21. Higher education and research are essential for the social and cultural development and the economic competitiveness of our societies. Universities and research institutions preserve and create knowledge and develop competences and skills that assist individuals to realize their personal fulfilment and to become active citizens. Higher education and research also help citizens pursue successful careers and businesses to innovate. Higher education therefore has an important role to play in enhancing the economic development and competitiveness of our societies.

22. Academic competitiveness, including the competition amongst institutions, academics and students for research funding, awards, and honours should be independently assessed based on transparent academic and scientific criteria and carried out in such a way that all institutions, countries and regions have opportunity to contribute to and benefit from the global knowledge-based society. While there is an overall acceptance of the need for greater openness and transparency with regard to differences in missions and performance of higher education institutions, there is a divergence of opinion with regard to instruments, methodologies and outcomes used as transparency and quality assurance tools such as classifications and ranking. Such instruments should meet the criteria set up in the *Berlin Principles on Ranking of Higher Education Institutions*.

23. There is a growing acceptance of the need of development of "common references" in relation to qualifications frameworks at national and international levels. This is being carried out notably through the *Qualifications Framework for the*

European Higher Education Area [within the Bologna Process] and the *European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning* [within the European Union]. Other common references include the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area* [within the Bologna Process], the *European Charter for Researchers and the Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers* [within the European Union].

24. Academic competitiveness may also be enhanced by opening up national funding schemes to foreign participants and by reinforcing transnational funding schemes such as *Erasmus, Erasmus Mundus,* the European Research Council and the substantial funding schemes in North America and Israel.

25. The *OECD/UNESCO Guidelines for Quality Provision in Cross-border Higher Education* are specifically relevant for transnational education. Overall, transnational education should be viewed as opportunities that need to be fully exploited, while at the same time addressing possible negative side-effects. The *Bologna Policy Forum*, which was attended by 46 countries participating in the Bologna Process and 15 other countries as well as a number of international organizations and NGOs, adopted the *Statement by the Bologna Policy Forum 2009* (Louvain-la-Neuve, 29 April 2009) stating that transnational exchanges in higher education should be governed on the basis of academic values and advocating a balanced exchange of teachers, researchers and students between countries to promote fair and fruitful "brain circulation". This also represents the principal challenge for policy development and practices for internationalization of higher education especially in relation between various regions of the globalized world.

26. Population decline and changes in age distribution are affecting higher education systems in most countries in the UNESCO Europe Region, with a consequence that higher education institutions see the need to compete for students both nationally and internationally, with the risk that international migration be required in order to overcome shortages of skilled labour. In this context, new competencies for new demands of the labour market must be anticipated and increased opportunities for higher education and lifelong learning need to be created for improving and upgrading the skills of the workforce.

IV. Looking ahead

27. The consequences of the financial crisis followed by the economic downturn are changing the context in which higher education both nationally and internationally will function in the years to come. Institutions of higher education in Europe Region as well as in other regions are affected and cost-cutting measures are adversely affecting conditions of employment of academic staff and their professional development. The consequences of such measures could lead to a long-lasting negative impact on the quality of higher education. Given this situation, financial and economic as well as the social and cultural aspects of the future of higher education systems must be taken into consideration and more than ever the notion of "academic moral solidarity" should become a norm and source for seeking

new ways of international collaboration, in particular with Sub-Saharan Africa, in order to avoid "academic protectionism" and "brain drain".

28. From an economic point of view, in periods of recession, investments in higher education should be treated as a high public priority, as they have long-term effects on the building of human resources and the production of knowledge, and offer [on average] high rates of social and private return.

29. From a social and cultural point of view, the current financial and economic crisis is in part a result of the departure from the basic values of societal cohesion and sustainable development. There is an urgent need to redefine these values in the context of multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious societies and to teach and practise them in all institutions of higher education.

30. "Globalization with a human face" must become the leitmotiv of all our efforts to achieve a peaceful and sustainable world without hunger and poverty. Increased cooperation with higher education institutions in other regions, especially in Sub-Saharan Africa, will be one expression of human solidarity. Intensified exchanges of students and academic staff, the twinning of research programmes and the joint use of ICTs in teaching and research activities are necessary in our North-South cooperation. Competition and cooperation in higher education do not exclude each other and must be developed, with a fair amount of good will, into a win-win-situation for all stakeholders.

31. *Internationalisation* is also an aim in itself and not only a means to better fulfil other tasks, that needs its own attention, professional dedication, staff and infrastructure, well defined strategies and specific funding mechanisms and other incentives from the side of institutions, governments and international organisations.

32. The Bologna Process has demonstrated how reforming higher education in an international cooperative manner can be undertaken and implemented. The decade of its implementation can be recognized as a "regional initiative of global relevance". The other regions might find, with appropriate modifications, the approach and mechanisms applied under the Bologna Process to be useful when formulating strategic goals in their respective national and regional higher education settings.

33. The discussions at the *UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region* have shown that in a growingly interdependent world, the reform of higher education at the regional, national and institutional level also needs to be carried out in an international manner, while at the same time respecting the local context. A facilitating role of UNESCO could be of great relevance and could play a key role in initiating more cooperation among the different regions.

34. In conclusion, we, the participants in the *UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region*, affirm that higher education and research are now entering a new stage of development. Our discussions shed a common light on the most recent developments in higher education, as well as the identification of the directions and challenges which we can expect to face. We hope that our region's experience might have relevance in a global context and serve as inspiration to other regions.

35. Undoubtedly, higher education has become a very complex system which requires an adequate intrinsic knowledge about its structures and functioning. And although the crucial role of higher education is recognized, there remains a need for

seeking appropriate policy directions and the formulation of adequate solutions. It also calls for the services and expertise provided by UNESCO-CEPES and its partners to collect and disseminate information as well as to provide expert knowledge from a multi-national and inter-regional perspective.

We, the participants in the *UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region,* thank the organizers of the Forum, in particular UNESCO-CEPES and the Government of Romania. We found the *Forum* an effective and relevant platform to update our ideas about the state of higher education in the Europe Region as well as to present, discuss and affirm the most effective and efficient ways of furthering higher education in the service of society.

Bucharest, 23 May 2009.

Inaugural Speeches

Inaugural Speech

Ecaterina Andronescu,
Minister of Education, Research and Innovation, Romania

It is a great honor and pleasure to open today the ***UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region: Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness***, organized by the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation and the European Center for Higher Education (UNESCO-CEPES), under the patronage of the Prime Minister of Romania.

From the very beginning, I want to underline that this event, which brings together delegations from the 52 countries of the UNESCO Europe Region – Europe, North America and Israel, and also from other countries of the world, is part of a series of regional conferences designed to prepare the message of the different world regions to the 2009 **UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education *The New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development***, which will be held in Paris, during 5-8 July 2009. So far, regional conferences have been held in:

– Cartagena, Columbia, in June 2008, attended by the countries in the Latin America and the Caribbean Region of UNESCO;
– Dakar, Senegal, in November 2008, attended by the countries in the UNESCO African Region;
– Macao, China, in September 2008, and New Delhi, India, in February 2009, attended by the countries in the Asia/Pacific UNESCO Region;
– Cairo, Egypt, in May 2009 attended by the UNESCO Arab States Region.

Mentioning this ample series of events is already enough to understand the magnitude reached by the dialogue between the world countries on the issues concerning the development of higher education and research. All this wouldn't have been possible without UNESCO's vision and determination to support the process of intense exchanges and cooperation between the world's countries in the field of higher education.

In fact, this series of international actions came as a result of the proposal of the Director-General of UNESCO, His Excellence, Mr. Koïchiro Matsuura, to the 34th Session of the General Conference of UNESCO, in October 2007, to examine how, since the last World Conference of UNESCO, ***Higher Education in the Twenty-first Century: Vision and Action***, held in October 1998, and until today, countries

all over the world have responded to the challenges of the present, but especially how are they getting ready to face the challenges of the future.

It is well known that we can not talk about sustainable development and knowledge-based societies without giving a special consideration to the development of higher education. In the same time, achieving the objectives of *Education for All* and the *Millennium Development Goals*, assumed by UNESCO, and therefore by all Member States, would not be possible without a significant contribution from the universities. However, when talking about the universities' contribution to the societal development, one must remember that this is not a goal to achieve easily.

The debates on this subject are complex and are rooted in the type of society we desire, in the availability and ability to make proper financial allocations, in the capacity to design and implement appropriate educational policies, in the talent to carry a continuous dialogue with the society as a whole, in order to help understand and accept the change, and also in the skill to make the most of the outcomes of change. Hence, universities' contribution to the development of the society can be neither standardized, nor framed in simple formulas. Therefore, strong interaction is needed between the academics, the governance and the society as a whole. The series of UNESCO events that I have mentioned provide a generous framework for such interactions.

It is in this context that the Director-General of UNESCO and the Government of Romania agreed on organizing in Bucharest the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region. UNESCO-CEPES and the Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation have been designated as the organizers of the Forum. For the Government of Romania and CEPES, this collaboration comes naturally, as an expression of their almost four decades of collaboration started in 1972, when UNESCO-CEPES was founded in Bucharest as a specialized body of UNESCO for higher education. Furthermore, the dedication of the Romanian Ministry of Education to participating in the European and international dialogue on higher education is an recognized fact, proved also by the recent decision of the Ministerial Conference of the Bologna Process, held in Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgium, on 28-29 April 2009, which entrusted Romania with the Secretariat of the Bologna Process and the organizing of the 2012 Ministerial Conference, coming as a confirmation of our contribution to the shaping of the future of the European Higher Education Area.

Returning to the UNESCO Forum starting today, we need to acknowledge that such an enterprise couldn't have been possible without the important contribution of our partners, namely the Council of Europe, European Commission, OECD, EUA, ESU and Education International, who helped us made this possible. At the same time, we need to express our appreciation for the efforts made by the Program Committee and by the institutions that the Program Committee members represent. We also thank our sponsors and the Permanent Bureau of the Parliament of Romania for their support in organizing this Forum. Last but not least, I wish to thank you all, participants and special guests from Asia, Africa and Latin America, for being here with us today.

I am looking forward to the effervescent and intense debates of the Forum and to receiving your reactions and recommendations for the adoption, in the closing plenary session, of our message to the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, held in Paris, in July, this year. I also need to mention that, under the care

of the three co-chairs of the Program Committee, the papers of the Forum will be published in a volume that will be available after 1 July 2009 and will also be presented at the UNESCO Conference World in Paris.

I now declare open the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region: Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness.

Inaugural Speech

Emil Boc,*
Prime Minister of the Romanian Government

For my country, for the Romanian Government and for me it is a great honor and also a great pleasure to welcome you today in Bucharest.

The UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region takes place in a context when the whole world expects the universities to give articulate answers to the great challenges of the present: recovering from the economic and financial crisis and ensuring a sustainable development for humanity, fighting the deterioration of the environment, and eradication of poverty and sources of conflict.

There is no need for deep meditation to understand that, without human resource development each and every community, in every country, there is little chance of progress. Moreover, the reality of the recent decades shows that the most dynamic and powerful nations are precisely those who have constantly invested in educating specialists, in endowing their people with professional abilities and knowledge able to make them most competitive at the global level.

The four major topics to be debated during this Forum - the ***access*** to higher education, the ***values*** promoted by higher education, the ***quality*** of academic training and the ***competitiveness*** of our academic world more and more open to internationalization – come to emphasize once more that higher education institutions, as active actors of the contemporary society, are called to design and build new bridges towards society.

Without giving up the traditional values of the Alma Mater community, without forgetting even for an instant the mission of the university to be a source of culture, knowledge and democracy, now, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, the university must find a new balance for each of the dimensions of its presence in the society and also to look to the future proactively considering the four major themes of discussion in the Forum:

– Democratic ***access*** to higher education should be addressed in the context of diversity pre-university education, but also considering the need to ensure a rational progression from B.A. to the master and doctorate degrees. Post-doctoral studies and research should not be forgotten, also, as they ensure the main source of excellence among the new generations of academics.

* *Presented on his behalf by Gabriel Bădescu, President, Agency for Gouvernmental Strategies.*

– The fundamental ***values*** of the academic community are now threatened by a strong pressure coming from the society, a pressure undoubtedly legitimate in fact, for an ever more pragmatic and efficient higher education. I appreciate the fact that Alma Mater and the members of the academic community have given the society a convincing answer by establishing the national framework for qualifications obtainable through higher education. These instruments for ensuring transparency for the results of academic training are now harmonized at European level and integrated in the system of qualifications that can be acquired by a person throughout life. The effort of developing national qualifications frameworks for higher education is either completed, or in full progress in all the countries present at this Forum.

– The ***quality*** of academic education is confronted today with the multitude and the diversity of suppliers of higher education programs, and with the more and more intense involvement of universities in lifelong learning programs (targeting students different from the typical, regular every-day student) and in the offering of online graduate and post-graduate qualifications.

– The ***competitiveness*** of the programs of study for each university depends essentially on the way that the educational contents meet the real needs of the knowledge, skills and abilities in each area of knowledge. What is new in the nowadays society is the fact that the university is both challenged and stimulated by the easier cross-border exchanges of students and teachers. The competitiveness of the academic offer is no more limited to the national market, but it becomes more and more globally assessed.

In my opinion, the most important challenge for all academic communities of the UNESCO Europe Region, and worldwide for that matter, is the integration of the new dynamic balance. It would be a serious mistake the prioritization of one of the above-mentioned issues to the detriment of the others.

And here are the arguments supporting my opinion: In a society so complex and dynamic as our contemporary society, a university is truly fulfilling its mission only if it is simultaneously promoting access, and values, and quality and competitiveness.

My experience as a faculty member of a prestigious Romanian university - Babes Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca - reinforces my belief that, in the future decade, the strategies of the universities competitive at the global level will include measures and programs aiming three major directions for action:

– The excellence of the faculty needs to be promoted with perseverance, honesty and exigency, making use of the opportunities offered by research programs supported by a balanced funding from both public and private sources, for each fundamental field of knowledge. The UNESCO Europe Region has developed a tradition of advanced knowledge and enjoys a solid recognition of its scientific merits. These traditions create great expectations, ladies and gentlemen! We cannot and may not put now an end to long interests and efforts dedicated to advancing the knowledge, only because nowadays we need to deal with the financial crisis, nor should we adopt hasty measures giving in to the present dim context. I strongly believe that we can find ways and resources for ensuring the continuity of scientific research in our universities.

– A new didactic technology for the educational process, the transmission of knowledge and the development of competencies, skills and abilities for capitalizing knowledge. The need for radical changes is dictated by the realities of the global information and knowledge society that we are all part of.

– A new academic leadership for our universities that have decisional and administrative autonomy. Therefore, the mission and functions of each university require a more creative approach. It is necessary to design and implement consistent strategies for the sustainable development of each institution, with proper anchoring in the realities and in the potential for development of the society that the universities are part of.

The issues proposed for this UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region are both challenging and tempting! I am convinced that the thematic sessions of the Forum will turn out to be an effervescent dialogue on the future of our universities over the next decade.

We highly appreciate the constant concern of UNESCO for the issue of structured dialogue on the development of higher education and on the cultural, social and economic impact of academic education on the progress and general welfare of humanity.

Also, please allow me to emphasize the role played by UNESCO-CEPES (European Center for Higher Education), a specialized body of UNESCO, founded in 1972 in Bucharest, and which, today, is the co-organizer of the Forum. All these years, UNESCO-CEPES has brought a most significant contribution to fostering the always necessary dialogue on the mission, development and functions of higher education institutions in the Europe Region, and also worldwide.

I conclude by wishing all of you here at the UNESCO Forum in Bucharest success with your endeavor, and I am convinced that the synthesis of the discussions here will be of valuable reference for the World Conference on Higher Education organized by UNESCO in July, in Paris.

Inaugural Speech

Cristian Diaconescu,*
Minister of Foreign Affairs, Romania

It is a great honor for our country to be the host of the ***UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region: Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness***, and it is a great pleasure for me to welcome you in Bucharest, for such an important event, on behalf of the Romanian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Allow me to use this opportunity to salute UNESCO's initiative of organizing this Forum on higher education, here, in Bucharest, and also to address the warmest congratulations to all those whose efforts have made this possible.

The high rank and interest of the representatives that have come to this Forum proves even more that it is considered a key event for shaping the future developments of higher education not only in Romania and South-Eastern Europe, but also in the UNESCO Europe Region and worldwide, as we are more and more aware that the importance of the quality dimension of our higher education is reflected in the professional quality of the graduates, not only at national, but also at the international level.

With your support, this Forum has the chance of becoming a valuable platform for intellectual debates on educational policies, and of generating a fruitful exchange of points of view and opinions on the current issues of European higher education, offering a great opportunity to synthesize and formulate valuable proposals for the World Conference on Higher Education that will be held in Paris, in July, this year.

I hope that the cooperation with UNESCO and the current Bologna Process will favor the responsible equal and mutual recognition of academic degrees and diplomas both at the European and international level. Such recognition would represent not only a sign of unity, but also of equity, when we talk about qualitative international higher education.

Held in 2009 – the European year of creativity and innovation – this Forum proposes for debates themes that may lay a solid foundation for new directions and opportunities in the European and global academic dialogue. We really appreciate the interest showed by all the participants and the organizations they represent to the intensification of this dialogue, especially because we strongly believe that we, in the UNESCO Europe Region, can be proud of our achievements in the field of higher education, but also need to further promote new ideas and new trends in access, quality, values and competitiveness.

* *Check against delivery.*

Principles such as the free access to education, quality and competitiveness are axioms of the educational policies in all Member States of UNESCO. However, we believe, that we can always find new methods, new ways and means for ensuring a more stimulating and competitive environment for both the providers and the beneficiaries of higher education, thus helping them in asserting and fully exploiting their potential.

Due to the constant efforts of UNESCO and to the outstanding expertise of the participants to this event, that Romania is honored to host these days, the relevance of higher education for all Member States and especially for the states of this Region is confirmed once more, as well as the constant concern of facing the challenges of development and integration in the context of globalization.

We strongly believe that Romania is willing and ready to develop and diversify the forms of cooperation with UNESCO and other partner countries in this field. Within this context, I make use of this opportunity to express my appreciation to the consistent and constant efforts of UNESCO-CEPES in Bucharest, and I am convinced that the activity of this center in Romania will continue to be as fruitful as it has been until today.

Also, it should not be forgotten that since its establishment, 37 years ago, UNESCO-CEPES has had a decisive role in achieving the necessary reforms in the European educational systems. Today, it has become one of the few specialized institution in approaching the newest trends and issues in the area of higher education, both at the regional and global level.

Convinced that the debates of this important Forum on Higher Education will offer us the opportunity of understanding the many different perspectives on the realities of higher education and also provide a great moment for reflection on the possible ways of future action, I want to thank you very much and wish you all success at this Forum.

Inaugural Speech

Ján Figel',*
Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth,
European Commission

I regret I cannot be with you in Paris and today, but I am really grateful to share with you my thoughts on the future of higher education. You have gathered to discuss the input that Europe can make to the forthcoming UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education. I command the organizers of this Forum for the title they have chosen – Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness, which are core issues for higher education everywhere in the world.

They have also been the heart of the discussions at the recent Bologna Ministerial Conference in Belgium and they will be at the center of Europe's efforts to meet the challenges higher education will face in the years to come.

I would like to focus my words on three main issues:

– Qualifications for the future;
– Mobility; and,
– Global attractiveness.

The standards and contents of higher education have been among the drivers of the Bologna Process from the very start. One issue is how to design study programs that would make it easier for graduates to find jobs later in life. Discussions in Europe on these issues have evolved significantly since 1999. The key phrases here are: learning outcomes and qualifications framework.

Of course, nobody can forecast with precision which kind of knowledge and which skills will be in demand in the future, but we can confidently predict that the number of generic skills, such as learning to learn, will gain in importance. Mobility is another interesting area for the future of universities. All indicators show that young people who have studied abroad are more likely to find a job upon graduation. More in general mobility boosts Europe's human potential. Students gain new knowledge and develop new linguistic and intercultural skills. And learning mobility encourages education systems and institutions to become more international, more accessible and more efficient.

You will understand that I was pleased to see that the communiqué adopted in Leuven included a target that at least 20 percent of students graduating in the European higher education area by the year 2020 should have spent a period of study

* *Video.*

abroad. We at the Commission are already preparing a paper on how to promote learning mobility among young people and I invite you all to let us know what you think when we launch our public consultation in July.

The third issue I would like to talk about today is how to improve the attractiveness of higher education both for Europeans and for students from other parts of the world. We should aim towards more young people enrolling in higher education and continuing education. A higher training for adults is still rather the exception but Europe needs all the talent it can master not least in the light of the current recession. Equitable access is the key phrase here.

Again, we are in tune with national ministers when they called for measurable targets for overall participation in higher education and, in particular, the representation of underrepresented groups. The attractiveness of higher education is a global issue of interest to the European and non European countries alike. The Bologna Process has created a lot of interest for Europe's higher education around the whole world. As testified by the success of the first Bologna Policy Forum last month. We need to be conscious, of course, of the risk of brain drain in developing countries. But the answer is not to put up more barriers; rather we need to ensure the careful circulation of talent and knowledge which is in the best interest of every country and region.

In your debates, today and tomorrow, ladies and gentlemen, you will undoubtedly touch up on all these issues. I am sure you will come up with some common European views that will inspire the World Conference in July. I wish you success.

Thank you all. Mulțumesc.

Inaugural Speech

Qian Tang,
Deputy Assistant Director-General for Education,
Representative of the Director-General of UNESCO

It is a great pleasure and honour for me to represent Mr Koïchiro Matsuura, Director-General of UNESCO, at the opening session of the **UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region:** ***Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness***. This event is convened in the context of the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education, to be held from 5 to 8 July 2009 in Paris.

The Director-General conveys his warm thanks and appreciation to Prime Minister Boc and the Government of Romania for its generosity in hosting the Forum and providing such a splendid venue as the Palace of the Parliament, the very heart of the country's democratic governance. Particular thanks go to Minister Andronescu for all of her efforts to ensure the success of this important event.

Let me take this opportunity to welcome all of you, colleagues working in the field of higher education from some 50 Member States of UNESCO's Europe Region, which covers Europe, North America and Israel.

In a world that is trying to come to grip with a major financial and economic crisis, with social tensions and with conflict, there is growing consensus that the international community must stand united in order to solve the complex challenges of our time. Investing in education at all levels is crucial to our success in achieving long-term sustainable social and economic development. With demand for higher education on the rise, at a time when the sector is undergoing transformation that is largely driven by new technologies and when government budgets are under increasing pressure, getting higher education policies right is of utmost importance. As the lead UN agency responsible for higher education, UNESCO is at the forefront of international efforts to better understand and manage these dynamics.

As you may know, over the past two years UNESCO has been holding a series of major international education meetings that share a common vision: promoting inclusion, quality, flexibility and innovation. The second World Conference on Higher Education, to be convened at UNESCO's Headquarters in Paris from 5 to 8 July 2009, is one of the events in this series. It will provide a international platform for debate on one of the most rapidly changing fields within the global learning landscape, taking stock of the changes that have occurred in higher education since the first World Conference, held in 1998, and addressing the new dynamics that are likely to shape the development of higher education policies and institutions in the years to come.

In the lead-up to this landmark event, a number of regional and sub-regional conferences have taken place to bring specific regional concerns, expectations and proposals to the global event. The Forum that begins today will no doubt help build consensus on the priorities for action in higher education in the years to come.

Four key themes are of key strategic importance for the Europe region: ***access***, ***values***, ***quality*** and ***competitiveness***. These themes are critical in helping higher education systems to preserve their fundamental mission of fostering knowledge creation and dissemination, creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship.

I hope that some of you will be able to attend the 2009 World Conference in order to share with your colleagues from the other regions the outcomes of your deliberations during this Forum, and thus contribute to shaping an agenda for change that will reaffirm the importance of higher education and research in building more inclusive, equitable and sustainable knowledge societies for the twenty-first century.

On behalf of Director-General Matsuura, I would like to thank once again the Government of Romania for its generosity in supporting this important event, and wish you all a productive meeting.

Thank you for your attention.

Inaugural Speech

Georges Haddad,
Director of the Division of Higher Education,
Education Sector, UNESCO

If seen from the broader perspective of history, ten years is, a priori, a very short period of time, especially when analyzing the evolution of institutions which, in their most widely known form, the University have managed to resist and adapt to changes brought about by history, by means of assuming deep, real mutations.

Yet ten years may also cause profound, sometimes revolutionary changes that affect all human and social activities.

Let us take one of many examples: the Napoleonic Empire lasted one decade, but the changes it made in France, in Europe and even beyond are still influential in sociology, politics, culture or law.

Nevertheless, we need to acknowledge that these years of profound mutations and changes were heralded by previous revolutionary years. Let us not forget that the dynamics of human and social evolutions or of living organisms in general does not follow the laws of Newton's mechanics, but evolutionary processes highly relying on the past, that scientists qualify as dynamic processes with delay or history dependent.

In this line of thinking, in order to come to appraise the new dynamics of higher education analyzed in detail at the first World Conference in 1998 and the regional preparatory conferences, we need to carry out a survey of tendencies that have characterized these last ten years and to outline several future developments.

Firstly, it seems obvious that the demands and needs of higher education have accelerated considerably throughout the world, especially in those regions that we so carefully name developing regions. In the last years various decision makers and influential institutions have come to believe that they must limit the needs of the poorest regions of our global village to the fields of basic primary and secondary education and have only recently added the so- called basic technical and vocational training, in order to appease a guilty conscience. Going further in search of this appeasement, they believed it necessary to attach the label of "quality" to this approach.

But this would mean to forget that education cannot be conceived as a linear pattern fragmented in stages from primary to higher education, but rather as a circular pattern, where all parts are subtly interconnected. Higher education at the same time irrigates and draws out its force, its legitimacy and its pertinence from all other stages in education.

Consequently, what we prefer to define as dynamic democratization of higher education is an unavoidable trend of the last years and the years to come.

To this end, we need to make university services evolve by diversifying structures, methods and means. Higher education as a public good includes nowadays the development of private institutions as well, that responsible states have a duty to supervise and regulate, aiming firstly at ensuring quality and fighting against fraud, corruption and commodification.

Public institutions need to adapt to this growing competition from the private field, to propose training programs of higher quality based on research and innovation and significantly improve the management methods, the evaluation systems and the objectives of the contract they have with Society.

I firmly believe that in the near future we shall witness the rise of higher education institutions that will subtly combine the structure of a public service with that of an entrepreneurial structure, capable of generating their own resources through research, innovation and life-long learning. These new methods will have to obey the imperatives and exigencies of academic freedom and university autonomy without impinging upon necessary socio-economic partnerships.

Everything seems to be in place, means and technique – especially the ones offered by new information and communication technologies –, social, institutional and academic will, despite some traditional resistance to any change. But I must insist on the fact that the dynamics of human and social evolution is always slow to manifest itself and these evolutions will consequently take years to spread at a global level.

Another major tendency that has been shaped in the last ten years seems to me to be deeply influenced by processes of internationalization, globalization and regionalization. A comprehensive presentation is not possible here, but we will outline some representative aspects of these evolutions in order to support our assertion.

We will firstly mention the aspect of transnational higher education, with its direct consequences : the academic mobility of students, professors and researchers, along with the mutual diploma and qualifications recognition. In this respect, the landmark of these last ten years is the context of the regional European process, named the Bologna process but which should be called in earnest the Sorbonne-Bologna process, since it was born politically in 1998 in Sorbonne, through a courageous and visionary declaration of four European ministers, followed a year later by the commitment of over 20 ministers in Bologna. This process has led to the creation of a European space of higher education and research which can still be improved in the line of harmonization, which some parties hail enthusiastically, while others reject for various reasons.

We have the pleasure of underlining the subtle, decisive role played by CEPES, created 37 years ago in a particularly complex era, in facilitating, encouraging, developing the dialogue and exchanges between universities. This action has surely created the favorable conditions to build the European space of education and research. We also have the pleasure of underlining the constant support given by Romania to the CEPES' missions and actions.

Still, the European process obviously opens new, original tracks towards a dynamic internationalization of the missions and perspectives of higher education and research.

To this end, we notice the visible strengthening of regional associations of universities and higher education institutions whose priorities are, among others, to

ensure better coordination of their actions and allow them to establish a more efficient collaboration with political decision factors and become must-be legitimate partners.

A significant consequence of internationalization or globalization of higher education and research is perfectly illustrated by the propensity to involve higher education institutions in competitions and classifications.

It is our duty to approach these tendencies with full care and objectivity in order to avoid caricature.

It follows clearly that, instead of alarming, competition and classifications will determine universities and institutions to consolidate their policies to cooperate and establish networked partnerships in order to ensure a sustainable future for the higher education and research based on sharing, solidarity, excellence and equity, which policies will lead to a series of credible and efficient solutions against brain drain.

I will end this short, incomplete presentation by anticipating that the fields which in the following years will witness the most profound, radical changes will be sciences, which the majority of young people fail to appreciate and even reject.

Indeed, the universality of mathematics, physics, chemistry, biology, engineering, among others, will allow the globalization of science tracks offered in the first stage as graduate and postgraduate courses.

These courses made available online will be conceived and designed by a group of world-known experts regularly renewed. Every two or four years they will reconsider and redesign these courses to reflect the novelties in research and innovation.

In this context the mission of universities will be to support students by tutorials, to make available additional quality courses, especially in humanities and social sciences, and, first and foremost, to evaluate and certify the knowledge gathered by means of these progressive systems through tests and exams, which will allow their international recognition and validation.

These high level universal courses will consolidate life-long training, which represents a major development of higher education in the twenty-first century, especially in this period of crisis and profound ruptures.

This pattern is harder to foresee in the field of letters, humanities or social sciences, where local particularities are constraining, yet legitimate.

Such perspectives which now seem quite fictional, will allow universal, fair access to higher education throughout the world regions, which must benefit rapidly from adapted technological equipment.

All these aspects and many more will be the centre of attention at the World Conference in July. Undoubtedly the messages and recommendations of the Forum reuniting us these days in Bucharest will answer our hopes and ambitions to go beyond talk in order to build together the most pertinent and efficient action, especially for the benefit of the most fragile countries and communities.

Let us work together well and meet in Paris in July!

Thank you for your attention!

Inaugural Speech

Marlies Leegwater,
Representative of the Bologna Follow-Up Group

It has been ten years since the Bologna declaration gave rise to what became known as the Bologna Process.

"We engage in co-ordinating our policies". That is a quote from that Bologna declaration, expressed by Ministers in 1999. It is an important line, as that is what is basically done and continues to be done.

"We engage in co-ordinating our policies" because the quality of higher education is considered of paramount importance for innovation and societies well being. That is why 10 years after the Bologna declaration 46 ministers responsible for higher education in Europe jointly defined aims for the next decade. Mobility is considered essential to reach this goal of attractive and competitive higher education. But mobility requires crossing borders and for crossing borders international joint action is needed.

The first decade of the Bologna Process emphasis was on shaping the European Higher Education Area with involvement of stakeholders.

The European Higher Education Area with the third-cycle structure; European ECTS credits for expression of workload; Diploma Supplement provision; quality assurance according to European standards and guidelines and Qualifications frameworks for transparency of levels.

It took 10 years to shape this European Higher Education Area and it still needs efforts to put all elements in place, but since the ministerial meeting last month in Louvain we are entering a second decade in which the emphasis will be on using this European Higher Education Area.

The new goals of the **Louvain communiqué** agreed on 29th April 2009 are:

– striving for excellence in all aspects of higher education, ranging from teaching and research to community service and engagement in social cohesion and cultural development.

More specific focus is drawn to a number of points:

1. The social dimension; that is to say: widening participation and accessibility of higher education for all in society and providing adequate conditions for completion of studies;

2. Lifelong learning, for personal growth, or for gaining new knowledge, skills and competences responding to changing labour markets;

3. Employability of graduates through close co-operation between governments, higher education institutions, social partners and students.

4. Student centred learning and the teaching mission of higher education through implementation of the concept of learning outcomes in relation to the international reference points of the overarching European qualifications framework;

5. Education, research and innovation. This triangular relationship should come to expression at all levels of higher education;

6. International openness, fostering relations also with other regions of the world and applying the same quality standards to transnational education;

7. Mobility for which a target is set at 20 percent of the graduates having been mobile by 2020. Moreover the statement issued after the Bologna policy Forum, which succeeded the European meeting and also included countries from outside Europe, emphasizes exchange being governed by academic values; it promotes fair and fruitful brain circulation by a balanced exchange of teachers, researchers and students;

8. Data collection to monitor progress in these areas;

9. Multidimensional transparency tools to show the diversity in institutions and programmes;

10. Seeking diversified funding sources within a framework of public responsibility.

These are the new goals for the European Higher Education Area. I appreciate this opportunity to present them to you and I look forward to fruitful discussions during this meeting and possible wider co-ordination of policies regarding Access, Values, Quality and Competitiveness.

Keynote Addresses

A Higher Education for a Democratic Society in the Twenty-first Century

Emil Constantinescu

Romania is hosting the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in Europe Region, a country placed on the Black Sea shore, that the ancient Greeks called Pontus Euxinus. The Argonauts, one of the world's most beautiful legends, recounts the story of 50 ancient Greek heroes among them Jason, Hercules, Orpheus, who searched these shores for the Golden Fleece, a symbol of richness, power and happiness. The first character the Argonauts met on their way was Phineus, empowered by the Gods with the ability to predict the future. However, fearful of his power, the Argonauts blinded him so that he, who could see the future, could not see the present. Moreover, despite having in front of him a table full with food, the harpies stole it all so that he would remain forever hungry. Phineus also had the ability to find solutions to the problems of the future. To get the Argonauts to send away the harpies, he taught them how to cross the Bosphorus clashing rocks by boat, crashing into everyone venturing that way, heading to *Pontus Euxinus*. The story of Phineus seems to me to be instructive to the participants at this conference, as our societies and their higher education institutions have to undertake a series of important reforms in order to meet present and anticipated challenges. Otherwise, we risk losing touch with the present and, to lose the necessary means for visionary and strategic projects.

Higher Education for a Democratic Society in the Twenty-first Century is a topic we can talk about either in prefabricated and "politically correct" formulas or, on the contrary, we can profoundly reflect upon it in an attempt to comprehend not only what connects the two concepts of **democracy**" and "**higher education"**, but also what might disconnect them and even contradict them. What do we, democratic university professors and staff, need to do if we wish these two concepts to enhance each other? I believe that we should start by elaborating a few theses which we can then debate further. I have chosen the following three theses for my reflection to share with you today.

The first refers to upstream education related to the academic stage; the second examines the contribution of universities to democracy in the societies they have developed amidst – meaning the downstream university, so thus the third would refer to our universities and to their perspectives within a democratic society.

I, and some of you of my generation, remember how a few decades ago, Pink Floyd had an explosive success with their otherwise great song entitled "*We don't need no education*". Two years prior, in Paris, young rebel crowds had set cars and police stations on fire. They also set fire to schools and destroyed Parisian university buildings, starting with the Sorbonne, a symbol of the "republic of philology" in Europe and in the entire world. Back in 1968, students on American campuses and in the great European universities were shouting, as democratically as possible, "*il est interdit d'interdire*", in protest at the Vietnam War. They also fought against traditional courses, such as archaeology or classical studies. In consequence, democratic society generated policies that brought about a transformation of the educational system unheard of until now, together with anarchical protests against the "system". But why should this be so?

We can understand that any educational process is also a process of "taming" what Plato called *the wild part of the human being*. It is absolutely natural to face a certain resistance from beneficiaries. We can understand that the European youth aspire to have all the advantages of a competitive world, but do not take responsibility for its uncertainties. It may be possible that hostility against the academia, as perceived retrospectively, also arises from the assertion that the educational system is disconnected from the realities of contemporary society. I do not refer here to the often called-upon adjustments to the labour market requirements. Numerous experiences and experiments have proven that the maximum adaptation to these exigencies is not absorbed by the young beneficiaries of an early specialized education, even through the computer information or other modern disciples, but, on the contrary, by those who have passed through a formation intelligently cantered on the traditional fundaments of science and culture and who thus gain a flexibility that allows them to further choose the highest fields within the professional "hunting field."

We can notice that once society had entitled higher education to have a major role in economic development as well as to be a social driving force for a merit-based system of social advancement, the state of higher education and the direction of its development gained a new attention and legitimate interest of the democratic society. It also has a formatting role with regard to elites.

A democratic society does not deny or suppress its elites. It uses them for mutual benefit, by making them accessible to any citizen willing to employ his talent and abilities to reach as far as possible on the individually chosen path. Thus, the argument it is not about increasing the number of schools that produce early "specialized robots" on the assembly line. It is not about mechanically making available to all the students the templates and the criteria of the nineteenth century school which addressed at most 5 percent of a generation. It is not about gathering 40 pupils in a small class and feeding them a cannon invented by pedagogues contemporary to Napoleon and Dickens, or with post-modern thinkers, that will build a twenty-first century democracy. One of the most noxious illusions of the present times is misinterpretation of "mass education" as the "democratization of the educational system". In Romania, as probably in the majority of the countries of the former socialist space, we have already passed through the experience of cultural massification through a distorted and at the same time under-financed educational system, with pupils and students trapped

in an equalizing assessment mechanism that systematically neglected the theoretical and human sciences for the exclusive benefit of standard practical occupations. You cannot imagine the despair many of us feel when seeing how the same errors, that generated harsh consequences, are now being repeated in the name of the "knowledge-based economy" and of narrowly-understood policies of "widening of access" in the name of democracy.

By no means am I here advocating a going back to the "old good days". What I call for is that in order to avoid these confusions, we must reinvent the school so that it will know how to preserve and use its passionate interest for exploration, for knowledge and the new. It will be a school that transforms every child's passion for stories into an ability to use adequate words. It will be a school that puts in service of the didactic process all the childhood colourful fantasies, and the explosive inventiveness of adolescence. It is about a school full of the joy of learning. Such a school integrates and does not compete with the almost infinite information means that today's society is fast developing.

We must reinvent the school so that it will not exclude, but include. It would take into account every child's and teenager's talents, it would offer him or her a customized path that will yield his or her personality to the full. Under present circumstances, of an informatics and information revolution, the bigger effort necessary to radically reinvent the school is not the one involving economic effort, but one concerning the intellectual effort. The universities that are, at the same time, the beneficiaries of the educational process and its latest achievement, ought to reflect upon this vital issue and fight for a real democracy that is knowledge based and for a new humanism, that would be capable of radically rebuilding contemporary society.

Will this process be adopted by our democracies? Will families, local communities, mayors, counsellors of different sectors, or even members of our parliaments, be willing to take the chance to support and finance such a radical reform, to open the way of an adapted, flexible education, able to mould itself on any child's needs and potential? Maybe the issue of financing education could tame the budget "shrews" in an apparently paradoxical manner, and not through restricting the access to studies that include higher education, but on the contrary, through a larger and democratic opening of the school gates at all levels. At least these will be the results if we take into consideration the projections published in a recent McKinsey Consulting Company study about the state of education and school-related challenges in the United States. As a starting point for its analysis it takes the situation presented in a well-known report presented in 1983 entitled, *A Nation at Risk* – which also draws attention to economic and social consequences of the increasing mediocrity within American education. The McKinsey study calculates what would have been the possible earnings, during the past 25 years, if the measures put forth at that time would have been implemented. **If between 1998 and today, the United States had attained the educational performance of Finland, the GDP of the United States in 2008 would have been higher by at least 1,3 and up to 2,3 trillion dollars.** If the graduates from disadvantaged ethno-cultural groups such as Afro-Americans and Latinos would have reached their white colleagues level between 1998 and today, the GDP of the country in 2008 would have been bigger by between 310 and 525 billion

dollars, and if the difference between the quality of education for youngsters from families with poor income and the rest of the population would have had decreased over 10 years ago, the GDP in 2008 would have risen by an amount between 400 and 670 billion dollars.

In the above context I would like to support initiatives such as the one undertaken by the renown economist and Nobel Prize laureate Joseph Stiglitz to come out with a new way of calculating GDP in order to reflect better the economic benefits of good education, performant health care system etc.

I do not know if such studies have been made for countries such as Hungary, Poland, Bulgaria, and the Czech Republic or even for Great Britain or France. What I do know, without any statistics, is that in my country there are many talented adolescents that never succeed to realize their potential because of un unhappy combination of objective – basically economic related – and subjective situations, especially related to the family and social environment they live in, and that, for many reasons, do not offer them the enthusiasm, the motivation and the support necessary to perform in an educational system which incorporates also ethical principles and humanistic values. Such a system automatically isolates them because it is built on inflexible principles guiding performance evaluation: just to give a simple example within a complex situation, a child having a perfect ear for music, but with no native talent for mathematics has no chance to become prize-winning pupil; if, on top of that, he comes from an disadvantaged environment, the chances of dropping out of school hugely increase. There is no doubt – the most profitable investment is one made in the educational system, under an essential condition – that financing should increase and not restrain both the democratic basis of the academic institutions and of the communities, and their contribution to the democratic development of society.

During the last few years, one of the increasingly obvious situations that had drawn particular attention in the academic community is that of the **"world-class universities"**. The tough competition generated by globalization long ago touched the academic world and now this competition has elaborated its instruments, concepts and weapons, and has become obvious even in the eyes of public opinion, much more sensitive towards the Olympics environment – or boxing match – interwoven between world university centres than towards the essence of the issue: what is a worldwide competitive university? Why should we make the effort to enrol our own universities in this race and at what price?

It is not only about money, although we are talking about a great amount of money. The figures provided by a recent study made by The World Bank entitled *The Challenge of Establishing World-Class Universities* (Washington, 2009), demonstrates the existence of a direct relationship between the level of general financing, professor's remunerations, endowments, and research grants of the most performant universities, and their place occupied on such international ranking as the Academic Ranking of World Universities [commonly referred to as the "Shanghai ranking"]. Obviously, a research team that attracted huge grants in the past had all the chances to do it also in the future. A laboratory led by a Nobel Prize laureate will attract, most of the time for good reasons, funds beyond compare and more significant than those allotted to a quasi-anonymous laboratory located in Eastern Europe.

We, the university professors working in the institutions of higher education in Central and Eastern Europe, come from a different background when compared to the world of open competition for grants. In the communist regimes there was a struggle for power between political groups, having branches within the intellectuals. Let me evoke here an example from the past history of my country where sociology, forbidden for a period of time, rehabilitated then for a few years, and then isolated again from 1978. The arbitrary distribution of the resources came from the ideological options of the communist party. Thus, the massive support enjoyed by the technical sciences reflected a very simple idea: "the more engineers exist, the greater the production can be." Back in 1990, 67 percent of the university graduates in Romania were engineers. On the other hand, during the communist regime, a researcher could have been sure that, unless breaking the party rules, he could obtain financing for the research he wanted (or a modest, but comfortable, life of miming research with a big economy of effort). We did not have the opportunity to critically examine how the research and the university studies were organized as it was imposed onto us through a political system that we had not adhered to. But a number of us had also the capacity to see the weak points of the competition-based system developed in the universities of the Western democracies.

The terms used within academic competition in the contemporary world have many positive qualities, such as a low level of subjectivism and abuse, not to mention the absurdities generated by the political guiding of intellectual life. However, it does not mean that we would live in a perfect world. Far be it for from to deny the virtues of academic competition. In essence, this is an effect of democracy: in Athens, we find, not only the great architectural projects of the Parthenon or the Propylaeas, but also the well-known literary works written by great poets and playwrights of the Age of Pericle, financially supported following a public debate in the People's Assembly.

I wondered for a long time if Pascal had ever won a research grant, no matter how small. Especially given that he did not write in English.

Seen from this perspective, the present financing system of the universities in Central and South Eastern Europe dramatically points out the inequalities inherited from the recent past: even though the new democracies governments allocate 5 or even 6 percent of their GDP to education, we are talking about a share of modest GDP and about a system that has been poorly financed for decades. The research programs the new EU members have access to rectifies the gaps only in a partial manner, and, on the other hand, import within the system their traditional lacks of balance – between the "tough" and the "soft" sciences, between theory and practice, between the Anglo-Saxon traditional system and the continental Europe one; last, but not least, between the national element and the one of internationalizing the higher education.

I will choose today, from among such distortions, only the one that places at risk traditional fields of excellence in the Euro-Atlantic academic community. However we speak mainly about less expensive fields, that need only a few books and a computer or even because of that, a great part of the humanistic sciences, particularly those situated beyond the acute now-to-date characteristics to which are often subjected the projections regarding the educational system and the research, are less

and less supported in the study and financing programs. The history of civilizations, the languages of the old documents, the rare languages, and the history of philosophy may become, in today's society, more and more endangered knowledge species. This happens also because of the power games played within the world of academic decision makers. In Romania, for 50 years, it involved the refrain of "bourgeois prejudices", while today in western countries the decisions are being taken by the post-68 generation, with all its qualities and also with all their post-colonial and post-modern prejudices. It also happens as a consequence of democratizing the decisions and of the labour market pressure.

The current world crisis has raised a question mark over a great number of options that the last half of century has considered as implicit, and makes us reflect on the extent to which our own choices have contributed to the aggravation or even to the beginning of the global crisis. If we agree on the fact that, beyond the rotten credits, the balloons of imaginary money, and the artificially raised shares on the stock market and all the speculative ways that have brought on all of us the present financial crises, there is one common denominating cause – a **serious value crisis.** We should also keep in mind that the history of past crises of this proportion shows that our fate will be determined less by the event itself than by how we respond. In this context, I believe that our responsibility in this crisis, as university professors, administrators of university institutions, and intellectuals, is undeniable. During the last decades, we have all contributed through our resignation, to a vast massification process of the educational system; that is increasingly dominated by the obsession with a fast profit, and less and less preoccupied by the formative value that can be provided by disinterested knowledge. We have accepted that we can build a knowledge-based society almost completely lacking in philosophic contemplation in fundamental theoretical knowledge, in an interest for archaeology and for the history of concepts and values of our contemporary societies. We have accepted, on behalf of an illusory practical efficiency, the dehumanization of the research approach, a damaging subordination of the asymptotic search for **"real truth"** in the benefit of the mass production of **"convenient truth".** Just like corruptible bankers and investment funds administrators, we have accepted and been pushed by illusions of easy and fast wealth. It is, I believe, the right moment to reconsider the academic education passing over the narrow touch of the present and the mechanics of a fast profit for the benefit of a new hierarchy of values and of a true knowledge-based society.

I believe that globalization should not be considered only an egalitarian force in the negative sense as is very often the case nowadays. Technological and knowledge monopoly, the promotion of the culture of consumption or the one-language supremacy [and you know which one I have in mind…] to the detriment of cultural diversity and natural identities, are realities that generate for good reason the opposite reaction. However, there is here the positive meaning of the equal opportunities now available for the young generation. Globalisation has opened a borders-free market in the educational system. Meanwhile, globalisation has offered a communication infrastructure beyond space or time. In order to place a value on this opening it is necessary to move on from reforming the institutions to redefining them. The educational

exchange process in Europe and increasing also in other regions can be compared with a tree. If mobility were to be the tree top and the roots, a network of domestic and international institutions, then the tree trunk must be made up of a new informational strategic organization that would bring profit from the critical mass of fundamental knowledge. I do hope that the on-going transformation of European higher education in line with the objectives set up by the Bologna Process is going to bring about such desirable outcomes in Europe and other regions of the world.

The double propeller of education and work can be functional only if it follows two principles: a lifelong education, and a multi-disciplinary profile. Lifelong education was officially implemented in Romania a long time ago by generally applying the license/ master/ doctoral degree in Europe, including the member states from the Central and South Eastern Europe of the European Union. The multi-disciplinary profile has not yet escaped the tyranny of disciplines and of the research institutes caste mentality. A solution for surpassing this situation would consist of an offer to be addressed to the young generation, by which we do not choose the name of the disciplines, but instead those of the professions, and present them as a horizon of the professions, where disciplines are replaced by modules that allow a personal study itinerary able to make up personalized curricula. The professors should become more than prestigious entities of the research world, that teach courses and give grades. They should rather become tutors and models, reviving the old European tradition of school founding fathers. It is necessary for us to create, both in the educational system as well as in research, new playgrounds and new games amidst which university presidents have the ability to manage inter-actions. The organizational background should also change within the context where the fight for talent becomes global, and jobs are accessible trough the Internet. Managing talent becomes more an art rather than a profession.

The challenges of technological development place an enormous pressure upon human resources. It is perhaps correct to state that to form and develop human resources should be considered as one of the essential concerns for humanity, as there is no technology able to produce the men and women that use it.

First, it is necessary for us to persuade the political decision makers about an obvious and often neglected, fact: the **social cost of education system short-comings is by far bigger than the costs involves in the educational system.** The globalization of educational problems involve: a scientific or technological transfer that cannot be made without a transfer of the necessary skills to use it and without a system of values that would lead to its good use.

Second, the gaps between richness and technologies are not coextensive to the one between human richness. The situation of the Central and South Eastern Europe countries proves clearly that, in spite of the local delays that have taken place during the last half of century, they have still kept the formation networks that have allowed for the survival of an intellectual and cultural potential, not connected to their economic resources, seriously hit by aberrant politics. It is the human capital which bodes well for their development. But this capital will diminish fast if not replenished with a new generation of researchers and teachers.

Third, we need to preserve and assure that the university or the "academic space" [in which I also include the academy of sciences and other research organizations], are also spaces of human interaction and communication. It is the space in which intellectual disputes take place and which germinates new ideas. The university transcends the frontiers of space and time. It also in a way unites people of different generations. It is also the context in which I see the advantages of the borderless education able to respond to the challenges of globalization. Evidently this would require much effort and re-thinking of our systems as well as the redefinition of our institutions. We need to educate at advanced academic level [graduate and post-graduate studies] individuals with global competencies, able to act according to the religious, technological and cultural local environment. We should not forget that the origins of globalization are constituted by the problems encountered. Global problems, very often diseases, require global answers. The slogan: ***"Think globally; act locally"*** is not a geographic definition, but a phrase and a way of action adapted to local situations, with a global impact. Globalization in association with democratization can no longer be perceived as an exclusively western product. Modern technology is indeed a product and consequence of the scientific production being concentrated in the most developed countries. Globalization, perceived as an answer to the global problems, urges western technology to consider the local characteristics while it searches for global solutions. In order to build a new concept of global solidarity in the higher education field we must look at it not only from a technological perspective but also from an anthropological one. Only by following this path will we be able to reach the globalization ethos.

Higher education can answer the great challenges of twenty-first century democratic societies only if good managers from our present educational system are, along with a leader, able to change the present educational system – in other words being able to re-think education. But even more is needed. Confronted with the present financial and economic crisis, economists and politicians are looking for solutions that would ensure the survival of the present political and economical system. The world financial crisis represents a historical opportunity for a new political project that would reorganize the global contemporary society. It is the right moment for the representatives of the academic environment, not constrained by the pressures of the profit-driven business world or unlike the politicians that need to gain popular votes, to build a new cultural project that will answer the twenty-first century uncertainties. The essential difference between political systems, today lies in how uncertainty is managed. They can assume it by trying to find solutions through a dialogue, or can try to eliminate it through an ideological, religious, or financial dictate. But the most effective framework for managing uncertainty is done in a democratic society in which confronting what is really at stake stimulates behaviour which allows seeking responses to the challenges of reality through respect for values and ethical principles. When we cannot act motivated by the certainty of success, we can act from the consciousness of duty. This concept corresponds best to what politics should be in a knowledge-based society and in the global future world: a complex vision of the future, based on a new dialogue about human values. This is why I share the view of Jacques Attali[1] that every university graduate should have

learned at least four things: **how to be a good citizen, how to communicate, create and criticize**. In the context of the topic of my paper, of particular relevance is what it means to be a citizen which, and let me once again cite Jacques Attali; "means knowing the law, one's duties and one's rights. But it also means learning how to live in society, to make decisions, to participate. Student life itself should be a first-hand experience in learning about democracy".

Let me return to my Hellenic analogy with which I started my remarks today. ***Gnothi seauton*** (*know yourself),* states one of the precepts decreed by Apollon at Delphi and preached by Socrates in Athens. The present world crisis brutally commands us to choose between **to have** or **to be**. A higher education for a democratic twenty-first century society may create a new balance between power and knowledge that would reshape a framework inside which each individual can ***be*** as well as ***become***.

Thank you for your kind attention and I am looking forward to our discussions during this important event for higher education and its stakeholders.

Note

1. Attali, Jacques, "Tommorow's world elite", *The UNESCO Courier*, nr. 37, September 1998, p. 37.

Higher Education in Europe and North America – A Pace Setter for Others?

HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal

I have been introduced by a title which to this day still makes me look behind me to wonder who is being addressed. I was taught to take other people seriously and myself not too seriously. After all, all of us – kings, presidents, excellencies – are here for but a few, fleeting transient moments. We do not count. What counts is one of life's bitter ironies, and that is that the pace setter rarely wins the race. As a member of the board of the International Centre for Democratic Transition as well as a member of the UN Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, I would like to say that mobilising the third sphere of *ad hominem* participation by government officials, private sector and civil society is the only way to gain consensus on the issues that we are discussing.

I would like to start by introducing you to my world. First of all as an Arab, I have to say that the Egyptian university of Al Azhar – which opened its doors in the tenth century – was the model of the tutorial system, the seminarian system. Having studied at that 'minor' university – Oxford – I am eligible to speak in the context of two worlds, the so-called Western world and the world of Islam [although I detest this simplistic generalisation – the West and the rest, the West and Islam – because they are talking about apples and oranges].

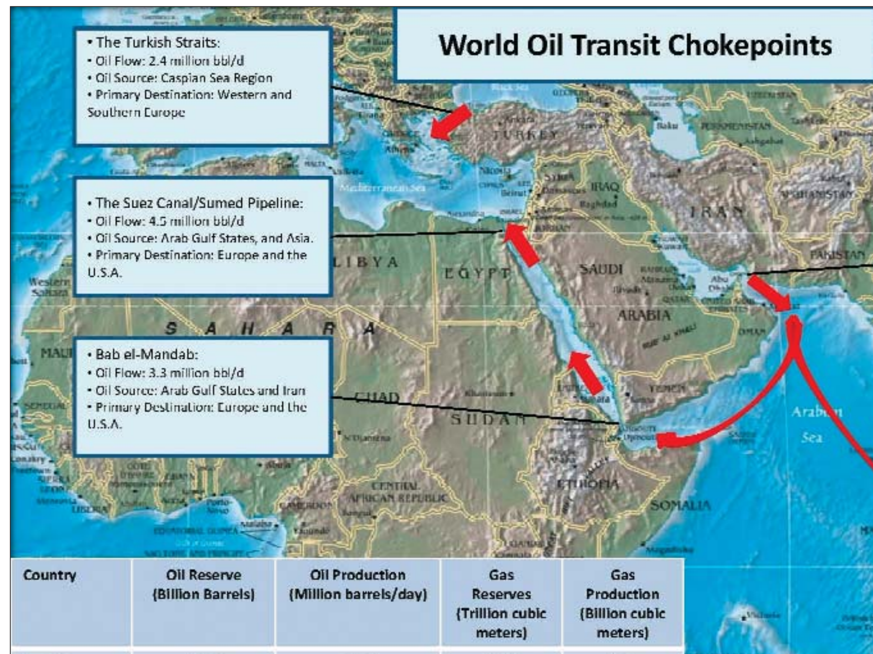
Allow me to go straight to the point – please look at Map A, the crisis ellipse, stretching from North Africa to the Straits of Malacca.

Map A

According to the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) should be understood as a historically unique alliance of five non-Western civilisations, and because of that, capable of evolving into the bases for a collective security system in Eurasia. When I say security, I mean a composite of hard security, soft security, insider power, and smart power.

Map B indicates that oil/gas reserves and production in the Arab Gulf states and Iran represent 60 percent of the world reserves and 30 percent of world production. That the world's main strategic oil chokepoints are also in this region is one of the conundrums that we face today. I would like to remind you that Vasco da Gama travelled to the coast of Malabar after six centuries of trade from the coast of Morocco, the Atlantic, to Malabar and to Malacca, which in Arabic means الملاقاة – the encounter, the meeting place. Six centuries of peaceful trade were ended with one question – da Gama asked the Jain king to kill the Arabs, Jews, Christians and Muslims or to expel them and the Jain king said: "What is 'to kill'?" The rest is history.

Map B



If you look at the Map B, you will see:

The Turkish Straits:
– Oil Flow: 2.4 million bbl/day
– Oil Source: Caspian Sea Region
– Primary Destination: Western and Southern Europe

The Suez Canal/Sumed Pipeline:
– Oil Flow: 4.5 million bbl/day
– Oil Source: Arab Gulf States and Asia.
– Primary Destination: Europe and the US

Bab el-Mandeb (at the end of the Red Sea):
– Oil Flow: 3.3 million bbl/day
– Oil Source: Arab Gulf States and Iran
– Primary Destination: Europe and the US

The Strait of Hormuz:
– Oil Flow: 16.5 million bbl/day
– Oil Source: Arab Gulf States and Iran
– Primary Destination: Western Europe, US, Japan and other Asian countries

The Straits of Malacca:
– Oil Flow: 15 million bbl/day
– Oil Source: Arab Gulf States, Iran and West Africa
– Primary Destination: All Asia/Pacific consumers including Japan and China.

I know that this Forum is focused on higher education in the Europe Region but I would like to draw your attention to the Middle East Citizens Assembly, where we have discussed student exchanges, including the establishment of a Centre for European Studies. The Centre is likely to be in Germany and will, I hope, to be able to talk of establishing bursaries and student exchanges as well as the revival of the ERASMUS Programme on a grander scale in our West Asia – North Africa region.

According to a number of strategic analyses, the rising world order in the twenty-first century will be significantly determined by a quadrangle of BRIC countries – Brazil, Russia, India and China, and increasingly in the future by the Islamic triangle of Iran, Saudi Arabia and Turkey. In a unified South America, which is not addressed in this Forum at all, you have a global SCO plus. On the drawing board at least, it is a highly obtained dream. It was the Japanese Diet, the Japanese Parliament in 1988 that said not to talk about stabilising oil *in situ*, but to talk about the peoples neighbouring the oil. In our Arab region, by 2050 we will have 55 million unemployed young people, which could well form the basis of an army of hatred. The 'hate industry' is winning.

Today we find ourselves asking whether the pace can be set for us. The other day I heard the German President Horst Köhler, an old friend, saying that we must govern our planet. I am not sure who he meant by 'we' and 'our'. This begs the poignant question – what happened to us? Sometimes it is not so much what did happen, as what did not happen. We did not assume and internalise the injunction of "man does not forget that which he understands." True understanding is learning as constructivism; that fastidious genre of erudition, in which the pupil is an active participant in shaping the informing aspects of her universe of discourse – the kind of erudition in which the student engages in interpretive and evaluative reasoning, constructing and deconstructing the raw materials at his or her disposal. This is a value-added programme with a mission.

I want to point out that with regard to so-called honour killings in many countries in the Arab and Muslim world and in the Mediterranean, let us face it, many of these young women achievers – over half the enrolment of the universities – are being killed by their male relatives because of jealousy. Here we are talking about promoting equal opportunities. Equal opportunity in the West means that we have, that is to say from the Arab countries, a significant percentage of patent holders in their thousands in the United States. Seventy percent of university educators in the US are of overseas origin. In percentage terms, we have more Arabs teaching in the US than there are Chinese or Indians. I know that you do not want to talk about 'brain drain' but would rather talk about 'brain gain'. What I am trying to say is that we are unreasonable, we are volatile, we are fanatic, and why? Because our regions are being lobotomised. Our human capital is being stolen as we speak.

At a Forum such as this in which we speak of education, we must be vigilantly alert to the stealth and subtleties of the vacancy of sloganeering. It would seem to me that in every discourse on education, a preliminary enquiry should always be this – what does it truly mean to be educated in the twenty-first century? Let me remind you that this black hole region of West Asia and North Africa does not have a functioning Economic Council or a Social Council. I addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations in May and September of last year on Global Commons: dignity and

justice for all of us, including the Iranians, Turks and Arabs. But, sadly there are no quarterly meetings in West Asia – North Africa to compare with the systemic approach to good governance found in the Southeast Asian and Pacific regions which have produced a Citizens Charter, a Social Charter and an Energy Charter. We often hear that education is at the top of this and that government's agenda, but what we do not hear is a satisfactory delineation of the boundaries of education as a concept and as an idea.

It would seem trite that before we seek to educate, we must first understand what education entails: comprehension precedes understanding. I share Roger Schank's bemusement that despite the dramatic changes in the contours of our global discourse:

We all seem to agree that an educated mind certainly entails knowing literature and poetry, appreciating history and social issues, being able to deal with matters of economics, being versatile in more than one language, understanding scientific principles and the basics of mathematics.[1]

If this is so, how then do we account for the fact that we live in a world in which HTML is decidedly more significant than basic chemistry?

We, Muslims, are instructed per the Holy Prophet to "seek knowledge unto China" – which is why I regret that the Arab Ministries of Education abandoned the name *Wazarat al Ma'aref* – Ministries of Knowledge. I propose a ministry for the epistemology of knowledge. Likewise, the Qur'an also postulates a kind of "proof theory" if you will, commanding, "Bring your proof – *if* – you are telling the truth." Thus Muslim students by religious mandate are instructed to adopt heuristic methods of "learning – to prove" what they know, and indeed what they think they know.

At a Forum like this, it is necessary that we ask – what are the pace setters doing about an educational system that rewards the rote acquisition of data at the expense of developing critical thinking skills? Critical thinking is that astute cognitive presence in which the learner brings the sum of his or her intellectual faculties to bear on the given object of enquiry, in a delicate process of constructionist discourse.

Yet today, the majority of educational systems, both in the West and elsewhere, teach their pupils to rely on the brain's taxon memory system which is activated by repetition. Even in the so-termed "advanced countries" where universities pay lip service to critical thinking, the reality as it pertains on the ground is oftentimes very different.

While some educational jurisdictions have made some strides in moving away from the Holy Grail of the examination (at least theoretically and rhetorically), it is still a pertinent reality that grades attained in the artificial and synthetic environment of the examination room – an environment that will never again be replicated in the student's "real" world, are in many cases the single most decisive factor in determining admission at institutions of pedigree, and in most cases, determining the annotation that accompanies the ensuing qualification.

For Einstein, it is "nothing short of a miracle that the modern methods of instruction have not yet entirely strangled the holy curiosity of inquiry; for this delicate little plant, aside from stimulation, stands mainly in need for freedom; without which it is going to wrack and ruin without fail."

I ask you to consider President Horst Köhler's title for his speech: "The Credibility of Freedom",[2] from the perspective of education and it is clear that rote

learning is brain antagonistic, and brain antagonistic pedagogies inhibit real experiential learning. As I have stated, universities are at their best when they ingrain in their students' minds the need to seek clarity, accuracy, precision, relevance, depth, breadth, logic, significance and above all, empathy. We have lost our good bedside manner, the doctors would say, the ability to step into someone else's shoes and see the world through their eyes. Inculcating these characteristics in students will ensure the cultivation of minds that can probe and analyse, create solutions to problems, and expand boundaries of knowledge further and further.

The commodification of higher education is a worldwide phenomenon and many universities increasingly becoming a kind of 'assembly lines'. In Central and Eastern Europe (as is the case in Latin America as well as West Asia and North Africa), the trend to establish private universities is growing. Public universities are in many places being "privatised" in the sense that they are increasingly responsible for raising their own funds. Students are increasingly seen as "customers", and of course, the expansion of the private sector brings up issues of quality control and accreditation since in many parts of the world there are few controls as yet on private sector expansion. In fact, 9/11 has meant that many Western universities are now being franchised in our part of the world. But is this a character building exercise, when those students do not have access to peer groups of different nationalities, to exchange ideas of different disciplines, or to live in a campus setting? I have nothing against private universities, but oftentimes these institutions are run solely for profit and deriving revenue out of the commodification of the human being.

The privatisation of education risks turning the scholar into a commodity, and thought into a production line. After all, the air we breathe is now a commodity. The water we drink, according to WTO agreements, is now a commodity. There is no concept of a carrying capacity for human, natural and economic resources, and certainly I do not yet see a concept of a recovery capacity. Bear in mind those 55 million unemployed young people in 2050 and tell me then that the so-called war on terror is likely to end.

There is a risk that university is becoming an "edu-factory" governed by maximum product efficiency, and in the Arab world, these factories export the best of their products. As I have just told you, education in the Arab world has thrived, largely as an export industry. If we were to count the contributions made by people from our part of the world, both within the region and beyond the region, I think it would compare very favourably with the imports of oil and gas. It may come as a surprise to you to learn that if you ask a Wharton School graduate from the Arab world as I have done, "When will you return?" They will reply, "When you can develop a meritocracy. Recognise us for what we are worth, not for who we know."

In 1977, I addressed the International Labour Organisation and proposed the establishment of an International Labour Compensatory Facility. (To date myself, I even spoke before the Brandt Commission at that time, hoping to humanise economic strategies.) This compensatory facility could be elaborated along the lines of the Trust Fund for Compensatory Facilities of the IMF. I welcome the discussion of an alternative IMF, an Asian IMF. If a European IMF is Euro-centric in drawing rights, do we not have the right to speak of Asian-centric drawing rights? Particularly as we

speak in terms of what Paul Volcker described as a regional development bank which is asymmetric – investing in human dignity. The aim of this facility would be to draw resources from the labour importing countries – in a spirit of goodwill and solidarity, and divert them to developing labour-exporting countries in proportions relative to the estimated cost incurred by the loss of labour. I firmly believe that had the political will – and perhaps more critically, the *policy* been present at the time, a set of operational formulae could have been found to facilitate the realisation of this proposal. There is an urgent need for a realistic approach to the problem of social unrest caused by the imbalance in the relationship between capital and labour.

As the world of higher education is quickly becoming more internationalised, with populations of students becoming more and more mobile, perhaps the time has come to talk of an international *student* compensatory facility as well.

Thirty years ago the Independent Commission for International Humanitarian Issues was conceived, and we called for a study of the conditions of life and work of migrant workers in the hope that such a study might help in the articulation and implementation of global policies and standards to govern labour mobility. Since then, there have been a plethora of such studies, but few standards and guidelines have been articulated, let alone implemented.

I would like to extend UNESCAP's definition of good governance to the sphere of higher education.[3] Good governance in higher education (like good governance in the public sphere) should have eight major characteristics – it should be:

– **Participatory**; This includes educational opportunities for IDPs, stateless persons, migrants, refugees, etc. Let me remind you that in the definition of GDP, there is no reference to political economy. The result of the continuing tens of thousands over the last decades is the huge upheaval of demography, for which national governments are not prepared to take direct responsibility. No single nation can take on this challenge alone, and this is why we have a saying in West Asia, that we have to be inclusive of all if we are going to share that tiny space of the so-called "fertile crescent", rather than allowing it to become a "futile crescent";

– **Consensus-oriented**;

– **Accountable**;

– **Transparent** and merit-based systems, not cronyism. I was happy the other day to see a Bedouin girl, achieving a first in matriculation, a first in medicine at Jordan University, travelling to Imperial College London and hoping to return not to specialise, but to work in public medicine in gratitude to those who made her what she is today;

– **Responsive**;

– **Effective and efficient**;

– **Equitable and inclusive;** We are working on a racial equality index in the United Nations High Commission for Human Rights. We also have peace indices, freedom indices. What does this alphabet soup amount to if it is not taken seriously by a new concept of world governance? I hope that by 2010 each region will begin to answer a questionnaire within the context of the Helsinki Process, the three baskets of security – basic and current, economy and social concerns, and humanitarian and legal concerns;

– **But most of all, the eighth criterion should follow the rule of law;** The rule of law means legal empowerment of those who have merited. Eighty percent of children flooding into Jordan after the recent fighting in Iraq are traumatised. We do not have specialists in counselling and in psychiatric reconciliation and reconstruction. We are building the future, we are told in terms of GDP, but I think it was Robert Genet who said GDP is concerned with everything other than the happiness and the quality of life of individual human beings.

The time has come for higher education institutions to engage in a collective and meaningful conversation – the gentle arts of conversation and listening have atrophied. These ideals can influence and enhance the trajectory of higher education for the sake of future end-users.

We have also inherited from the pace setters the somewhat pejorative distinction between the so called "hard" and "soft" sciences. Conventional wisdom has it that the so-termed hard sciences – because of their use of quantifiable data and "empirical" methods, are more rigorous and accurate, and therefore infinitely pre-eminent *vis à vis* their gentler counterparts. However, as Thomas Kuhn in his study of the epistemology of science showed us, this distinction is largely spurious because all human beings – a category from which scientists are not exempt – are subjective and therefore "hard sciences" are not as "hard" after all, and can sometimes be more relative than "soft science".[4]

I would add that it is under the rubric of the "soft sciences", that we find history. According to Étienne Gilson, "history is the only laboratory we have in which to test the consequences of thought". In the spirit of ideas having real world consequences, we must always be cognizant of our historical consciousness and collective memory – constantly mindful of the neuro-anatomy of memory. It is only through remembering our past that we can preserve our future.

It is high time that we re-examined our traditional teaching techniques and developed new methods of pedagogy. We need to move away from the idea that the teacher has a monopoly of knowledge and wisdom, and move towards Socratism – a classroom pedagogy in which the teacher is the facilitator of an enquiry into some of life's most vexing questions. Great value should be given to research, essays, independent study projects, dissertations and thesis writing, which require the individual to ask questions and find solutions for problems, come up with opinions and work on their own as well as within a group.

But unfortunately, our students are taught *not* to challenge the system, *not* to challenge the teacher, *not* to challenge their peers – which is the whole idea of collegiality, the peer system. Most importantly, they are taught not to challenge *themselves*.

Life happens, and it happens in such complex, multifaceted and interconnected ways that we would be remiss if we continued the archaic traditions of teaching our students in insular paradigms in which chemistry never meets ethics, and ethics never meets geography. Just yesterday, as I mentioned, I met with His Beatitude, the Patriarch of the Romanian Orthodox Church, who reminded us that wisdom can be found where intelligence is connected to life.

When life happens, it often happens in the third sphere – that *ad hominen* space that challenges the ossified public/private dichotomy. We talk of education for skills

and invention, education for employment, education for life – but when will we implement a programme for education for citizenship? Not globalised citizenship, but a human-dignity-based understanding of citizenship.

We need to be educating for the third sphere on interdisciplinary bases. As things stand, the third sphere is largely a "no man's land" – neither governments nor the private sector can competently occupy that space, and our education systems have only prepared us for the occupation of the two spheres.

What I am saying is that it is time that our institutions of higher learning began to prepare the future generation to reclaim our global commons – the eclectic space that encapsulates our environmental, social, cultural, genetic and intellectual resources. Responsibility for our cross-border resources must be undertaken through self-organisation and collective action of a third sector of popular will which I have described as that powerful countervailing force dedicated to ensuring composite human security through cooperation and sustainability across huge social fissures and multiple hybrid spaces.

Regionally, I asked myself and I would like to discuss with Professor Jan Sadlak: How can we network the efforts of UNESCO, ISESCO, the Islamic Science Academy and the Association of Arab Universities, all of which we host in Jordan. We need to begin to ask ourselves to what extent is the current regional system of financing higher education adequate, efficient and equitable? What are the challenges the region is likely to face in the near future in terms of financing higher education? What can be done to address the financing problems in light of experiences elsewhere?

There are significant benefits to the society and polity of a well-funded higher education characterised by broad coverage. Since both the individual and the society reap the rewards of education, an equitable financing system should imply cost sharing. The potential gains from public-private cost sharing are readily apparent in the success of a number of Western countries. Indeed one of the major strengths that distinguish higher education in Western industrial countries is that financial resources allocated to their better universities far exceed their students' actual or potential ability to pay.

Student fees are supplemented by significant public support and enormous private and civil society endowments which enable universities to exploit their supplemental income and leverage their reputations in order to acquire high-quality faculty, talented students, and state-of-the-art facilities. These countries have created schemes to make education almost without cost at the point of use, and to make repayment manageable over time and under differing economic circumstances.

We need to learn from good practice found in parts of the US and other Western experiences in higher education. I am particularly enamoured of the small country of Finland which is such an achiever in this field, where large business corporations regularly allocate generous resources for research.

In the Arab world I want to thank the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, which has taken seriously Muslim nomenclature for authenticity with the general public. For example, the concept of الملاقاة *al-hima*, which means foundations for the protection of the human and the natural environment; and

al-waqf, which is a foundation I hope that can revive scholarship, not least of all, jointly with Christian schools in the Holy Land. I had the privilege of studying with the Dominicans in the Holy Land at the time when a very dear friend I paid tribute to only few days ago in Italy, Father Michele Piccirillo of the Franciscan order, was working on Byzantine Mosaics. I learnt biblical and Mishnaic Hebrew. I tried to invest in bridge building. But where in this world of knowledge are those who *know* allowed to exchange views without being accused of being mavericks? Perhaps they are in the science and the liberal arts academies.

A UNDP Report of 2000 stated that there is a lack of political will – I would rather say *policy* will – by Arab governments to commit funds for research and development.[5] It seems to me that the catalyst has to come from international standards. I have been through the looking glass, as a public persona and now as a non-governmental organism – an NGO. We need to compare with other regions of the world. We train fewer scientists and engineers, produce fewer scientific publications, patents, and innovative technologies. We cannot continue this way. However, why can we not quantify success stories of the tens of thousands of scholars from developing countries who emigrate to the US and to Europe?

As patron of the Fulbright Scholarship for our region, despite my many appeals, the follow-up with scholarship recipients is dismal. I ask myself, how can the noble goals of the Fulbright program – the increase of mutual understanding, the promotion of international cooperation, etc. – be achieved without the requisite follow up? Without longitudinal studies? Somehow, somewhere, we have failed to connect the dots.

Today, regionally, we still do not have a facility to maintain an exchange of information. In Buenos Aires in the 1970's, we spoke of data systems at the first conference of transferable technology between developing countries. Now they have become knowledge systems or even cogito spheres. However, people die every day for different reasons in my part of the world, yet we lack a regional information system. We do not have the kind of open archives as exist in the Central European University in Budapest. I congratulate the Eastern Europeans for having put in place software to enhance their universities. Standards through extended conversations between Western Europe and Eastern Europe are our way to take a short-cut to a good neighbourhood policy. Not only between Europe and West Asia, but in the *medi terra*, the Mediterranean, the *terra meda*, the sea of seas – including the Black Sea.

When we talk of trends in higher education – massification, universalization – we confuse quantity with quality. In the Arab region in 1950 there were only 10 universities; by 2003 there were over 200 – a considerable number of private universities. As universities have grown in number, there has been a remarkable enrolment of university students resulting from natural demographic growth. The problem is that less advantaged social groups such as the poorer segments of the population, ethnic minorities, and women have not profited across the region equally from expanding enrolments.

The significant increase in institutes of higher education and in the number of students has unfortunately not been accompanied by an equivalent rise in the quality of the education those institutes dispense.

A 2008 World Bank report identifies three main causes for this gap:

– an insufficient focus on the quality of education;

– excessive bureaucracy, dogmatic procedures, and insufficient accountability on the part of university administrations and ministries in charge of higher education;

– inadequate innovations in teaching methods and techniques and grossly insufficient investment in research.[6]

In the current global economic crisis, will institutions dedicated to ensuring human dignity be the last on the list for policymakers? We need to step back and make an honest assessment of where we are going. Are we building institutions that will enable our young people to contribute to their own communities and to engage in meaningful ways with the world? Do our educational systems help to create a dynamic citizen equipped with the reason, knowledge and creativity to contribute on the world stage? Any programme of education should have benchmarks to describe the nature and characteristics of different levels of achievement within it. Here I stress the importance, yet again, of value-added with a mission – and universal standards. The vehicles that we have to accelerate trans-national understanding and cooperation must be used correctly.

We need to rethink education. I reiterate: we need to ask of ourselves, what does it truly mean to be educated in the twenty-first century? Education is not just a fundamental human right and the basis of individual and social development – it is in fact the gatekeeper of what has become the watchword of our age: security. This concept of security incorporates the active stake-holding of the disempowered, encourages citizens to participate in building their own human and natural environments, and recognises the need for cultural sensitivity.

We need to speak of education in an anthropocentric framework, where science and technology are at the service of humanity rather than *vice versa*.

When Thomas Jefferson called higher education in the liberal arts "training for citizenship", he was building on the classical Greek tradition, and distinguished professional training from the liberal arts. Slaves can be trained to do their jobs; citizens are trained to make choices that affect not just themselves but their communities as well. For those in the West who preach democracy to us, democracy does not descend by parachute. Democracy is building from the grassroots up. That's why the liberal arts need to be developed – to educate the "liber" or "free person" – man and woman. Indeed, while American universities were originally founded by the state to serve state interests (for example, Harvard was granted its charter by the Massachusetts Bay Colony, Dartmouth received its charter from King George III), it was only when the state "let universities loose" or when they liberated themselves that they flourished and evolved.

Dr. Maria Montessori said "there is only one problem, and it is human development in its totality; once this is achieved in any unit – child or nation – everything else follows spontaneously and harmoniously."[7] This focus on education for the whole person will enable our students to keep pace with the untold possibilities and opportunities that lie ahead in this twenty-first century with its ever-accelerating inventions and discoveries.

We are not merely working machines; we are creative and purposeful participants in communities. The university therefore provides a context in which people are encouraged and guided in the exploration of life in its diverse forms, developing not just skills, but intelligence and wisdom to help further our collective human journey. West Asia and North Africa, and Southeast Europe are on that cyclic line, that energy ellipse, which can either develop a complementarity between people and resources or continue to live a dichotomy at that parallel.

We must remember that a true education goes beyond mere knowledge and opens the mind to the cogito sphere, to the wisdom of our shared human heritage. **This is the way to our future**.

Notes

1. Roger C. Schank, "What Does it Mean to Have an Educated Mind in the 21st Century?" *Edge* (January, 2002) available at http://www.edge.org/q2002/q_schank.html.
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3. United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific, Poverty and Development Division, "What is Good Governance?" (May 2007).
4. Thomas S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).
5. United Nations Development Programme, Arab Human Development Report, 2008.
6. The World Bank, "The Road Not Traveled: Education Reform in the Middle East and Africa" (Washington, D.C.: 2008).
7. Maria Montessori, *To Educate the Human Potential* (1961).

Regional Report

Ten Years Back and Ten Years Forward: Developments and Trends in Higher Education in Europe Region

Alex Usher

It all Used to be so Simple

Higher education consisted of universities, and not many of them at that. Classes were small, tutorials were common. The purpose of a university education was clear: preparation for a life at the top – a finishing school for what would become an elite in the sciences, in the professions, and in government. There was a hierarchy, of sorts: the oldest universities in each country – Paris, Oxford, Harvard, Jagiellonian – have always had that extra amount of prestige and been able to attract the best (and often the wealthiest) students. Though the governance arrangements of these institutions differed from place to place, they had in common a resistance to change, a reluctance to alter arrangements which in some cases were centuries old. Students began and ended their careers at a single institution just as, later, they would tend to work their whole careers in the same field or economic sector, and live their lives within the borders of a single country.

Then Came Massification and Everything Changed

Higher education had, of course, been growing steadily since shortly after the Napoleonic wars; throughout Europe and America, a large number of institutions can trace their provenance back to the nineteenth century. But it was only after the second world war that governments in the West, with a historically unprecedented commitment to social equity, that higher education came – slowly and unevenly – to be considered as a social escalator. If universities were working well as a finishing school and a ticket to success for the elite, then a widening of access would provide more tickets to success. Governments began to take an interest, pumping in large, welcome sums of money, but altering priorities and ultimately governance as well. Though higher education had never been *simply* a Cardinal Newman-esque finishing school, massification and government funding meant that the sector had to justify itself in more utilitarian terms and so the sector began to be judged by the success of its ever-larger squadrons of graduates. But this was a devilishly difficult

task as the economy itself was beginning to change: employment was no longer for life, work itself became much more specialized. This led to calls for new types of institutions to meet these changing conditions; and as the sciences continued to push into new and unexplored areas and the humanities continued to fracture, there were whole new fields of study to explore as well.

External forces played a role, too. Declining trust in governments and public institutions has played a major role in the changing the relationship between governments, institutions and citizens. Globalization on the one hand, and European political integration on the other has meant citizens are much more mobile than they used to be. Mobility, once a rarity, has moved to centre-stage as a policy issue (in Europe at least). The increasing importance of universities as generators of knowledge in the new economy, and the apparent success of the American research university model in putting itself at the centre of the innovation process has led to a widespread re-evaluation of institutional missions. The end of communism in eastern and east-central Europe created massive new forces for expansion and international co-operation.

All of which is to say that the forces affecting higher education in North America and Europe over the past decade are long-term secular ones. They did not begin in this decade and they did not end in it – nor will they in the next one. Systems of higher education are gradually being asked to do more and more over time – to educate more students from ever-more diverse backgrounds, in more subjects, in more ways, in more fields of study; to do so in a fashion which is both unique at each institution while at the same time highly transferable, so as to encourage mobility in learning. And all the while being asked to produce more research, disseminate it more widely; to contribute to global scientific debates at the same time as contributing to local economic development. These are the forces which have emerged from the confluence of massification and the new knowledge economy. They may affect different systems in different ways at different times, and they may evoke different policy responses – but in the end, the story of higher education in this decade is everywhere about how different governments and institutions are coping with these forces.

Which brings us to the purpose of this paper; namely, to summarise the main trends in higher education over the past ten years in Europe, the United States and Canada and to critically examine what these trends might mean for higher education in the years ahead. There has been tremendous change in higher education in the past decade – more so in Europe than in North America, and for somewhat different reasons in the countries of the old EU-15 than in the rest of the continent. With such a diverse range of systems and institutions, it cannot be hoped to cover the full range of a decade's worth of labour at over 8,000 educational institutions in 50 states. Nonetheless, it is to be hoped that the essentials can at least be relayed, and that these essentials can help us make sense of the likely directions the systems will be taking in the century's second decade.

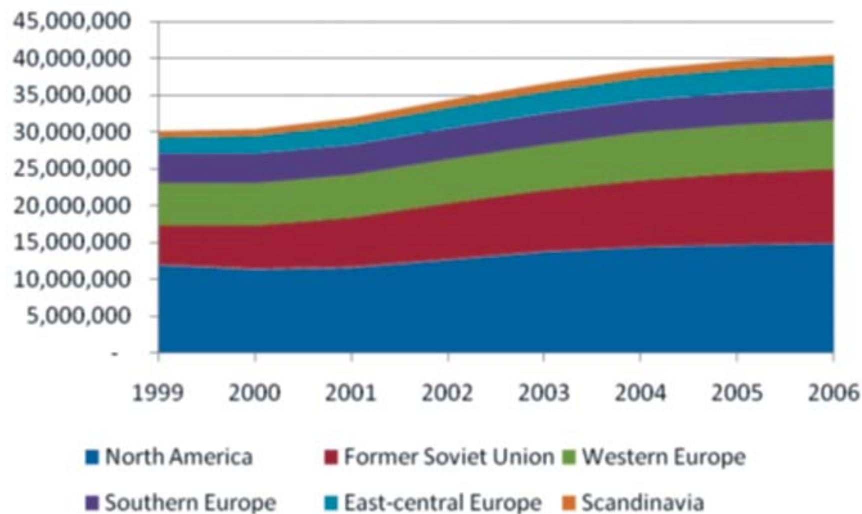
From Massification to Universalization

One of the most significant changes in higher education in Europe and North America is the continuing massification of higher education. Massification has happened in stages across the region; the phenomenon began in the United States in the 1960s, moved to Canada in the 1970s and the 1980s, Western Europe in the 1980s and the

1990s, and in Eastern and Central and Eastern Europe since 1990. In this decade, the drive to wider access stalled in some parts of the region, and roared ahead in others.

In the past decade, student numbers have grown substantially across the region[1]. At the turn of the past decade, there were just over 30 million students in North America and Europe; by 2006, this figure had increased by a third to just over 40 million. However, this growth was not by any means equally distributed across the entire region. In the countries of the former Soviet Union, student numbers grew by an astonishing 89 percent, and these six countries accounted for very close to half of the growth in the entire region. Next door, in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe saw an increase of 51 percent. In the rest of the region, the expansion of access over the past decade has been much slower: Scandinavia saw an increase of enrolment of 34 percent, North America of 24 percent (though this sub-region's increase still accounted for nearly a third of all growth across the entire region), Western of Europe 16 percent and Southern Europe saw growth of just 7 percent (due in large part to a decline in student numbers in Spain).

Figure 1. Total Enrolment (ISCED 5A+6) by sub-region, 1999-2006.



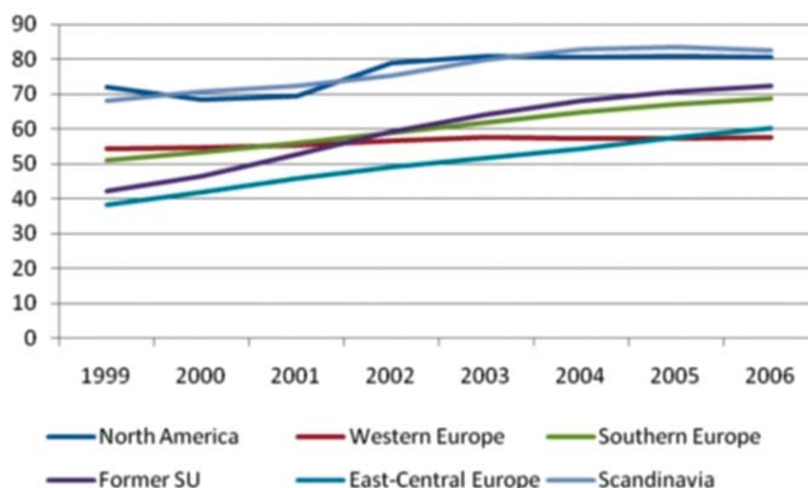
Source: UIS.

Another way to look at participation statistics is by looking at something called the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER). This statistic, which is common in international comparative statistics is less frequently used in national statistics: basically, it is a statistic of convenience which is used because of the ease with which it can be calculated rather than because of its accuracy as a measure of participation.[2] Simply, it is the total number of students in a country (including international students) divided by the number of citizens in that country in the five year-age cohorts which follow the normal secondary school leaving age (in most countries, this means the 18-22 age bracket). As a statistic, it is of continuing importance because of the

original theory of "massification" articulated by Martin Trow (1974). Under Trow's classification, systems of higher education with GERs of less than 15 percent were categorized as "elite," systems between 16 and 50 percent were considered "mass", while systems with over 50 percent were considered "universal".

By this definition, every country in the region now has a "mass" system of higher education. Indeed, most have "universal" systems of higher education and have has this level of participation for some time. The main development in this respect over the past decade is that most of the former communist states have moved from being mass systems to being universal systems. Indeed, in the entire continent only Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Slovakia and Switzerland have GERs small enough to be considered simply "mass".[3] Despite this, there are still some substantial differences in actual enrolment ratios across the region. Greece and Finland have the highest national GERs at 95 percent[4] and 93 percent. Generally, ratios are highest in North America and Scandinavia, where the sub-regional ratios are at roughly 80 percent. Next are the areas covered by the countries of the former Soviet Union and southern Europe at around 70 percent. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe for which data are available have a GER of 60 percent[5]; perhaps surprisingly, it is the countries of Western Europe, including France, Germany and Switzerland, who have the lowest GERs of all, at just 57 percent. Western Europe was also the sub-region which exhibited the least growth during the decade.

Figure 2. Gross Enrolment Ratios (ISCED 5A+6) by sub-region, 1999-2006.



Source: UIS.

A number of countries stand out for their recent rapid expansion. Greece appears to have recorded the highest increase in GER; however, other UIS data indicates that enrolments only increased by 47 percent. For GER to have doubled, the relevant age cohort would have had to have dropped by 25 percent in seven years, which

seems unlikely. After Greece come a clutch of former socialist countries which saw their Gross enrolment ratios grow by somewhere between twenty and thirty-five percent. Outside this area, Iceland and Denmark are the only other countries to have seen major increases in enrolment ratios in the past decade.

Table 1. GERs of the Region's Fastest-Growing Systems.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	1999-2006 Change
Greece	47	51	59	66	73	80	90	95	*48*
Hungary	33	37	40	45	52	60	65	69	*35*
Iceland	40	46	48	54	62	68	70	73	*33*
Lithuania	44	50	57	62	68	73	76	76	*33*
Russian Federation	40	45	52	59	65	69	71	72	*33*
Romania	22	24	28	32	36	40	45	52	*30*
Slovenia	53	56	61	67	69	72	79	83	*30*
Ukraine	47	49	52	57	61	65	69	73	*26*
Denmark	56	58	60	63	67	74	81	80	*24*
Czech Republic	26	29	31	35	37	43	48	50	*23*
Latvia	50	56	63	67	71	75	75	74	*23*
Poland	45	50	55	58	60	62	64	66	*21*

Source: UIS.

Typically, in the first, early phases of expansion known as "massification", higher education expands by attracting the relatively better-off in society – people with already high levels of social capital and a tendency to have oriented themselves in an academic direction from a very early age. The barrier to their participation was not usually that they lacked aptitude or even finances; rather, it was a simple lack of places. The engine of massification, therefore, was simply the construction of new institutions and the mass hiring of new teaching staff. In most of Europe, this was achieved almost exclusively by building public universities with public money; in North America it was achieved by building public universities with a mix of public and private (mainly tuition) dollars.

What is especially noteworthy, therefore, about the massification and incipient universalization of higher education in East-Central Europe and the former Soviet Union is the extent to which it was achieved not just through private expenditures, but at private institutions as well. In Estonia, half of all institutions are now private institutions created in the past fifteen years or so; in Latvia, over a quarter of all students are now enrolled in private institutions. In the Russian Federation, the region's largest country, it is estimated that over a third of all institutions and about

a sixth of all students are in the private sector. In short, the Eastern half of the continent achieved massification through very different means than the rest of the region. But every path to massification and indeed – to coin a phrase – "universalization" creates its own set of problems. The fact that the former socialist countries took a different route to universal higher education means that the set of problems they face going forward will be quite different than the set of problems faced by Western European countries at a similar stage.

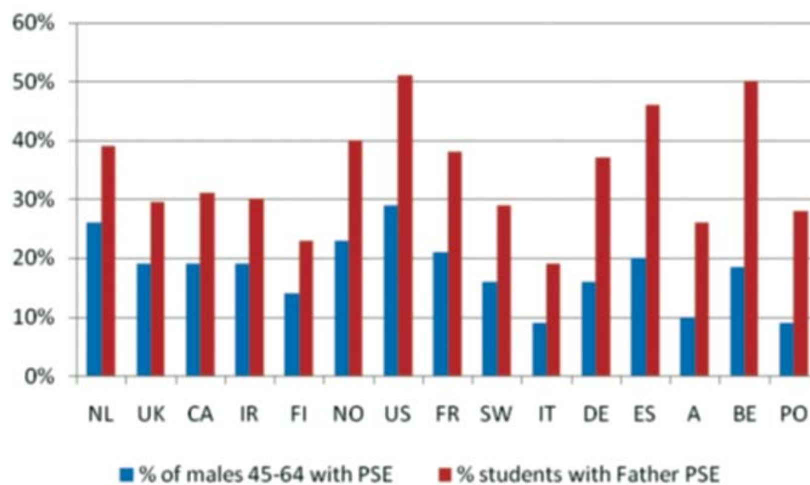
The challenges of expansion under conditions of universal education are very different from the challenges of expansion in mass high education systems and in most respects are less tractable as problems. Universalization involves attracting a very different sort of student to advanced study than does massification. By definition, as one passes 50 percent, to continue to increase participation means to involve people who are below the median in terms of academic achievement and these people tend to come from society's more disadvantaged groups who have always been less likely to attend post-secondary education. The patterns are similar everywhere. Youth from low-income families are less likely to attend than those from higher-income families. Youth with disabilities, or youth from racial minorities or Aboriginal groups all tend to have lower rates of participation than other youth. Similarly, immigrants in most countries find that newer citizens have more difficulty entering tertiary education (Canada, which has quite different immigration policies and patterns than the rest of the region, is a notable exception – there, immigrant youth are much *more* likely to attend higher education than native-born youth). Where massification means a focus on the raw number of students attending higher education, universalization necessarily means an increased focus on fairness in attendance. This is almost an arithmetic truth, because once the 50 percent mark is reached, to continue growing in numbers necessarily means taking in more students from groups that are historically under-represented.

It is difficult to understand what kind of progress is being made internationally in this quest for "fairness" or "equity" in participation, for the simple reason that there is not an international standard for measuring it and difference countries have chosen to try to capture the issue in very different ways. In America, the unit of measurement for equality of participation is usually race, though family income is used as well. In the UK, measures of "class" predominate. In much of Europe, there are concerns about the participation rates of recent immigrants, but administrative or survey data that can measure participation rates of these groups is quite limited. About a decade ago, however, the Eurostudent project began publishing a comparison of equality based on parental education levels – a measure which was later dubbed the "Education Equity Index" and brought into use in comparisons involving non-European OECD countries. This data is somewhat patchy (no data is available in many countries) and cannot – as yet – tell us anything about changes over time as it has not been collected for very long. It can, however, show some basic differences in equality of access across different systems.

Figure 3 shows the educational equity index for fifteen countries from our region. The index is expressed as a ratio: the percentage of males aged 45-64 (a rough proxy for "all fathers") with PSE, divided by the percentage of students who report having fathers with PSE. Countries with a high ratio have a student body

which is roughly similar to the general population in terms of parental education levels and hence, likely in terms of socio-economic status as well; countries with a low ratio have a student body which is quite dissimilar to the general population in terms of parental education at large and hence are likely drawn disproportionately from an "elite" tier of society. The countries that score well on this measure are mostly Anglophone and Scandinavian, though the best-performing country of all is the Netherlands. The countries which do poorly on this measure are from Central, Southern or Eastern Europe.

Figure 3. Average Fathers' Education vs. Students' Fathers Education.



Note: data for Figure 3 is taken from the *Global Higher Education Rankings* (Cervenan and Usher, 2005) and, for Norway, Estonia and Portugal, from *Eurostudent*, 2005.

As Scott (2009) notes, the argument about *fairer* patterns of attendance (as opposed to simply larger number of attendees), has had a longer provenance in North America, where universal higher education was achieved some decades ago, than it has in Europe, where for the most part the mark was reached in the 1990s. But this is likely simply an outgrowth of the fact that the United States has been dealing with universalization longer than anyone else. The 50 percent figure was achieved in the United States in the mid-1970s, not long after the adoption of a national system of grants (the Basic Education Opportunity Grant, or BEOG, later to become the Pell Grant) and in Canada at about the same time. The first European country to reach this level was Finland, in 1991, but within a decade all of the EU-15 bar Germany and the somewhat anomalous case of Luxembourg all had reached it.

Intriguingly, as universalization has progressed, there has been a noticeable failure of policy discussions surrounding the process of universalization to converge. In countries where tuition fees exist, there has been a natural inclination to focus on the extent to which financial factors are a barrier to access. And while clearly financial factors are at a significant factor in some places (Advisory Committee on

Student Financial Assistance, 2001), there has been a general move away from the idea that any kind of financial incentive alone can widen access very much. Instead, there has been a pre-occupation with other, non-financial types of measures to widen access. In North America, these have tended to take the form of what are known as "early intervention" measures – programs delivered through schools or community groups which mix some form of academic and/or social intervention (*e.g.,* mentorships) to reach students who are considered promising candidates for PSE but whose social background might not orient or prepare them properly for PSE. In the United States, these programs come under the heading of the TRIO programs, in the UK they come under AimHigher, etc. In a crude kind of way, these programs are trying to widen participation by re-distributing social and cultural capital, thereby complementing student aid programs' re-distribution of financial capital. In much of Europe, however, this discussion is non-existent; it sometimes seems, in effect, that many policymakers genuinely believe that the condition of "accessibility" is satisfied by the absence of tuition. Whether this is true or not is unclear, but the absence of a policy community devoted to widening access through non-financial means in most of Europe is quite striking to North American eyes.

One of the problems with evaluating these different dialogues is that there is precious little information in most countries about the reasons why some youth choose not to enter PSE, and hence little basis for evaluating whether or not the policy dialogues are appropriate or not. It is not obvious that the reasons for youth non-attendance are be the same everywhere. Even between such ostensibly similar countries as the United States and Canada there can be significant differences in access patterns and the nature of the barriers can be quite different (Frenette, 2006; Belley and Lochner, 2009) – financial barriers appear to be a much bigger issue in the United States than they are in Canada, for reasons that are not entirely clear, but not related to the affordability of public higher education, which is actually more expensive in Canada than in the United States (Usher and Steele, 2006). The fact is that attitudes to education and to policy tools designed to aid access to education differ as well. In Europe, for instance, Sweden and the Netherlands have nearly identical systems of student loans – generous in size and open to all. But whereas five out of six Swedish students borrow, only one out of six Dutch students borrows.[6]

But widening access is not simply a matter of introducing re-distributive programs for financial or social capital. It is also a matter of changing the nature of higher education itself. This is because the most successful learners – that is, the ones most likely to have entered higher education early on in the massification process – are the ones who are most academically attuned to higher education institutions. As universalization progresses, most new students are simply less interested in the kind of education provided by existing higher education institutes or are simply less academically gifted. In order to attract these students, new tactics need to be introduced. The old-school universities – the ones that were traditionally used to train the new elites – do not provide a type of education which is universally desired by youth or universally desirable in the labour market. So there has been a move to create new forms of higher education at new types of institutions – education that is less theoretical, more practical and (in theory at least) more welcoming to non-traditional

students. Thus, universalization has to some extent driven institutional diversification over the years – a subject we will return to at greater length below.

But the question, of course, is how to finance all of this growth. Since the recession of the early 1990s, public finances have been much less expansionist across North American and Western Europe – and the straightened condition of the economies of the former Communist bloc have not left room for expansion of public funding either. As a result, money to pay for increasing or widening participation has been more or less restricted to whatever can be made through the progressive rationalization of the system and system productivity on the one hand, and private funds (mainly tuition fees) on the other. It is striking that major enrolment gains in our period seem to have been restricted by and large to those countries – Canada, the United States, the United Kingdom and the former socialist countries of east-central and eastern Europe – where fee policies are substantially liberal and permit significant cost-sharing. This is an important question which we will return to below in our section on financing.

One trend in participation which has been quite consistent across the entire region is the continuing expansion of female enrolments in higher education and the resulting emerging gender gap. In almost all countries, women now form the majority of the undergraduate student body, and they take up an ever larger share of enrolment with every passing year. The reasons behind this trend are not clear. It is perhaps significant that across the region gender gaps tend to be wider among groups which are traditionally under-represented in higher education (blacks in the US and UK, aboriginals in Canada, etc.).

True, these gains are not distributed equally throughout the academy. The gender gap has not closed (though it has narrowed) at the level of graduate studies and among faculty there is still a pronounced bias towards males. In terms of distribution at the discipline level, women remain a minority everywhere in mathematics, engineering and related disciplines, The stubbornness of math and engineering in resisting the overall trend of increasing female participation is somewhat puzzling. One recent paper (Drewes, 2009) looking at academic production functions suggests that it might in fact be a case of comparative advantage rather than absolute advantage: though females "outproduce" males (in an academic sense) more or less across the board, the gap in achievement is less pronounced in these disciplines than in others, and this creates an incentive for males to flock to them.

Whatever the reasons, the general trend of an increasing participation gap between women and men shows no sign of slowing and it is likely that we can expect this gap to continue to widen. This widening participation gap has yet to really emerge as a political issue anywhere, but it is difficult to see how the gap continue to grow without it becoming one eventually. Whether the trend can be reversed through any overt government policy action is an open question, though.

Another barrier to wider participation is distance – youth from regions not possessing an institution of higher education are substantially less likely to attend than youth with easy access to an institution (Frenette, 2004). This is not a pre-occupation in all countries in the region, as some are so densely populated that it is not an especially urgent question; however, in larger countries like Canada, the United States and the Russian Federation the question of distance has taken on more importance.

Over the years, many have touted the virtues of distance education as a means to provide these people with an education cheaply. Since the dawn of the internet age fifteen years ago, there has been a view that perhaps with greater application of technology, this can become a realistic goal.

However, the reality has been somewhat different. Though there are few good international or comparative studies on the use of distance education, a fairly consistent pattern seems to have emerged across the region. Distance learning is still only rarely used for purposes of giving instruction to undergraduates – the dominant trend in providing access to education for people in more remote communities is still to construct new institutions. There are two reasons for this. The first is that the construction and maintenance of institutions – even very small ones – have benefits that go beyond mere education. They also provide jobs and the potential of economic spin-offs – and the electoral calculus of democratic societies creates incentives for politicians to create ever more of these kinds of organizations. The second is that few people seem to think that distance education is well suited to provide basic undergraduate education. First cycle programs are about human capital formation and – to an increasing degree – about socialization as well. These things require "rubbing elbows" (that is, casual face-to-face contact and communication) with other students and with teachers and professors – things which for all the interactive technology in the world are far more easily achieved in person, at traditional bricks-and-mortar institutions.

Where distance education in the electronic age had really taken off is in professional education – that is, in post-baccalaureate and graduate degrees. Here, "rubbing elbows" is less important. As second cycle programs, they are less about teaching people how to think and much more about getting competent advanced learners to master a particular set of skills or field of knowledge. But in this case, distance education is actually not about distance – it is more about the virtualization and modularization of education. These techniques were originally designed to promote distance education but increasingly they are being used to reach working-aged students in urban areas; people who have no problem physically accessing a campus but who have time constraints and work commitments during normal institutional working hours and so are looking for an asynchronous for of education that permits them to learn when they can. In theory, something similar could be worked out for first-cycle courses. However, the demand simply isn't there and even if it was, it is not clear that traditional-aged first-cycle learners have the necessary discipline and self-motivation to make asynchronous education workable on a large scale.

A question occasionally posed about all these efforts to widen participation is: is it worth it? Though a number of studies have demonstrated the public benefit of raising levels of tertiary participation, the fact remains that the utility of higher education as a private good is at least partially because it is a positional good. As more and more people obtain a particular qualification, the more important it becomes to obtain said qualification because of the consequences of being left behind (a logic which feeds the demand-side of the massification/universalization equation). But at the same time, since the value of a degree is at least partially due to its ability to signal to employers that the holder has better-than-average skills (employers tend to use degrees as screening devices during the hiring process) if too

many people start obtaining a qualification then it loses its value as a positional good. The only way for people to regain a positional advantage is to take still more education and receive additional qualifications. This is still a good thing to the extent that the extra education is producing returns in terms of long-term productivity, but longer spells in education at ever higher levels is a costly proposition, and this "education arms race" caused by education's partial status as a positional good has the potential to increase costs (either public, or private, or both) significantly over even the medium term.

Over the past ten years, the era of massification has come to a close across most of the region. Apart from a few small outliers (Albania, for instance), countries have moved their gross Enrolments rates either over or very close to 50, which is the (admittedly arbitrary) line which Trow used to divide "mass systems" and "universal systems". In other words, we have entered the age of universal higher education. This is a massive accomplishment, and one which the rest of the world will continue to strive to emulate.

The Quality Debate

The quality of higher education is hardly a new pre-occupation. But the past decade will almost certainly be remembered as the one in which notions of quality assurance became more harmonized through the Bologna Process and one in which quality measurement – either through rankings or through surveys such as the National Survey of Student Engagement in North America – became ubiquitous.

Broadly speaking, there have been two approaches to quality in higher education in the past twenty years. The first generally goes under the name of "quality assurance" or "accreditation" and has traditionally tended to focuses on ensuring that certain minimum levels of resources (*i.e.*, inputs) are present to ensure a "quality" education, as well as requiring institutions to have their own policies regarding quality monitoring and improvement. The second approach, which includes both rankings systems and systems of performance indicators, is a more quantitative approach which tries to assess based on instructional conditions and learning outputs.[7] Neither of these approaches was born in this decade, but both approaches had substantial success in establishing themselves over the past ten years. Towards the end of the period some pan-European education groups tried to describe the two as essentially antithetical, with quality assurance being contrasted favourably with rankings. But to view these two as substitutes to one another is a profound mistake; as Jongbloed (2003) once memorably analogized, quality assurance is the equivalent of a restaurant health inspection while rankings are the equivalent of a Michelin guide. Both have their place; neither can replace the other.

The quality assurance/accreditation model (which can be applied either at the institutional or the programme level) of improving quality has always been based on a few key elements. However, Europe is now moving to a relatively common standard which is described by Kohler (2009) as follows:

> First, higher education institutions are expected to submit **a self-evaluation report** on the object to be evaluated, accredited, or audited. The self-evaluation report is followed by a **site visit**, or in some cases two site visits, of a panel of

> experts appointed by the agency concerned. The **evaluation operations** and the subsequent **report** of the evaluating team is expected to **apply predefined criteria** and **processes** and must be **evidence-based**, looking both at concepts and practices of the object concerned. It may limit itself to statements in terms of fact finding, but in most cases it also arrives at conclusions in terms of recommendations or affirmative or negative judgement. This is usually followed by **final judgement** passed by a specific body of the agency established for that purpose, thus making sure that there is a calibrating check across the entire field of operation and thus formally accepted institutional responsibility of the agency. In some cases this judgement is **valid directly** vis-à-vis the institution which applied for the process, in some cases it is **passed on to** the competent **governmental authority**, usually the ministry of education, to adopt the decision formally and to make it known to the institution. If dissatisfied, institutions may **appeal** using specific appeals procedures, and – as may be the case in some systems – to law courts.

Though Kohler's description of the quality assurance process is European, it is not in its essentials that different from the processes of accreditation known in the United States (though the role of the government authority may be quite different).[8] Still, even here there is scope for considerable differences in national practices. The nature of the pre-determined criteria for examination may differ significantly from country to country. So, too, can the nature of the site visit team, with student participation (or non-participation) being a key variable. The transparency of the exercise is also not always the same – the manner in which results are released and to whom they are released can also differ extensively.

In 2003, the ministers responsible for the Bologna Process began a consultation designed to lead to a common but not unified system of quality assurance. Two years of consultation among quality assurance agencies, higher education institutions, and student representatives followed and the result was the adoption in 2005 of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). The main features of this consensus are as follows: institutions have primary responsibility for quality and are required to have processes of internal quality assurance. Institutions are subject to external oversight by an agency charged by government to assume competency of quality assurance mechanisms. And finally, quality review agencies themselves are submitted to quality assessment procedures through the European Quality Assurance Register, which is a joint project of the European Network of Quality Assurance Agencies (ENQA), together with the European University Association (EUA), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), and the European Students Union (ESU). In principle, this structure means that national quality assurance bodies now coordinate to determine mutually acceptable evaluation frameworks, and thus, visions of institutional quality. Simultaneously, institutions are empowered to evaluate themselves, but within the framework of wider agreements on institutional quality and evaluation that their representative organizations have worked to develop. This is indicative of a broader governance trend: increased institutional operational autonomy coupled with strengthening webs of external coordination.

The Bologna Process, then, has had an incontestable effect on quality assurance schemes the national level. The effect of Bologna was largest in small countries and countries further east, where such arrangements were least developed. And not before time – the legacy of the break-neck expansion of higher education of the last fifteen years (see above section on *massification or universalization*) was widely divergent standards of institutional quality which required some external surveillance. But it also had an effect at the institutional level. At a time when institutions were being made more autonomous (see section on *governance,* below), Bologna made it clear that institutions themselves bore primary responsibility for quality, not an external agency. Though the process is far from complete, this was a major step towards inculcating each and every institution with a "culture of quality".

One significant criticism of quality assurance schemes is that their results are not always easily interpretable, and their definitions of quality not always transparent. And it was in part because of a desire for greater transparency and clarity about what constitutes quality that performance indicators and their close cousins, rankings, were initially created. But for all that these two approaches are thought of as being antithetical to one another, the success of the quality assurance model in the past decade did not mean that the more reductionist and quantitative methods of measuring quality were in retreat. On the contrary, performance indicators and rankings grew to unprecedented heights of importance during this decade.

Performance indicators were adopted in nearly all US states during the 1990s and continued to be collected and published throughout this period. However, despite the fact that they were initially intended as a steering mechanism for higher education institutions, the fact is that in fact they have had remarkably little impact on funding policies (Burke and Manassians, 2003). In fact, their use has only infrequently extended beyond the simple act of collecting and publishing data; few policy-makers seem to use them when making policy and their use has not seriously altered patterns of institutional funding. Similarly, although performance indicators are in use in other jurisdictions such as Germany, they have not played much of a role in policy over the past decade.

On the other hand, one specific form of performance indicators – that is, rankings and league tables – have captured a great deal of both policymakers and the public. At the start of our period, these existed only in the region's three Anglophone countries. By the end, most of the large countries had their own systems of rankings, and the entire region was covered by two major sets of international rankings. Though national rankings and league tables[9] have not been brought directly into the policy-making and funding process in the Europe Region as they have in countries such as Nigeria, Kazakhstan and Taiwan, they have nonetheless had a substantial effect on universities as a whole.

In Europe and North America, rankings are usually the purview of commercial publishers and tend to be published for purposes of helping undergraduates choose a university (at least ostensibly – to some degree, there is an element of playing to academic vanity as well). Examples of these are widespread: *US News and World Report, The Guardian Good University Guide* (UK), *Maclean's* (Canada), *La Repubblica* (Italy), *Hoger Onderwijs Keuzegids* (the Netherlands) and *Perspektywy* (Poland). The cause of their popularity is fairly obvious: as the cost of higher education

rises (guides are considerably more likely to exist in countries with tuition fees than in countries without them), there is a desire on the part of students and parents to be able to understand the nature of their investment and compare it to other possible alternatives. These rankings, which are for the most part published in the form of "league tables", purport to rank institutions ordinally based on their scores on a set of indicators which are chosen and weighted by the publisher of the rankings. This produces a "best" institution, and a "worst" institution, and everything in between, measured with what many people would describe as a largely spurious level of precision.

At a technical level, rankings have been modified quite a bit over the course of the decade. Student survey data is more frequently incorporated into the results; smaller field-of-study units are now compared as well as entire institutions, thus allowing a more fine-grained approach; the weighting of indicators, always a source of criticism for its lack of scientific basis, has become less common, and, perhaps most famously, web-based rankings such as those run by the CHE-Centre for Educational Development in Gütersloh, Germany, have emerged to replace "one-size fits all" rankings with "personalized" rankings. Some of these innovations have helped to ease some of the criticisms around rankings, but complaints about rankings continue. The basic criticisms are that they are simplistic reductionist (true – that is, indeed, their point); that they encourage competition amongst institutions (true – but a) this is not necessarily a bad thing and b) institutions compete for prestige regardless of the presence of rankings); and that they present perverse incentives for institutions to "manage to the indicators" (true, and depending on how useful or useless the indicators are, potentially the best criticism of published rankings). There were many suggestions, particularly in the United States, that rankings were distorting the admissions process and whipping up a mania about the college selection process. But whatever their effects on consumers, national rankings had little impact on government policy.

However, government reactions changed when the first set of major *international* rankings began to be developed. In contrast to national rankings, which had little effect on national policy, the publication of international rankings would provoke a much more substantial policy response.

In 2003, a researcher working at Shanghai Jiao Tong University, Nian Cai Liu, first published the Academic Ranking of World Universities. Even though this ranking appeared at more or less the same time as another global ranking published by the Times Higher Education Supplement (THES) which produced broadly similar results, it was the Shanghai rankings which created the greater commotion and was to lead to some profound changes in policy across Europe. There were several reasons for the Shanghai rankings' greater influence: for one thing, its decision to concentrate on research output as opposed to things such as the presence of international students or staff-student ratios meant that its definition of world-classes was much more in line with academic norms (Sadlak and Liu, 2007). For another, its choice of mainly bibliometric indicators allowed it to be much more scientific and replicable than the THES, which relied very heavily on the results of a reputation survey which was conducted in a fairly opaque manner. Perhaps most importantly from a political perspective, the Shanghai rankings were Chinese rather than English and, and developed on a non-profit rather than a commercial basis:

hence they were not seen as having such a vested interest in the Anglo-American model of the university.

Table 2. Distribution by sub-region of Top 100 and top 500 Universities in the Academic Ranking of World Universities, 2008.

Region	Shanghai Top 20	Shanghai Top 100	Shanghai Top 500
North America	17	58	180
Western Europe	2	25	134
Scandinavia		8	33
Former Soviet Union		1	2
Southern Europe		0	35
East-Central Europe		0	6
South-East Europe		0	0
TOTAL	19	92	390

Overall, the Shanghai rankings showed our region in an extremely positive light: 92 percent of the rankings' top 100 institutions around the world were located in Europe and North America, as were 78 percent of its top 500. This is a testament both to the region's economic clout as well as its commitment to free academic and scientific inquiry. But while the Shanghai rankings had little effect in North America, (presumably because it showed American – and to a lesser degree Canadian – universities as performing very well in terms of research metrics), in Europe – particularly Western Europe – the effect was electric. Just as the European Union was committing itself to the Lisbon Strategy, which set a goal for Europe of becoming "the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based economy in the world... by 2010", here was a significant piece of evidence suggesting that Europe's universities at least were lagging their American counterparts quite badly. Though there were more European universities than American ones in the rankings as a whole (210 to 151), the closer one got to the top of the rankings, the better the American universities did, taking 54 of the top 100 spots and 17 of the top 20.

The European response to this was two-fold. The first was, not surprisingly, to critique the rankings on several grounds. There was, firstly, the undoubted Anglophone bias of the rankings. This was partially a function of using bibliometric data from sources such as Thompson ISI's Web of Science, which concentrates on the world's "standard" (and largely English) scientific journals; it was also partially because the role of institutional size in the rankings in effect privileged large American-style multiversities over institutions in countries whose educational systems were geared towards smaller, specialist research institutions (such as France and the Russian Federation). There were also criticisms of the occasionally picayune nature of the methodologies used (the method in which Nobel Prize winners were included in the rankings was singled out for special scorn). As a follow-up to this, there were

attempts to create a specifically European ranking which would – presumably – aim at being at least somewhat more holistic and less reductive than league table rankings. The multi-dimensional approach taken by the CHE and its partners with their various type of rankings projects would appear to be the way of the future here.

But the second response, which Hazelkorn (2008) has documented in some detail, was quite different: to embrace the rankings and make them a tool of government policy. In France, it became government policy that two French universities make the top 20 by the year 2020; Ireland made it a goal to place one in the top 20. On one level, this response was absurd – short of a truly heroic injection of new resources, reaching these goals in this period of time is an impossible task. But on another level, it revealed three very important things – first, that European governments were prepared to view the Shanghai rankings at least as a legitimate measure of institutional quality (at least as far as scientific research was concerned); second, that they saw the research output of their top institutions as a proxy for national research output and third, that national research output was a matter of national prestige, worth spending a large amount of money to promote and maintain. And, in a sense, they were probably right – in the knowledge-based economy, being able to attract and maintain large concentrations of highly skilled scientific researchers is a key to promoting innovation and economic growth. It is, as Sadlak (2008) has noted, perhaps, the beginning of the era of the "new geo-politics of higher education".

A final important development in the field of quality and quality measurement occurred in North America. Although commercial rankings had had little impact on government policy, they were felt to have a pernicious impact because in the absence of a culture of data transparency, the indicators contained in the rankings often became *de facto* benchmarks as far as governing boards were concerned. This was seen as having pernicious effects on institutional policy-making, because they spoke to inputs or outputs but not to the actual process of learning that occurred within an institution. Since institutions consider themselves to be in business precisely to help people learn, it seemed deeply unfair that "quality" was being judged on measurements which effectively ignored the educational process. One observer likened the process of measuring educational quality through such measures with the drunk who loses his keys in the street but goes to look for them under a streetlight because "the light is better over there" (Chun, 2002). But the simple fact was that inputs and outputs were easier to measure and describe than the learning process: hence their attraction, especially to policymakers.

Thus was set in motion a search for a set of indicators that would actually describe the effectiveness of the learning process within institutions in a simple, easy-to-understand manner. With funding from the Pew Foundation, George Kuh and a small group of researchers worked with a consortium of educational institutions to develop such an instrument. The result was the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE – pronounced "Nessie"), which was piloted in 75 institutions in 2000. The program grew quickly to several hundred institutions in North America (and, more recently, overseas as well) and spawned a sister-survey known as the Community College Survey of Student Engagement (CCSSE or "Sessie").

The NSSE is a fairly simple survey, just four pages in length, which asks students about their learning experiences at institutions, such as average frequency

and duration of homework, frequency of contact with faculty or other advisors, number of books read for courses and for pleasure, etc. Drawing on about three decades of research on the effectiveness of educational practice among college students (in the American sense of the word college), these results are then turned into a series of institutional "scores" which describe how well the university does at creating a "learning environment".[10]

As its rapid spread through the North American educational community attests, NSSE has been very popular among institutions. Each participating institution receives its own scores as well as those of other institutions within its "peer group" (based on the institution's Carnegie classification[11]). The dominant sentiment among those who use it is that it is a superior management tool – it provides precise, quantitative data regarding aspects of the learning experience which can be used to modify policy and practice within an institution. In this sense, it is simply a superior instrument which an institution can integrate into its existing "self-audit" regime.

While the NSSE does in some sense represent an advance over the earlier input/output techniques, it is not without its flaws. NSSE does not actually measure learning outcomes; instead, it measures the presence of policies or practices which have been shown through many decade of research to be correlated with good learning outcomes.[12] If the surveys show that these practices or conditions are present, then NSSE assumes that good learning outcomes are occurring. Even if one accepts this assumption, one must bear in mind that the NSSE is essentially content-free; it can determine whether "learning" is taking place, but says nothing about *what* is being learned. Methodologists may also question the accuracy of a survey that relies on students self-reporting on questions such as "how often have you worked harder than you thought you could to meet an instructor's standards or expectations?" Finally, although the relationship exists intuitively, little evidence has been produced linking good "learning" results to future career and life outcomes.

Another recent approach to quality measurement has recently been developed by the Council for Aid to Education (a subsidiary of RAND Corporation), and is called the Collegiate Learning Assessment (CLA). The CLA is meant to test general skills such as ability to communicate and critical thinking not at an individual level but at an institutional one.[13] A selection of first and final year students sit the CLA test; the two groups are treated as a synthetic cohort, and the difference in average scores of the two classes is calculated. On its own, this difference means nothing because presumably a portion of any gain can be attributed to the effects of aging rather than the process of education – what matters is the size of the difference compared to the difference of other peer institutions. The efficacy of institutions in teaching general skills is then calculated by the difference in differences.

It could be argued that this approach is superior to NSSE; it measures learning directly instead of inferring it and it looks at individual students' results as opposed to simply measuring the learning environment.[14] However, the CLA is still in its infancy and has no track record to speak of; it remains a potential tool rather than an actual one. Still, the basic approach of testing general skills at more than one point in time to measure educational effectiveness is widely understood and accepted (if not always liked).

Regardless of whether the concept of quality is being approached from the standpoint of quality assurance or that of quality measurement, there has been some movement over the past decade on the definition of quality. In prior decades, quality has been at least some degree synonymous with the quantity and quality of inputs. In part, this reflected a genuine belief that more money and more resources necessarily had a positive effect on outcomes; in part, it reflected the fact that inputs were much easier to measure than outcomes. However, over the past decade there has been a gradual move towards looking at outcomes. This move is in no small part due to new theories of public management which recommend setting broad outcome objectives and allowing agents (in this case, universities) considerable leeway in deciding how to meet these objectives. But, as is so often the case, the kinds of outcomes being examined are the ones easiest to measure and monitor – publications and citations where research is concerned, and employment rates where teaching is concerned. This has led to fears that other important aspects of institutional life, such as their social missions, are being ignored by the quality agenda. Presumably, this can be rectified in time; just because performance on social missions have yet to measured does not mean they are inherently unmeasurable. The move to outcomes measurement has been broadly positive, but much work remains to be done for it to gain broader acceptance.

Internationalization

If any the trends of the last ten years have been truly *of* the last ten years rather than simply a continuation of a long-standing trend, it is the move towards the internationalization of higher education. Though previous decades had not been without gestures in the direction of internationalization (for example, the creation of the European Union's Erasmus Program), it was in the last ten years that the idea has really taken root. The most obvious expression of this movement was the Bologna Process. Originally signed by 29 European ministers of education in 1999, the Bologna Declaration was an attempt to bring greater pan-European commonality in terms of degree cycles, credit accumulation and quality assurance practices, as a means to facilitate student mobility across the continent. Since then, the declaration has been adopted in 46 countries, and the process now encompasses 4,000 higher education institutions and 16 million students, making the system comparable in size to that of the United States.

The creation of the European Higher Education Area was to a large degree predicated upon the adoption of a common degree structure known as the 3+2+3 (a first cycle of three years, a second cycle of two years and a third cycle of three years). This, it was felt, would make credentials more easily transferable across national borders, both for purposes of employment and in terms of degree progression. Although the Bologna process began in the late 1990s, progress on the harmonization of degree lengths took some time to become a reality. In many countries, especially those that did not have three cycles and possessed very long first degree cycles, there was considerable resistance to the introduction of the new degree structure. However, since the adoption of the Bergen statement in 2005, progress has been much quicker and, in the words of one observer "the Bologna Process has triggered off enormous activities for higher education reforms, and substantial efforts are undertaken for structural reforms in terms of a convergent model (Teichler 2004, 9)[15]".

As Kohler (2009) has noted, the creation of a continental higher education area was primarily about improving pan-continental labour mobility which was previously impeded by the plethora of credential types and names and which made it difficult for employers in one country to assess labour skills and competencies gained in foreign countries. But Bologna ended up having some significant side effects in terms of education. The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) appears to have substantially simplified the process of taking terms or years abroad. The harmonization of systems of credit has in turn also simplified the creation of joint programs offered across two or more institutions in different countries, thus guaranteeing that students will have an international experience over the course of their degree.

Of course, internationalizations initiatives need not be accompanied by major policy initiatives like Bologna. Simple supply and demand has been a major factor behind international mobility for years. This could be seen not only in terms of the influx of students from Asia and Africa into Europe and North America over the past decade, but also in America itself, where demand for year-abroad programs also grew substantially. Goucher College in Baltimore was perhaps exceptional in its making a semester of study abroad a condition of graduation, but there is a general trend in the United States (particularly at small, expensive Liberal Arts colleges) to encourage and accommodate much more international experience during a student's education.

Globalization and its attendant requirements for a workforce which is at ease in multiple languages and cultural settings are clearly powerful spurs to the development of internationalization. It is presumably no coincidence that the one area of the academy where internationalization has most thoroughly worked itself into basic curriculum design is in Master's of Business Administration (MBA). Nearly all the major MBA schools have linkages with other schools around the globe, and offer programs with significant periods of study abroad. No other field of study even comes close in terms of internationalization.

One area where internationalization has not, despite all the talk, made a great deal of headway is in terms of changing the basic higher education experience at a curricular level. Although great strides have been made in terms of encouraging and facilitating point-to-point transfer of individual students for limited periods of time, it remains the case that only a very small minority of students actually use schemes like Erasmus to move from place to place, and that this is likely to be the case for some time to come. The great promise of the internationalization of higher education is that it should be able to deliver a more international education without a student actually having to leave his or her institution. Obviously, mobility programs do help in this respect, as students at a receiving institution certainly benefit from having the perspectives of in-bound foreign students added to their classrooms. And, of course, the power of ICTs do allow students to interact with students and lecturers around the world in real time. But a truly international experience in higher education requires institutions to begin thinking as MBA programs do and truly integrate internationalization into the fabric of each and every program, not just in terms of encouraging point-to-point mobility but in infusing the entire curriculum with an internationalist outlook. There are very few, if any, examples of institutions internationalizing themselves to this degree, but it is the logical next step in the development of international higher education.

Institutional Change: Convergence or Diversification?

While the trends for students are relatively easy to describe, the same is not true of institutions. Trends among institutions are simultaneously pushing in opposite directions – some towards convergence and harmonization and others towards diversification. To some extent, the different trends are geographical: with the EU broadly heading towards more harmonization, and North America broadly moving towards more diversification. But institutions are complex entities, and within the same institution some dimensions of activity might be subject to convergence trends and others might be subject to diversification trends.

On the one hand, there were a number of trends – primarily those related to the economy and to massification – which were pushing institutions to become more diversified, and to meet an ever-expanding set of niches for education and training. On the other hand, there were pressures which were pushing institutions towards more standardization. One was the European process known as "Bologna", which achieved impressive results in the last decade with respect to standardizing degree lengths and structures across Europe. Another was the increasing importance within the academy of research production as the sine qua non of scholarly life and the desire of most institutions to become more research-intensive (a process that was substantially accelerated by the spread of published university rankings). The result was a complex overlay of pressures both for and against diversification.

Forces Acting to Increase Diversification of Institutions

In favour of diversification was the long-term shift of mission for higher education systems that began decades ago: the shift from universities as elite institutions with a limited and specific educational mission to the main engine of the knowledge-based economy (Altbach 1998). This is partly due to massification; as participation has widened and institutions have to serve a larger and larger student clientele, they have also had to provide an increasingly diverse range of services and programs. But changes in the structure of labour and the economy have contributed as well. This trend is of much older provenance that the current decade, but certainly the last ten years have witnessed the entrenchment of this perspective. Institutions now are required to meet varied economic expectations around program delivery, accountability, and training for work in the labour market. There are a number of implications flowing from these trends (Guri-Rosenblit, 2004). Noted higher education scholar Philip Altbach described the diversification process in the following way:

> Whether planned or not, massification contributes to creation of different kinds of academic institutions serving diverse population, with varying quality, purposes, and resources. No nation can afford to educate all of its students in traditional universities, nor can all of those seeing postsecondary education meet the admissions standards of such institutions. Typically, traditional universities are at the pinnacle of the system, with less selective universities, postsecondary vocational institutions, and a range of other specialized schools serving a diverse clientele (Altbach, 2008, xviii).

Widening participation in Europe meant providing access to more under-represented groups of students (students with disabilities, rural students, low-income students and adults, children of immigrants), and improving pathways to degrees from outside the formal higher education system. This meant a larger focus on part-time students, recognition of both formal and non-formal prior learning, bridge programs between occupations and (sometimes shorter) degrees, all of which increased the complexity and diversity of the system. With higher education systems themselves facing an increasingly complex series of demands, there was much more space for individual institutional missions to become diversified and specialized as part of a collective effort to meet a broader set of societal demands.

Another major factor in diversification – in Portugal, East-central Europe and the former Soviet Union at least – has been the increasing presence of private institutions (some for-profit, some not) within the system. Many of these are designed to educate a very different type of student than traditional universities, either teaching specialized subjects or serving students in geographically isolated areas. Though these newer institutions are often seen as being of lesser prestige because of they are younger, smaller in size and (usually) narrower in program offerings than the older institutions, it was in fact precisely their smallness and narrowness that made it possible for them to offer higher education to these smaller communities. Had they been constructed on the older model, they would not have been economically feasible.

Part of the massification drive has meant putting institutions of higher education in ever-more remote regions. Once there, institutional missions are rarely "just" about access and teaching: instead, they include what Kazlauskiene (2007) has called "regional engagement". An institution with a regional engagement mission needs to forge tight links with the local economy (and hence local stakeholders), both so that it can adapt programs to the local labour market and so that it can more effectively transfer knowledge, skills and technology to the community. Institutions tend to benefit from strong community support and revenue opportunities which come from student enrolments and partnerships with local business; communities benefit from improved human capital, possible spin-off businesses and a gateway to the wider world through the institution's multiple connections to the global academic community (OECD, 2007). The result was a type of institution which the OECD referred to as being "globally competitive and locally engaged", playing an increasingly important role as providers of knowledge, facilitators of cluster development and key actors in regional innovation systems" (ibid, 31). These new types of institution are not universally-loved: there are concerns that their missions are not necessarily compatible with traditional academic value and that the relentless focus on massification is leading to the deterioration of academic working conditions. Be that as it may, it seems unlikely that the rise of these institutions will be reversed.

Forces Pushing for Convergence

On the other side of the coin are the forces pushing for greater unity in the provision of higher education. The most notable expression of this has been the desire for the greater production of scientific research and the trend for more institutions in Europe and Canada to try to emulate the model of the American research university. There are, broadly, two sets of mutually reinforcing reasons for this.

The first reason has to do with the changing nature of the global economy. The notion of the knowledge-based economy has dramatically influenced the role of higher education institutions, especially the ways in which they are managed and envisioned. One of the most important roles is now the production of knowledge. Although many observers (*e.g.,* Friedman, 2005; Cairncross, 1997) have predicted the "death of distance" in a weightless economy, this seems to have been truer of manufacturing than of innovation. In fact, the geographical agglomeration of talent in the form of scientists and venture capital may be more important now than ever before, and large research-intensive universities are among the most effective aggregators of highly qualified personnel. Though this was understood by European policymakers before this decade, it was not clear until quite recently decade exactly how far European universities were behind American ones were in the production of knowledge and the agglomeration of talent. But thanks in part to ranking exercises like the Shanghai Academic Ranking of World Universities and others which measure such things as publication counts, citation counts and patent awards, the scale of the gap has become much clearer. And as the gap has become clearer, there have been attempts to close it (see relevant parts of the paper on *quality*).

The second reason has to do with academic prestige and the norms of the academic profession. The coin of academia is reputation – personal, scholarly reputation. And reputation within academia is earned primarily through research. This has always been the case, but the advent of advanced information technology and the internet has magnified the effect. Some prestige can of course be gained through teaching, but such prestige is always a local affair – teaching is a rival good and there are only so many students who can fit in a lecture theatre to listen to a great teacher. Scholarly communication via published peer-reviewed research, on the other hand, is a non-rival good – it can be transmitted around the world instantaneously to as many people as care to read it. The possibilities of research as a way to improve one's reputation are thus exponentially larger than teaching – hence, the incentive for academics is to invest as much of their time as possible in research. However, not all institutions are able to provide academics with equivalent opportunities for research, either in terms of material resources or time away from teaching.

This is where the two reasons converge: government policy in many countries over the past decade has increasingly privileged the production of scientific research by enriching the funds available for researchers. Institutions thus have a pecuniary interest in getting their staff more involved in research. This coincides neatly with academics' own interests. The result is a situation where institutions and academics both have incentives to intensify their own research activities and hence more closely replicate the American research university model.

In those systems that have opted for a set of hierarchical or vertical distinction with very distinct levels of degree-granting institutions (*i.e.,* universities, colleges and polytechnics), one of the biggest policy challenges in non-unitary systems has been the introduction of vocationally-oriented institutions within the higher education system. One of the most significant challenges for these systems has been to avoid "academic drift" where institutions established as vocational, career-focused centres work to aspire to more "elite" academic and research status (Santiago et al., 2008, 97). This has been an especial challenge in Canada, where this drift has now resulted in the

creation of several types of non-traditional bachelor's degrees delivered entirely outside the framework of a university, and the creation of new types of universities which offer everything from vocational apprenticeships to master's degrees.

Similarly, the last decade has seen an increase in the focus on graduate education, especially in fields related to science and technology as governments and institutions seek to support the knowledge-economy. As Ellen Hazelkorn notes "...PhD students are seen, by all governments, as a talent metric vital for economic development and innovation." (2008, 9). This could present another place for possible future dissidence. Especially as government and institutional focus continues to be on graduate student attraction and support for commercialization of their research, graduate students possess more power than is currently being exercised.

The other major force for harmonization over the past decade – in Europe at least – has been the Bologna Process. The move to a common degree structure and program lengths has by design reduced the diversity of programs across the continent. And European harmonization does not end with Bologna. The "Tuning" process, which was initiated by faculty at the institutional level shortly after the signing of the Bologna Declaration, is an attempt to determine the desired learning outcomes of higher education on a programmatic basis (*i.e.,* in areas such as business education or chemistry) using a methodology that produces 'reference points' for statements of learning outcomes, levels of learning, and desired competences. Desired learning outcomes are agreed upon through a broad based consultative process that includes stakeholders inside higher education institutions and external to them (*i.e.,* employers, graduates). The criteria-referenced competency statements are not 'straightjackets' designed to standardize curricula. They do represent an effort to develop a common "language" for academic-subject specific knowledge and generic competencies, accompanied by benchmarking at the discipline level, but they do not prescribe the curricular and pedagogical means to do it.

So what can we say overall about convergence and diversification in Europe and North America? Clearly, there are a number of contradictory pressures facing universities. Catering to student choice is pushing institutions and systems to provide more individualized, niche degrees while catering to student mobility is pushing institutions and systems to ensure convergence processes like Bologna which promote harmonization of program lengths and program outcomes. National higher education systems have embraced contradictory policies – both in support of elite and mass education which makes those systems unstable (Bleiklie, 2004). This is perhaps nothing new – institutions have always faced contradictory pressures from a variety of stakeholders. What is perhaps most salient about the past decade is how many of the pressures for both convergence and diversification were from global or supra-national sources rather than national or local ones. But this may not be permanent: Teichler (2004) argues that structural changes within higher education systems may be cyclical, with "segmentation and hierarchization" occurring when systems fear an over-supply of graduates and convergence of programs and reductions in differences between institutions occurring when demand for education decreases. If this is correct, then the coming demographic shift and the declining numbers of students of University age in much of our region may go into reverse in the next few years.

Governance

Developments in the field of governance of higher education have been highly uneven over the past decade. In North America, where institutions began the decade with considerable amounts of institutional autonomy, there were few substantial changes in governance arrangements; indeed, governance barely rated as an issue there. Western Europe saw more change but it was in Eastern and East-central Europe, which inherited some very centralized decision-making structures from communist times, that the changes were the greatest. In a very general kind of way, Europe moved towards a North American model of institutional governance in that institutions became more autonomous in their decision-making and governments took less of a direct role in the management of institution. But governance is multi-dimensional, and in many ways Europe remained quite unlike North America.

Broadly speaking, one of the greatest shifts in institutional governance in Europe over the past ten years has been the devolution of managerial authority from national governments to higher education institutions (Crosier et al., 2007; Eurydice, 2008; Eurydice, 2006; Eurydice, 2000; Stensaker et al., 2006). Focus on this broad trend, however, obscures the extent to which higher education governance has shifted. Far more has occurred than a simple transfer of authority between static entities. Institutions have changed themselves as governments have developed new methods of 'guidance from a distance' that replace direct management. Governments have not simply transferred authority to traditional collegially self-governing universities; rather, they have transferred authority to an entirely new managerial level that has largely superseded collegial self-governance (Eurydice, 2008). Simultaneously, governments have moved toward greater emphasis on quality assurance and accountability structures, enhancing rather than reducing their ability to direct higher education systems (Santiago et al., 2008). While they have increasingly devolved day-to-day decision-making powers to a new level of university managers, governments have arguably intensified the extent to which they oversee and direct higher education.

The set of actors involved in higher education governance has also shifted tremendously. Whereas discussions of governance in the 1980s through the 1990s focused mainly on the changing nature of university management, state oversight, and market forces, this last decade was marked by an increased focus on the broadening international and network aspects of governance (Eurydice, 2008; Santiago et al., 2008; Stensaker et al., 2006). However, though international network actors have had a growing influence, ministries of education and institutional leaders remain the most potent actors in higher education governance (Stensaker et al., 2006). This section will focus on the evolving roles of these primary actors.

Changes to national level governance of higher education institutions and systems have been driven largely by the acknowledgment of the role that higher education plays in economic development and social well-being. Across the Europe Region, there is broad consensus at the national level that higher education is a primary economic driver. This, combined with the general shift to managing by outputs rather than inputs, had led governments to begin to demand specific market-relevant outputs from higher education institutions. To that end, they have developed a number of

governance mechanisms to ensure that demands are met. To a considerable extent, these new instruments use monetary incentives to leverage desired system outcomes. Such governance mechanisms utilized by governments include performance-based funding for teaching and learning activities, targeted funding to achieve explicit objectives (*e.g.,* development of partnerships with the surrounding region), competitive research funding; objectives-based contractual arrangements with institutions; and publication of information on institution's performance (Santiago, 2008). In effect, the state has stopped trying to run institutions directly and provided institutions with incentives, but it continues to maintain control by managing through incentives. (Warden, 2008).

It should be noted that incentive funding has not, for the most part, replaced block grants or input-formula funding (*i.e.,* based on enrolments) in most of our region (Eurydice, 2008). But then again, it does not need to – most institutions are working with such small financial cushions that even small amounts of incentive funding can cause them to re-orient their activities significantly. Output-based funding formulae are most common for research, where outputs can easily be counted in terms of citations, publications, patents, etc. Only Denmark has gone to the extent of relying on output-based measures (*e.g.,* degrees awarded) to award the majority of its funding for teaching activities (Vossensteyn, 2004).

These processes often come into effect as instruments of wider revisions to governance policy, "In some [European] countries, reforms in these areas were introduced in the form of broad framework acts that encompassed the entire domain of institutional autonomy, finance and quality control (Eurydice, 2000, p. 87)." Thus, while institutional autonomy is intended to give universities sufficient latitude to explore new approaches to program delivery, management, fundraising, and partnership building, it needs to be understood that it is being promoted in the context of efforts to have university managers view their activities in the context of wider system goals. The overarching phenomenon of new institutional managerial control in the context of increase external expectation is often referred to as the "new managerialism." Brown (2007) uses the term as follows:

> ...to indicate that a more conscious and systematic effort is made by the authorities at a university... to manage the affairs of the institution, including the activities of the academic staff, and to fulfill certain overall organizational objectives rather than leaving outcomes to be determined simply by the interplay of the various interests within the institution. The shift reflects the increased external stakeholder interest in higher education that has accompanied massification and the knowledge economy with the central role for universities as producers of knowledge. (p. 22)

Even though the transfer of control to university managers has occurred unevenly across Europe, some trends in the division of governance responsibility between institution and state have emerged. The receipt of governance responsibly has placed institutions in increasingly complex webs of external obligation. (Stensaker et al., 2006). University managers have found themselves in control of former state agencies (universities) that are now corporations, legal persons (Santiago et al., 2008, 91).

Transitions toward professionalized management are proceeding across the Europe Region, albeit at different paces due to the varying pace of governance reforms and the fact that the legal position of institutions varied considerably across the Europe Region prior to reform (Eurydice, 2008).

The extent of the change in governance, in Western Europe at least, is observable from two reports produced over the course of the decade. The first, published by Eurydice in 2000, was entitled *Two Decades of Reform in Higher Education in Europe: 1980 Onwards*. In this report, Eurydice profiled the evolution of institutional autonomy from 1980 to 2000. In many European countries during that time period, full or partial autonomy in most of the critical areas of institutional activity (budgeting, hiring/firing, administration, and course planning) was granted to higher education institutions by the State (Eurydice, 2000 p. 91). Few European states included in the 2000 Eurydice study retained direct state-control in any of these areas; however, the study did not include part of East-Central and Eastern Europe, where the state retained a greater level of control.

The second report, published by the Centre for higher Education Policy Studies (CHEPS) and entitled *The Extent and Impact of Higher Education Governance Reform across Europe*, looked at a slightly different set of factors, but still looked at five broad features of governance in 32 European countries and assessed how they increased in importance, decreased in importance or stayed the same between 1995 and 2005 by surveying university managers.

A central conclusion of the study was that, “traditional notions of collegiality and consensus based decision making are under pressure, making room for ‘businesslike’ leadership and management, aimed among other things at professionalizing institutional governance and management” (Stensaker et al., 2006, p. 27). Table 3 below presents an abridged version of the study’s conclusions.

Table 3. Changes in Institutional Governance in Europe 1995-2005.

Country	Competition	State Regulation	Academic Self-Governance	Managerial Governance	Stakeholder Guidance
Austria	Some Increase	Some Decrease	Some Decrease	Some Increase	Some Increase
Belgium (FL)	Large Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase
Belgium (FC	Large Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase
Bulgaria	No Change	Some Decrease	No Change	No Change	No Change
Croatia	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change	Some Increase
Cyprus	No Change	No Change	No Change	Some Increase	No Change
Czech	Large Increase	Some Increase	Large Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase
Denmark	Some Increase	Some Decrease	Some Decrease	Some Increase	Some Increase
Estonia	Some Increase	No Change	No Change	Some Increase	Some Increase
Finland	Some Increase	No Change	No Change	No Change	Large Decrease

Country	Competition	State Regulation	Academic Self-Governance	Managerial Governance	Stakeholder Guidance
France	Large Increase	No Change	Some Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase
Germany	Large Increase	Some Increase	No Change	Some Increase	Some Increase
Iceland	Some Increase	No Change	No Change	No Change	No Change
Hungary	Some Increase	Some Decrease	Some Increase	No Change	No Change
Ireland	Large Increase	Some Increase	Some Decrease	Large Increase	Some Increase
Italy	Some Increase	Some Decrease	Some Decrease	No Change	No Change
Latvia	Some Increase	No Change	No Change	Some Increase	Some Increase
Liechtenstein	Some Increase	Large Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase
Lithuania	No Change	Large Increase	Large Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase
Malta	No Change	No Change	No Change	Some Increase	Some Increase
Netherlands	Large Increase	Some Increase	No Change	Large Increase	Large Increase
Norway	Some Increase	Some Decrease	Some Decrease	Some Increase	Some Increase
Poland	Large Increase	Some Increase	Large Increase	Large Increase	Some Increase
Portugal	Some Increase	Some Decrease	Some Increase	Some Increase	No Change
Romania	Some Increase	Some Increase	Large Increase	Large Increase	Some Increase
Slovakia	Some Increase	Some Decrease	Some Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase
Slovenia	No Change	Some Decrease	No Change	Some Increase	No Change
Spain	Some Increase	Large Increase	Some Increase	No Change	No Change
Sweden	Some Increase	Some Increase	Large Decrease	Some Increase	No Change
Turkey	Some Increase	Some Increase	Some Increase	No Change	No Change
United Kingdom	Some Increase	No Change	No Change	No Change	Some Increase

Source: CHEPS, 2006.

The CHEPS survey of university managers found that institutions tend to possess a great deal of control over some areas of responsibility, whereas in other areas institutions had little influence. Among other things, the study concluded that:

– Institutions' freedom to define their institutional missions is typically constrained constitutionally or by government priority.

– Organization of top-level university management is often determined by government, but the degree of government determination of internal governance structures below the very top is highly heterogeneous across Europe.

– The introduction of new study programs is largely the prerogative of institutions, except with regard to some mandated professional programs.

– With important national oversight, quality assurance in the area of teaching and learning is largely an institutional responsibility shared by university management and the academy.

– With regard to budget allocation, there is great variability in the extent to which institutions must follow government guidelines or choose to follow them.

– With regard to employment and staff, it was found that across Europe, institutions have considerable autonomy in defining conditions and terms of employment, though national guidelines for staff compensation are common.

– In the area of student selection and enrolment level determination, state involvement across Europe varies widely. In some countries, governments still determine both enrolment levels and entrance requirements where as in others these responsibilities have been devolved to institutions, with many countries falling somewhere in-between.

– In the area of public-private partnership development, there is very little regulation and institutions tend to have a great deal of latitude.

Still, while the broad direction of policy changes is in favour of greater autonomy, current levels vary a great deal from country to country. At one end, the levels of autonomy are similar to those enjoyed by institutions in North America (which, on average, exhibit considerably more autonomy than those in Europe). At the other end, in parts of Eastern Europe, there is still significant government involvement in universities, though even here the movement is towards greater autonomy. One region, however, is somewhat anomalous. In most of Europe and North America, greater institutional autonomy has been accompanied with a greater degree of managerial governance inside the university, with stronger central administrations, along the lines set out by Clark Kerr in his famous missive about multiversities (1963). However, in south-eastern Europe, and specifically in much of the former Yugoslavia, movement in this direction has been absent. The administrative tradition inherited from the former regime was not the extreme centralism found in many neighbouring countries – rather it was the extreme decentralism that characterised so many Titoist institutions. This has persisted into the new era, making it difficult for institutions to properly take advantage of commonalities among programs of study and internal economies of scale.

To sum up: over the past decade, institutional autonomy has expanded across Europe, though unevenly and in ways that are specific to each national context. This autonomy has brought with it a host of new responsibilities to both society and state. The expansion of institutional autonomy is changing universities themselves. A new managerial level has grown at the top of European universities for the purpose of directing institutions to newly defined societal obligations while managing engagement with new areas of institutional activity such as enrolment management, capital investment, and the building of partnerships with the private sector. In the process, collegial self-governance has been relegated to the specific areas of direct to concern to the Academy, such as assurance of the quality of teaching and learning and the introduction of new fields of study. Though it is impossible to say whether policy in Europe will continue to devolve ever greater powers to institutions, it does seem unlikely in the short term at least that the trend will reverse itself so that the state

can re-assume greater direct control. In that sense at least, the past decade seems to have brought the North American and European models of university management closer together.

The devolution of decision-making and responsibility from government to institutions has not, however, simplified system-level governance – quite the contrary, in fact. As noted earlier, it is not that governments have stopped steering the system: they have just shifted from doing so directly to doing so indirectly by incentivizing certain outcomes. But this is a major innovation and most governments are still on a learning curve with respect to understanding how to use this new steering mechanism. The first major implication of the devolution of power is a need for much more information on institutional inputs, throughputs and outcomes. Evidence-driven policy requires a bare minimum of evidence to work, and this simply does not exist in many places on many issues. This is not only an issue in terms of looking at outputs; in some countries governments have attempted to use student choice as a lever to improve quality and efficiency, but in the absence of useable, detailed data on conditions and results at each institutions, it is hard to see how student choice can achieve this.

But the problems of system-level governance are not limited to a lack of usable data. As noted earlier, higher education systems are being asked to take on increasingly diverse set of missions. Some of these missions involve co-ordination across different policy areas – such as the secondary education system, or the health system. And with institutions now having been given more autonomy, co-ordination takes on a much more complex character.

Marketing and Commercialization

One of the most remarked-upon developments over the past decade on both sides of the Atlantic has been the increasing attention paid by institutions to the marketing of their efforts. Institutions are much more likely now than a decade ago to be involved in activities of advertising, branding, and marketing which leave some people with more traditional views about universities quite uncomfortable.

In part, the new focus on marketing is a simple matter of a search for dollars. As systems of higher education expanded rapidly, per-student funding in general declined. In North America and Western Europe, this happened some time ago (but created problems which continue to this day); in east-central and eastern Europe it happened in this past decade. In those countries where institutions were permitted to charge tuition fees to offset this drop in per-student income, attracting new students was an important financial survival mechanism. This search for students has been accentuated by demographic shifts: as youth become scarcer, so the competition for students becomes fiercer. These shortages need not be on a national level; in Canada, institutions in large urban centres are badly over-subscribed while institutions in more rural areas, and parts of the country that are in long-term economic decline, are having trouble maintaining their enrolments. A more intensive marketing campaign, complete with institutional branding and advertising, is the result.

Some argue that the focus on the branding of institutions and national systems of higher education is illustrative of a broader trend that has unfolded over the past two decades: a shift in the rationale for higher education toward increasing emphasis on

the private nature of post-secondary education. Entin and others refer to global economic changes beginning in the 1970s that have, over the last 30 years, impacted higher education (Entin et al., 2005: 26; Giroux, 2002; Lafer, 2003; Lafer, 2001) through budget cuts and increases in tuition. Altbach (2008) discusses this trend:

> The implications of the domination of the private good argument in higher education are immense... Public higher education has increasingly been asked to depend on student tuition and entrepreneurial projects to support itself. The state has systemically withdrawn its financial support for higher education. The results of this are clear worldwide. Increased tuition fees for students, less basic research, and more academic entrepreneurialism characterize academe in most places.

Or, as Lafer (2001) puts it: universities have moved away from the "community-of-scholars model, fashioning themselves instead in the image of private corporations." No doubt, these views are true to some extent: but it is worth remembering that in most cases, the cause of the lower per-student funding (and hence all the dreaded "commercialization") was the massification and universalization of higher education.

To the extent that commercialization is about a "battle for students", there are a number of other trends which are encouraging institutions to move in this direction. One, obviously, is demographics: young people are becoming scarcer in much of our region and even in countries with growing populations, some areas are becoming depopulated. This makes the task of increasing enrolment that much more difficult and encourages institutions to intensify their efforts to seek students at home. It also leads them to seek students abroad. In Europe, thanks to the Erasmus program and the generally greater levels of mobility among, internationalization has long been a reality. But increasingly, and not just in Europe, the search for students is taking institutions into the developing world. Again, taking in students from abroad is not new, but its purpose has morphing from being a source of cultural exchange to being a source of foreign currency. But to attract students from abroad requires intensive marketing – students in China will have little knowledge about most European or North American universities, so institutions wishing to recruit need to invest heavily to promote "brand recognition" (at least for those institutions whose existing brand recognition is less than that of Harvard of Yale or Oxford). At least some of the institutional obsession with rankings needs to be understood in this light: since students in remote parts of the world will have few sources of information about education in the west, these independent and purportedly authoritative data sources take on huge importance: indeed, as Hazelkorn (2008) notes, a very high proportion of institutions actually use the results of various rankings as part of their publicity material.

Along with this need for advertising and branding has come a trend of investing in higher levels of services and facilities (such as more modern dormitories or recreation facilities), all of which make can be justified as making for a better "learning environment" but can equally be criticized as being "non-essential". These higher levels of services, naturally, bring with them higher levels of costs, which tend to be borne by students.

The Use of ICTs in Higher Education

As in the rest of society, the use of ICTs has increased significantly in higher education over the past decade. Broadly, it can be said that ICTs have had impacts in three quite distinct areas of higher education activities – research collaborations, institutional management and instruction. These three issues will each be treated in turn.

One of the most important outcomes of increased ICT in academia has been the facilitation of research collaborations between researchers or teams at different universities. Though obviously collaboration between colleagues at different institutions was well known prior to the past decade, the use of ICTs is now enhancing the possibilities of inter-institutional collaborations immensely. To a much greater extent than ten years ago, research collaborations are now taking place between institutions rather than simply within them. This has made much more functional the notion of "networks of excellence" – it has also made it much more difficult to claim that a particular piece of research actually originated at a particular institution, since articles are more likely to have authors at multiple sites.

It is not clear if the past decade has witnessed an increase in expenditures on ICTs for management and administrative services in the past ten years, but it is clear that there is a great deal more computing power available for these tasks. Institutional managers certainly have much more data available at their fingertips to help them guide their institutions; students can certainly interact with their institutions more easily (*e.g.,* registering and paying for courses on-line). Yet it is striking that with all this data been collected and transferred within institutions how little *common* data there is amongst institutions and how weak some national data systems are with respect to education and education expenditures. This is, perhaps, to underline the role that governments still need to play in order to enforce common reporting rules.

But the greatest promise of ICT was a shift in the way learning occurs. Much more information is now available electronically via the World Wide Web than was the case a decade ago; students at even the tiniest university have access to far more information than was the case a decade ago, and this to some extent levels the playing field somewhat between smaller and larger institutions. ICT can also be employed within the classroom itself (through interactive presentations using laptops or "clickers") and can act as an enhancement to the in-class experience through technologies such as BlackBoard and podcasting.

The point of all this is in fact to transform teaching and to change its production function. Most professors in our region are still essentially using the same technology that Socrates and his competitors the sophists were using in the Athenian agora 2500 years ago – the lecture. The lecture conveys information through verbalization on the part of an expert. Traditionally, there have only been two ways that a teacher could increase his or her productivity: either by stuffing more students into the classroom, or by enhancing the out-of-class experience by making more related knowledge available to students so that they may absorb it in their own good time outside of class (in this respect, Google and the world of information on the web is simply an extension of the earlier technologies of the book and the library). In theory, ICTs can make learning more efficient by allowing more interaction inside a class (thus allowing both

the teachers and the taught to assess progress on the fly) and more collaborative learning on the one hand, and by extending the boundaries of the classroom (both spatial and temporal) by permitting more asynchronous communication (*e.g.,* e-mail) amongst a learning community. These kinds of efficiencies are important not only to improve student learning outcomes, but also to permit some reductions in per-student costs (Foster, 2007). Dykman (2008) notes the possibilities inherent in the "unbundling of teaching roles" by saying:

> Unbundling can significantly lower the costs of education in the long term through achieving economies of scale by isolating and standardizing parts of the teaching process. The development of academic content to students, the interactions with students, and assessment of student performance are functions of teaching that are essentially unbundled in an online environment, because each of these is supported by the professor by different subsystems of the technology (Dykman et al., 2008, 12).

In practice, though, effecting this shift has not been so easy. It is very easy for ICTs in education to simply be "papered over" and existing course, the addition of technology merely a decorative add-on to a continuation of a 2500 year-old technology. For ICT to genuinely change the classroom experience requires truly re-thinking pedagogy in order to embed the old material in a new way which is both engaging and genuinely takes advantage of the possibilities of the new medium. It is emphatically not simply a matter of posting lecture notes on-line (which is what some early ICT efforts amounted to). The problem is that most institutions do not have the expertise to really make this change themselves and while some for-profit companies such as BlackBoard have tried to work with institutions to help them adapt to the new pedagogy, there is concern about the long-term implications of in effect outsourcing the platform on which curricula are delivered. The result is much less change in teaching styles and technologies than one might have hoped. Even major acts of "academic philanthropy" in this area (Guri-Rosenblit & Sebkova, 2004), such as MIT's Open Courseware Project (in which the university put all of its curriculum on-line for free use by any and all interested parties), have failed to spur major changes in the way curricula are developed.

One place where technology has taken off, however, is in what used to be called "distance-learning" but which is now increasingly called "e-learning" (in large part because distance education's clients are no longer necessarily that distant and their barriers may be temporal rather than spatial). Since the lecture has never really been the dominant technology in distance education, there has been less resistance to the adoption of new technologies and new ways of embedding curricula. The adoption of these new technologies has been especially significant at the level of the Master's Degree among working professionals. This is partly because this type of learner is well-suited to a more independent learning style and the "just-in-time" delivery of information and instruction, and partly because these kinds of programs are more likely to be run on a commercial basis and to have large amounts of money available to them for development.

The full potential of e-learning is still relatively unexplored (Altbach, 2008, Dkyman et al., 2008) and at the undergraduate level may remain unexplored for

some time. Yet despite this, the implications of increased use of ICTs in teaching are relatively clear. The first is that it the locus of teaching need not be a physical space; a host of new possibilities for distance education may be opened up, which could be a significant boon for institutions wishing to partner with institutions in developing countries to satiate the large and growing demand for higher education in these countries. Institutions can already be classified as being either “bricks and mortar” institutions (representing the conventional model of the university) “clicks and bricks” institutions, (integrating existing campus infrastructure with computer technology; and “clicks” institutions, offering learning only online (Phipps and Wellness, 2001; Levine, 2000). Currently, institutional prestige is very hard to come by for this third type of education. But this may not last forever and there are certainly more possibilities than there used to be for collaborations among different types of institutions to combine the prestige and quality control of older “name” universities and younger, less prestigious but more technologically adept ones. But notions of quality and processes of quality assurance may take some time to catch up with the possibilities of the technology.

Changes in the Financing of Higher Education

All of what we have been talking about to date – massification, universalization, diversification and quality – cost money. Money for higher education comes from three sources, which in order of importance are: governments (or taxpayers) via grants voted by the legislature; students via tuition fees; and other entities via cost-recovery exercises and revenue-generating ancillary operations. The dominant discourse about higher education is that there has been a shift in financing from public to private sources and that this has had serious consequences for institutions. As we shall see, this is partially true – but that the story is actually considerably more complicated and nuanced.

First, the issue of the public-to-private shift. As shown in Table 4 (which uses data from the most recent edition of the OECD’s *Education at a Glance*), there has indeed been a shift away from public financing and towards private finances. But overall the shift has not been especially large. Indeed, in some countries (most notably in the United States) between 2000 and 2005 the pendulum actually began to swing the other way in favour of a greater share of public financing.

Table 4. Trends in the Proportions of Total Expenditure on Tertiary Education Coming From Public Sources, 1995-2005.

	1995	2000	2005
Austria	96.1	96.3	92.9
Belgium	n/a	91.5	90.6
Canada [2]	56.6	61.0	n/a
Czech Republic	71.5	85.4	81.2
Denmark [2]	99.4	97.6	96.7
Finland	97.8	97.2	96.1
France	85.3	84.4	83.6
Germany	89.2	88.2	85.3
Greece [2]	n/a	99.7	96.7
Hungary	80.3	76.7	78.5
Iceland [2]	n/a	94.9	91.2
Ireland	69.7	79.2	84.0
Italy	82.9	77.5	69.6
Netherlands	80.6	78.2	77.6
Norway	93.7	96.3	n/a
Poland	n/a	66.6	74.0
Portugal	96.5	92.5	68.1
Slovak Republic [2]	95.4	91.2	77.3
Spain	74.4	74.4	77.9
Sweden	93.6	91.3	88.2
United Kingdom	80.0	67.7	66.9
United States	37.4	31.1	34.7
OECD average	79.7	78.0	73.8

Source: OECD, Education at a Glance, 2008

However, simply looking at the changes in the proportion of financing does not tell the whole story. For while it is true that private funds (which are primarily but not exclusively derived from student fees) are playing a slightly more important role now than they did a decade ago, the fact remains that almost all countries have poured a great deal of additional public funds into tertiary education in the past decade. Indeed, in virtually every country in the OECD, public expenditure was higher, in real terms, in 2005 than it was in both 2000 and 1995. Across the OECD, the average country saw an increase in funding of almost 48 percent between 1995 and 2005. However, there was a significant contrast between countries in the

European Union's old core (that is, its original six members), and those in North America and the rest of Europe. For reasons that are not entirely clear, growth in spending in the EU's original six was much slower than elsewhere in the region. The hypothesis that this slower growth was related to increase private funding can be ruled out, however; a look back at Table 4 shows that in none of these countries was the increased share of private financing anything beyond the OECD average.

Table 5. Real Changes in Total Public Funding 1995-2005 (2000 = 100).

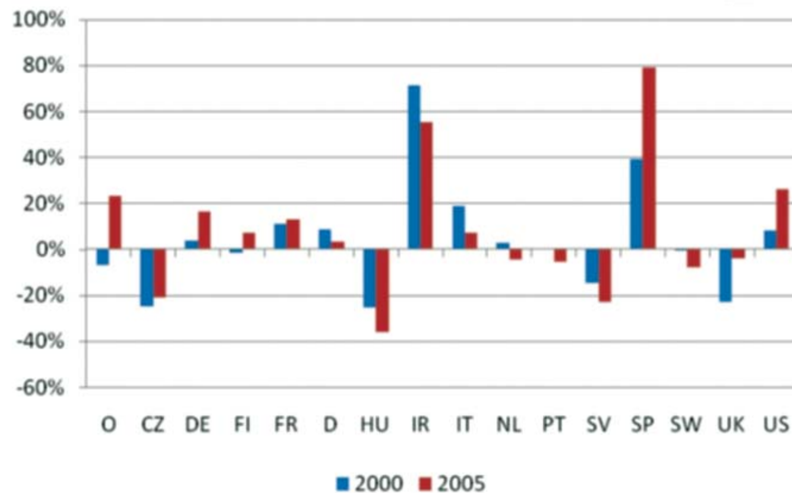
	1995	2000	2005
Austria	97	100	129
Belgium	n/a	100	101
Canada	69	100	n/a
Czech Republic	86	100	147
Denmark	93	100	115
Finland	91	100	114
France	93	100	106
Germany	96	100	102
Greece	63	100	228
Hungary	78	100	129
Iceland	n/a	100	170
Ireland	50	100	109
Italy	85	100	100
Netherlands	97	100	110
Norway	107	100	117
Poland	89	100	193
Portugal	76	100	101
Slovak Republic	85	100	127
Spain	72	100	119
Sweden	84	100	111
United Kingdom	116	100	148
United States	85	100	132
OECD average	85	100	127

Source: OECD, Education at a Glance, 2008

But if public funding has increased, so have student numbers. Even if public funding has increased, if public-funding *per student* has decreased, then institutions may still perceive the past decade as having been a time of restraint. Figure 4 shows

the change in funding per student relative to 1995 in 2000 (blue bars) and 2005 (red bars). Here, a somewhat different picture emerges. Two countries for which data on student numbers and finances are available for all three reference years stand out as having had massive increases in public funding per student – Ireland and Spain. Three countries from East-central Europe – all of which experienced very substantial increases in student numbers over the decade – saw substantial decreases in public funding per-student. Austria and the United Kingdom saw decreases in the last half of the 1990s, followed by substantial increases in the first half of this decade. Most other countries in the graph saw very small little change in public funding per-student over the decade. It should be noted, however, that several important countries are excluded from this graph because of data gaps; of these, both Greece and Poland stand out as having made very large new public investments in tertiary education.

Figure 4. Change in public funding per student since 1995.



Source: OECD, *Education at a Glance*, 2008.

To be clear: although the public share of educational expenditures is shrinking, it is not shrinking because there has been a reduction in public funds. Indeed, it was not even falling in per-student terms in most of our region. It simply was falling because private money was increasing faster than public money. The above figures, if anything, understate this because of the lack of data from places such as Russia and Ukraine, where vast sums of new private money have come into the system through the introduction of private universities.

In many countries, the shift towards greater private expenditures has come about because of the introduction of cost-sharing measures (*i.e.,* tuition fees). Why have governments chosen to introduce cost-sharing? Dutch researcher J. J. Vossensteyn (2004) has argued that cost-sharing has emerged in a context in which "the increasing demand for higher education services exceeds the capacity of the public budgets available for higher education". Johnstone (2006) has also suggested two other possible

reasons for cost-sharing: the first being a notation of equity which suggests both that "those who benefit should at least share in the costs" and that increased system funding allows for financial assistance to those in need (who may not have had system access in the absence of cost-sharing), and the second being a "neo-liberal economic notion that tuition – a price, as it were, on a valuable commodity – brings to higher education some of the virtues of the market [efficiency and responsiveness]". Because there is typically some mixture of all three of these motives at play in the introduction of tuition fees, it is possible for those in favour of tuition fees to argue truthfully that their policy is about improving equity and those against it to argue truthfully that it is simply an ideological pro-market initiative.

Of the OECD countries above with comparable data from 1995 to 2005, Portugal has experienced the most drastic shift in the direction of private finance of higher education. In 1995, public funding accounted for 96.5 percent of total funding for higher education. This was the third highest figure recorded by the OECD in 1995 preceded only by Denmark and Turkey. With Portugal's latitude for public spending constrained by efforts to "reduce the national budget deficit below 3 percent pursuant to the Stability and Growth Pact of the European Union" (Santiago et al., 2006, p. 174)", a decision was taken to introduce cost-sharing. By 2005, the relative proportion of public funding of total higher education expenditure had dropped to 68.1 percent, a change of 28.4 percent. Of the 31.9 percent of expenditure on higher education coming from private sources in 2005, 23.4 percent came from household expenditure versus in 3.5 percent in 1995. Cost sharing has proceeded principally through transfer of funding responsibility to students through a series of tuition increases with the largest jump occurring in 2003-04 (OECD, 2007 p. 113). Portugal is not, of course, the only country to have introduced tuition fees in the past decade, but its case is nonetheless relatively typical.

As a federal state with jurisdictional (*Lander*) responsibility for education, Germany's movement toward greater cost-sharing through tuition fees has been slower and more uneven. Prior to 2005, tuition fees were banned at the Federal level, "After a contentious court battle between the federal government, which wanted to ban fees, and six German states, the country's Federal Constitutional Court ruled in 2005 that the states could set tuition policy." (Wilhelm, 2008, p.54). Since the law has changed, some *Lander* have embraced a jurisdictional level fees, others have allowed institutions to set their own fee levels with a jurisdictional ceiling, while still others have rejected fees outright. The proportionate drop in public expenditure on higher education that these developments have likely caused is not covered in the chart above, as it only covers developments up to 2005. The drop in proportionate public expenditure observed above thus cannot be attributed to the introduction of tuition. Future data will likely reveal a greater drop.

A very different story is observable in Ireland, a country which represents the principle counter-example to the trend of greater cost sharing through transfer of some financial responsibility from the State to students though tuition. In Ireland, between 1995 and 2005, the relative proportion of expenditure on higher education emanating from public sources actually increased by 14.3 percent, the largest increased recorded in this period for an OECD member-state. This change is traceable to Ireland's 1996

elimination of undergraduate tuition fees in an effort to increase the higher education system's accessibility (Swail and Heller, 2004). As a result of the elimination of fees, household expenditure on higher education fell from 28.3 percent of total higher education expenditure in 1995 to 14.1 percent in 2005 (although tuition was eliminated, Irish students still pay an annual registration fee which is almost indistinguishable from tuition). In a recent study, *Higher Education in Ireland*, the OECD has recommended that Ireland reintroduce fees, citing the benefits of having additional funds in the system and the argument that tuition elimination has not increased access for traditionally underrepresented populations (OECD, 2006, p.89).

Several non-OECD states in the Eastern portion of the Europe Region have also seen significant changes in levels of public expenditure on higher education proportional to total expenditure on higher education. Much of this change is observable in former Eastern Bloc countries that have seen expansion of private expenditure in the public system as well as private system growth. While the private sector is not equally strong across the Europe Region (in Croatia and the Czech Republic, for instance, private education is notable by its near-total absence), it is in general much stronger than it is in Western Europe, accounting for as much as a third of total enrolment in some countries. In addition to tuition fee revenue at private institutions, public institutions have also in many countries been given considerable latitude to raise funds via tuition fees. This is sometimes (confusingly and somewhat inaccurately) referred to in the region as the "privatization of public universities". The introduction of fees has occurred despite deep political resistance to fees and (even occasionally constitutional prohibitions on the practice). Generally speaking, in the former Eastern Bloc countries the introduction of tuition fees has come via the "dual track" method, where a certain portion of students – usually those deemed especially meritorious – are not required to pay. On top of these students, institutions are permitted to enrol a number of other fee-paying students (institutional freedom to decide on both fees and the number of students to accept varies widely across the region). Thus, higher education in the region has managed a delicate political balance by both introducing the principle of fees while retaining the principle of free tuition. Several countries in the region have proportional levels of public expenditure that are well below EU levels. In 2003 for the entire EU 27, "79.9 percent of the funding for HEIs came from public sources (Eurydice, 2008, p. 47)." In 2003, the proportion of public spending on higher education in Lithuania was 61.8 percent, in Bulgaria was 55.2 percent and in Latvia was 44.9 percent, all figures well below OECD and EU averages (Eurydice, 2008).

So what was the effect of all this cost-sharing? Theoretically, cost sharing can allow for system expansion and/or quality enhancement, depending on national and institutional priorities. Across most of our region, the primary impact appears to have been system expansion: nearly all the countries that have seen the tuition increases have also seen substantial system expansion (*e.g.,* the Russian Federation, Poland, Romania). This is not to say that countries without tuition fees have not expanded as well – Greece, Iceland and the Czech Republic represent systems that have expanded substantially without recourse to cost-sharing. However, there are no countries which have introduced cost-sharing that have not seen at least some system expansion – whereas a number of countries with no cost-sharing (*e.g.,* France) have effectively seen zero growth in participation.

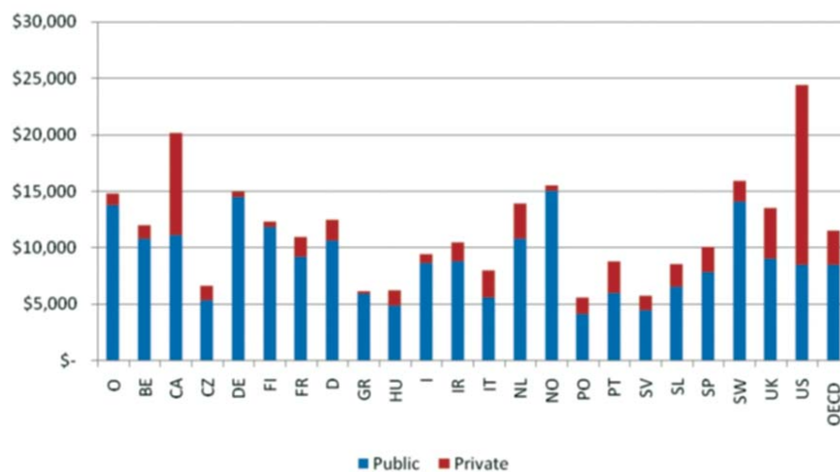
Under cost sharing models, there is always a fear that some students and families being called upon to assist in the financing of education will not be able to make the necessary contributions and will thus be excluded from higher education. This is why most cost-sharing models have employed student and family assistance programs in the form of grants and loans to mitigate this financial pressure (Vossensteyn, 2004). Still, even with these, much of the debate around cost-sharing has revolved around the question of whether tuition fees harm access. As an independent variable, it seems that they do not. As Johnstone noted (2006): "Evidence from Finland, Norway, Denmark and Sweden, for example, shows that the absence of fees does not help to boost participation of students with low socio-economic status. Neither did the abolition of tuition fees in Ireland in the mid-1990s lead to increased participation from lower socio-economic status students." Similarly, Usher and Cervenan (2005) found little correlation between low tuition fees and other measures of affordability on the one hand, and measures of participation (either in terms of system size or measures of equality of access) on the other.

Normally, the way that cost-shared systems ensure these better outcomes is by offering grants (which go to poor students) and loans (which go to poor and middle-class students, though in some countries such as Sweden they are available universally) which help offset the cost of education in the short term. As a result, students with lesser means in the end pay significantly less for their education than students from wealthier families and this therefore erases such putative negative effect of tuition as may exist.

As noted earlier, one of the most important developments in increasing participation in the past decade occurred in eastern and east-central Europe. There, decades of pent-up demand were met by a major increase in cost-sharing, both through the creation of large numbers of private universities (especially in Romania, Poland, Ukraine and the Russian Federation), and the creation of a two-tiered system of tuition at public universities. Under the two-tier system, the highest achieving students[16] received higher education for free while lower-achieving students paid tuition. Although these "scholarship" places are distributed according to an objective standard of merit, everywhere they are largely occupied by children of the elite who had the advantage of being able to access high-quality secondary education. The resulting system looks to be almost exactly the opposite of what occurs in the American system. In both, the rich tend to go to more elite schools and the poor to institutions of lesser repute. The difference is that in America the rich pay extraordinary sums while the poor, after receiving Pell grants, pay very little; whereas in east-central and eastern Europe, it is the poor who pay more – and for the most part they do not have access to student loan programs as these are still quite rare across the region. And yet, despite all this, despite the fact that the cost-sharing experiments in Eastern and East-central Europe have had none of the features that offset the negative effects of rising tuition for the poor, they all – seemingly – have had very good outcomes, at least in terms of being able to expand higher education. However, no data has yet emerged from these countries with respect to how cost-sharing has affected the social composition of the student body in the aftermath. This is a pity as understanding the effects of such a major experiment would go a long way to de-mystifying the effects of tuition on access and participation.

Such a de-mystification is important because the debate about cost-sharing is not going to go away in those west European countries where fees have yet to be really introduced – notably Germany and France. Figure 5 shows per-student funding from public and private sources across the OECD in 2005. With the exception of Norway, there is a very large gap in per-student funding between Europe and the United States, and that difference is almost entirely accounted for by private expenditures – *i.e.,* tuition. It is difficult to see how, with such a gap, Germany, France and Italy can close the gap with the United States either in terms of participation rates or in terms of research or other measures of quality. Some might argue that a more "European" path would be for these countries to emulate Norway and spend much larger amounts of public money. Possibly, this is true. However, even before the present recession and the upcoming demographic crunch, the larger West European countries were in no great hurry to increase their public per-student funding in the last ten years – indeed, it was in these countries that public per-student funding was increasing the slowest. As long as this funding gap persists, cost-sharing will remain an important policy option to consider.

Figure 5. Public and Private Expenditures per Student in Tertiary Education, 2005.



Note: Data for Switzerland and Norway are from 2003, not 2005. Data for Canada is for Tertiary A only; the figure for all Tertiary is likely somewhat lower.
Source: OECD, Education at a Glance, 2008.

This leaves us with an important question: if per-student public financing over the past ten years has in most countries stayed roughly stable or increased, and private financing has increased faster than public financing, then higher education institutions should be feeling better off than they did a decade ago. But this is often not the lived experience, especially for those within the academic profession. Across the region, the long-term trend is towards the increasing casualization of academic labour and the growth of fixed-term contracts.

Part of the answer also lies in the fact that in some cases, even though public funding has risen, the ability to use it in an unconstrained fashion has not. Where governments have chosen to "steer" the system through various types of earmarked-funds, institutions do not necessarily have the freedom to use the new, larger pots of money in an unconstrained fashion. This can mean that even while institutions as a whole are receiving more money, some parts of the institution may be receiving decreasing amounts of money, which in turn leads to restraint and cost-cutting activities in parts of the institution.

But perhaps a more substantive answer to the paradox lies in a phenomenon first noted by economist William Baumol and which is sometimes known as "Baumol's Disease". In education, where quality is primarily defined by a stable ratio of inputs to outputs (*i.e.,* teacher-student ratios), productivity increases are hard to come by. Yet despite the fact that productivity rises are low, educational institutions have to pay rising salaries in order to remain competitive with those in industries where productivity *is* rising. The result is that the main cost of education – salaries will nearly always be rising faster than inflation. Thus, even in an era when total income per student is rising faster than the consumer price index, the need to pay competitive salaries to academics may mean that even this may not enough to maintain staff and services at an even level.

The past ten years, then, have been reasonably good ones for tertiary education. Public funding for it has risen, and private support for it has risen faster. In Central and Eastern Europe, much of this new money has gone to funding a massive surge in participation – it is these funds that have permitted that region to universalize their participation rates, meeting and in some cases even surpassing the participation levels of Western Europe. In some cases (notably the United States) the extra funding appears to have gone to increasing research output and increasing student services as well. The manner in which the money has been spent, as we have seen, has also changed some aspects of institutional governance, providing institutions with more autonomy. In sum, a positive decade, even if not every opportunity has been seized and Baumol's disease has eaten away at some of the gains. The question, as we approach the start of the century's second decade, is whether or not this good news is likely to last.

Looking Forward to 2020

It has been argued throughout this paper that many of the basic forces shaping higher education in the past decade are not new to this period but rather are the continuation of longer-term trends. In brief, these are:

– The modern knowledge economy is demanding ever-higher rates of skill formation; higher education is seen as the way to accomplish this, and so pressures to continue to "universalize" higher education will continue.

– The modern knowledge economy demands innovation; one of the drivers of innovation is the clustering of talent and the production of new knowledge; universities will continue to perform this task

– Modern theories of management emphasize outputs over inputs; institutions can expect to continue to have their success measured in this way.

– The pressures of European integration and the pull of globalization will continue to intensify the pressures for the internationalization of education.

– The youth population is declining in some parts of our region, and this intensifies the competition for students even if the proportion of students from these younger, smaller age cohorts attending higher education continues to increase.

These trends, broadly, have already influenced universalization, the changing mission of higher education (feeding tendencies both to converge and diversify), the definition and measurement of quality, the desire of institutions to provide a more internationalized curriculum, the boundaries of institutional governance and autonomy and the branding and selling of universities. There is no reason to think that any of these trends will abate over the next decades, meaning that the basic pressures to which institutions are responding will not alter. The continuing focus on expanding participation will continue to demand a more diversified set of institutions in order to ensure that systems' more diversified goal with respect to participation and economic growth are met. Globalization will continue to put a premium on the ability of graduates to function well in jobs which require multiple languages and sensitivity to different national cultures: this will guarantee an intensification of the trend towards internationalization. Increasing skill requirements will likely make even greater demands on system resources as the demand for graduate programs increases. The latter two of these trends are likely to increase per-student costs significantly.

Some might point to a changing demographic balance as a reason for optimism: even if per-student costs are increasing, the coming demographic dip means the age cohort making up the "traditional-aged student" is getting smaller and will thus be more manageable. The demographic picture, however, needs to be nuanced somewhat. Though it may be true that it is difficult to make demographic predictions with accuracy (LeBras, 2008), making predictions about tertiary-aged students from here until 2025 is relatively easy seeing as all the potential students have already been born. Vincent-Lacrin's (2008) data, which shows demographic projections to 2015 and 2025, suggests that the region's countries can be grouped into three: *countries with expected growth in both the medium-term and long term* (Denmark, the United States and the Netherlands), *countries with expected growth in the medium-term but declines in the long-term* (Iceland, Sweden, United Kingdom, Canada, Switzerland) and *countries with expected declines in both the medium and long-terms:* France, Ireland, Germany, Austria, Russian federation, Portugal, Spain, Greece, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovak Republic and Poland. But a declining demographic profile does not necessarily mean fewer tertiary students. The pressure to expand access and universalize higher education may offset the declines in population in some of these countries. France and Germany, for instance, have considerable room to increase their participation rates should they choose to as they now have among the lowest GERs in the region. But it does mean that competition for students is likely to be more intensive in these countries than elsewhere, with all that that entails.

It also should not be assumed that any increase in demand over time for higher education will be for traditional undergraduate education. In some places, where there are shortages in some types of trade and skilled labour, the expansion may be

in further education rather than higher education. Where attainment rates are already high, further expansion may be expected to occur in professional or graduate programs. Needless to say these distinctions have major cost implications, with the former being considerably cheaper than the latter.

This brings us to the other major variable; namely, funding. The present financial crisis seems destined to have a substantial effect on higher education. In the early phase of the crisis, those institutions which were most dependent on revenue from endowments (primarily those in the United States, but also some in Canada and the United Kingdom) have already run into difficulties because of falling asset values. If these institutions also run their own defined benefit pension programs , they have run into even more trouble because the fall in asset values has put in jeopardy their ability to meet their commitments – costs in these areas must rise, requiring cuts in other areas of expenditures. Public institutions in the United States have a further challenge in that they receive their money from states that are constitutionally bound to present balanced budgets. Thus, they are likely to receive further significant cuts to their budgets in the months ahead. Undoubtedly, all this will tend to narrow the per-student funding gap between the United States and Europe.

However, European universities are unlikely to emerge unscathed from the next decade, either. Bondholders are unlikely to keep buying government debt indefinitely; the current fashion for running large budgetary deficits to ward off the effects of economic recession will need to end at some point in the near future and that will affect the ability of governments to continue providing funding to institutions. Indeed, among the countries which have been hardest hit by the initial onslaught of the recession, such as Ireland, Hungary and Latvia, it already has. Within two or three years, it is quite likely that we will see the return of public sector austerity measures similar to those seen in the early 1990s.

Add to this the other half of the major demographic shift currently underway. By midway through the decade, large numbers of the "baby boom" generation born between 1946 and 1960 will have retired. In many, many countries, especially in Europe, this will have a significant impact on public finances. Health care and pension costs will rise, and raising additional tax revenue to pay for it may be politically difficult. This means that expenditures on education might be under extreme pressure. To an extent the pressure might be alleviated if enrolments fall in line with youth population decreases, but that would effectively require higher education systems to stop widening access in order to keep per-student funding stable.

With public funding likely at a standstill, how will increased participation, greater investment in research and higher quality be paid for? While funding from sources such as private donations, philanthropy and sale of ancillary services can help at the margin, there are really only two possible ways to pay for this. The first payment option is to increase institutional efficiency and productivity; in short, finding ways to teach more students with fewer faculty. But for this to mean anything other than simply larger class sizes, intensive research into the improved use instructional ICTs needs to take place, and ways need to be found to help students become better independent learners in a shorter space of time. As we have seen, this is unlikely to happen quickly. The likely result here in the short term is

therefore an intensification of the pressure to casualize academic labour and reduce per-student costs. Alternatively, governments can push new students into cheaper forms of education; instead of putting them through large research institutions with high per-student costs, they can put them into lower-cost institutions with shorter programs (this would appear to be the strategy of President Obama, whose administration has taken a particular interest in increasing sub-baccalaureate attainment as a means of pushing up overall graduation rates). The second payment option is to inject more private money into the system through cost-sharing (*i.e.,* tuition fees), but this seems to be a politically unpalatable choice across much of Europe, even if it is accompanied by the introduction of a series of loans and grants.

Scarcer funding will constrain the choices facing governments, but the underlying problems and tensions which each national system will face over the coming years will be the same ones they are dealing with now. In most of Western Europe, the pressing question will remain how to make their universities more competitive with American research institutions in order to help make Europe more competitive and productive as per the Lisbon agenda. One can expect that governments will try to "steer" institutions towards these goals with various types of incentives. In France and Germany especially there may also be a renewed debate on expanding participation, especially now that their participation rates have fallen behind not just America but most of the rest of Europe as well. In Central and Eastern Europe, having achieved universalization last decade in a somewhat break-neck manner, there will undoubtedly be a focus on quality assurance. There may also be an increased concern about fairness in participation, this might not have mattered much in the first throes of universalization when the important thing was to try to satisfy the expansion of demand as quickly as possible. However, if the pattern of North America and Western Europe repeats itself, then as massification turns to universalization, these questions of fairness are likely to become more important.

But these things all require money. With money from public sources likely to remain highly constrained for the first half of the next decade at least, this money can only come from students or from internal productivity gains. Neither is likely to be achieved easily. The first will undoubtedly provoke confrontations with students unwilling to pay more for their education; the latter will – if not handled carefully – provoke significant conflict with a professoriate which has seen institutions fill with fewer full-time permanent positions and more non-permanent positions, and faculty members going from one position to another, from one institution, without a permanent appointment (or, in the eastern half of our region, increasingly holding positions at multiple universities simultaneously).

It is unlikely to be a dull decade. And whatever the outcomes, they will not be simple.

Notes

1. In a paper of this length, it is not possible to examine each country individually but nor is it desirable to treat the entire region from Vladivostok to Vancouver as a single integrated whole. Therefore, for the purposes of sub-regional examination, this paper divides European and North America into six regions: North America (Canada and the United States); Western Europe (Ireland, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, the Benelux countries, Switzerland and Austria);

Scandinavia (Iceland, Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark); Southern Europe (Portugal, Spain, Israel, Italy and Greece); Central and Eastern Europe (Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Bulgaria, Albania, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia); and the former Soviet Union (the Russian Federation, Ukraine, Belarus, Latvia, Lithuania and Estonia). Data on most of these regions is quite complete: the exception is east-central Europe where data from Romania, Albania and most of the former Yugoslav republics is quite limited.

2. A “participation rate” is the fraction of a particular age cohort (*e.g.,* 18-21 or 18-24) who are enrolled in higher education. However, in order to calculate this on a national basis, a national statistical agent needs to know the age distribution of the student body, and in many countries this is not the case. So, a simpler measure, known as the Gross Enrollment Rate (GER) was developed, in which the total number of students is divided by the sum of citizens in the five age-year cohorts following the normal end of secondary school (to all intents and purposes, ages 18-22). This is the standard way that UNESCO expresses participation rates, and it is used here because it is the measure most commonly available across all states in our region. For those used to more conventional participation rate figures, GER can appear as a somewhat misleading measure – countries with a wider age distribution of students look better under a GER than they do under a part rate; similarly, countries with longer periods of study for a first degree (*e.g.,* 5 years instead of 3) will tend to look better under a GER system than under a participation rate system. More generally, GERs will always be higher that participation rates; countries that GERs of 50 should not be interpreted as having half their youth of a particular age group enrolled in tertiary education – typically, the figure would actually be a little over half of that.

3. Technically, Luxembourg has a GER of just 10 percent, making in an “elite” system of higher education, but this is simply a reflection of the fact that most of the students in this tiny country attend universities in neighbouring France and Germany.

4. There is some doubt about this figure: while UIS data records that Greece doubled its GER between 1999 and 2006, other UIS data indicates that enrolments only increased by 47 percent. For GER to have doubled, the relevant age cohort would have had to have shrunk by 25 percent in seven years, which does not appear to have been the case. The figure – or at least the scale of the increase – therefore needs to be treated with some caution.

5. Note, though, that this figure does not include Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro, and Serbia, all countries where enrolment rates are known to be substantially lower, which are excluded due to the unavailability of data .

6. The amounts borrowed by Swedish students are also startling – according to Usher (2005), Swedish students graduated, on average with more debt than students from any other country in the world, including the United States, despite having no tuition.

7. Tremblay (2008) also identifies “audits” as a third form of quality assessment procedure, but these are relatively well and so are not discussed in detail here.

8. In Canada, institutions do not receive accreditation, and nor do programs outside the professions (*e.g.,*: law, social work, dentistry). However, it is common practice for every program to undergo a periodic review. In most places, this review is not a two-stage internal/external review, but rather a single stage review which incorporates both some external reviewers into a primarily internal review structure.

9. All league tables are rankings, but not all rankings are league tables. A ranking implies that comparisons are being made; a league table implies that the results are being printed in such a way as to display institutions in an ordinal fashion from best to worst. The CHE’s “personalized rankings” would be an example of a ranking which is not a league table.

10. See Kuh (2001, 2003) for further details on NSSE. Details on the CSSE may be found at the website www.ccsse.org

11. The Carnegie classification is the standard typology used to classify American post-secondary institutions. A full description may be found at http://www.carnegiefoundation.org/Classification/. This particular relationship between NSSE and Carnegie now has a feedback loop as since 2007 Carnegie classifications have used NSSE results as an indicator to assist in the classification process.

12. "Good learning outcomes" in the US context tends to refer to "retention" and completion rather than mastery of a subject of body of knowledge.

13. See the Collegiate Learning Assessment Conceptual Framework Document at: http://www.cae.org/content/pdf/CLA. ConceptualFramework.pdf and the Summary Technical Report at http://www.cae.org/content/pdf/technical_report.pdf. For a broader discussion of the CLA see Benjamin and Chun (2003).

14. Indeed, during the beta-test phase, all students who took the CLA also took the NSSE in order to provide external validation.

15. Teichler notes that these changes have been documented by Haug et al., 1999; Haug and Tauch, 2001; Reichert and Tauch, 2003; UNESCO, 2003.

16. A significant trend over time in countries with two-tier tuition has been a gradual on-going reduction in the number of fully State-sponsored students and an increase in the number of fee-paying students.

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Thematic Papers

Access in Higher Education in Europe and North America: Trends and Developments

Peter Scott

Executive Summary

This paper considers trends and developments in access in North America and Europe. Its starting point is that access (broadly defined) has always been, and remains, the key driver of higher education development – despite the emphasis placed on other dimensions including the quality dimension and, in particular, workforce demands (which have become more prominent within 'knowledge society' discourse during the past decade). Access, as expressed through the social demand for higher education, has not only determined the overall size (and scope) of contemporary higher education systems but also deeply influenced their practices and values.

The paper considers these trends and development in access under four headings:

– The degree to which the purposes and values of higher education have been modified by the development of mass systems is considered first. Massification has been a pervasive phenomenon affecting all institutions including (and, perhaps, especially elite universities). Statistics relating to the growth of student numbers in higher education during the past decade were also considered. From these figures it appears that there has been no slackening in the pace of expansion;

– Next the question of whether massification had been successful in delivering fairer access is considered, and the counter-argument that mass higher education has been less dynamic in terms of promoting social mobility is addressed. While there have been some disappointments, participation by women and minority communities in particular has made substantial advances. There is little evidence to support the conclusion that mass higher education systems has been 'captured' by the growing middle class;

– Third section the main access strategies pursued during the last, and preceding, decade are reviewed. Distinctions are drawn between: (i) affirmative action, or positive discrimination in favour of disadvantaged social groups; (ii) the general effects of growth in promoting fairer access; and (iii) more targeted widening participation policies, whether through student financial assistance or incentives to institutions to recruit more students from under-represented groups. It is clear that the priority attached to these three strategies, and their efficacy, has varied over time;

– Finally three scenarios for the future, and their likely impact on access, are discussed. These are (i) 'steady state', or the radical reduction in historic growth rates; (ii) continuing growth, at or about these historic rates; and (iii) the transformation of higher education systems into more extensive and open lifelong learning systems. It is clear that the first of these scenarios would make it more difficult to pursue access; that the second would have ambiguous results; and that the third would offer both exhilarating opportunities but also pose serious challenges (and even threats).

The overall conclusion of this paper is that, despite the mixed results produced by the strategies that had been pursued in the past and the uncertainties posed by these three scenarios for the future, there is little prospect of access ceasing to be the dominant driver of higher education development – although it may no longer be defined almost exclusively in familiar terms of 'fairer access' and 'widening participation'. Instead access is likely to be interpreted in much broader, and more fluid, terms giving rise to new strategies and novel policies.

Introduction

The development of mass higher education systems, initially in the North America and later in Europe, represents the fourth decisive epoch in the long history of the university – equal in significance to its first foundations in medieval Europe; its transformation during the Renaissance and Reformation (and Counter-Reformation) into a more secular and state (or, at any rate, dynastic or princely) institution; and its, effective, re-foundation in the nineteenth century after a period of stagnation and even decline, partly in response to the aggressive rise of the national (and bureaucratic) state (exemplified most dramatically by the establishment of the University of Berlin in 1810) and partly in response to the emergence of new forms of urban and industrial society increasingly dependent on science, technology and professional expertise (exemplified, although initially in the context of agricultural improvement, by the establishment of the great American land-grant universities in the 1860s). The massification of higher education, which began after 1945, accelerated between the 1960s and 1980s and is still from complete, is the fourth great revolution in the *longue durée* of the university, its centuries-long advance from medieval Europe school or global institution (Scott, 1995).

There have been two fundamental drivers of massification (Deer, 2005). The first, 'pull' driver, is the increasing demand for graduates with expert and professional skills. Although in the medieval period universities did produce the churchmen who filled many secular as well as religious offices, between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries they gradually ceased to be so deeply engaged in the professional formation of emerging elites; instead their main business is best described as preserving the cultural capital of existing elites. In a similar way universities, with their outdated curricula and aversion of intellectual novelty, were by-passed by more nimble scientific institutions – by academies in the case of Enlightenment thought and speculative science; and by practitioners in the case of scientific and technological

applications. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries universities resumed a more active role – to staff the burgeoning bureaucracies of nation states, business and industry; to support the development of professions, new or re-energised; and to satisfy the ever increasing demand for scientific and technical experts. As social mobility increased and traditional hierarchies crumbled the role of universities in preserving and transmitting cultural capital took a new and more dynamic form – not simply to preserve the status of existing elites but also to forge new and more flexible elite identities. At the same time universities acquired a novel but aggressive stake in research which moved from the periphery, restricted to scholarly endeavour and speculative inquiry, to centre-stage, the large-scale industry of experimental (and instrumental?) research which dominates the modern university. In the twenty-first century the rapid development of a knowledge-led global economy, and the almost unchallenged hegemony of a (over-simplified) 'knowledge society' discourse, have further strengthened the articulation between higher education and the economy (Reich, 1991, 2001). The business of mass higher education is simply that, business – to produce appropriately skilled graduates and useful research.

The second – 'push' – driver of massification is the increasing social demand for higher education. In some respects this second driver intersects with the first, as jobs once available to those who had completed secondary school are now restricted to higher education graduates. This is a complex process, in part attributable to the enhancement of expert skills (whether as a result of technology 'push' in the case of scientific and technical occupations or upward credentialisation in the case of emerging professions) but also partly due to the simple fact that the proportion of higher education graduates in the workforce has increased (so reversing cause and effect). However, in other respects this second driver is independent of the first. The first stirring of massification in higher education took place approximately a generation after the introduction of near-universal secondary school systems – which in turn occurred about two generations about the introduction of compulsory primary (or elementary) education in the second half of the nineteenth century. In other words the growth of mass higher education is simply the culmination of a long educational revolution. This, in itself, does not mean that its basic causes were not economic. Clearly an important motive for the development of primary and secondary education systems was the need to satisfy the demand for a better educated workforce. But a stronger link can probably be established between the long educational revolution and the advance of democracy, although in practice it is difficult to disentangle workforce demands from rising social aspirations focused as much on economic improvement as on political emancipation (or cultural enlightenment). The rising levels of attainment (and ambition) in secondary education appear to be as much the cause as the effect of increasing skill levels in the workforce. If this is true, this second driver of massification is perhaps even more significant than the first – despite the fact that the discourse of welfare-state liberalism, which provided it with ideological articulation and legitimacy, has (temporarily?) been eclipsed by neo-liberal 'knowledge society' discourse which highlights the first driver.

Access, therefore, is arguably the most significant element within the development of mass higher education. In this paper access is defined in the widest possible terms – embracing absolute growth in student numbers, differential

enrolment rates among different social groups, the spread of different kinds of student across different types of institution and graduate destinations (and longer-term) social and economic outcomes. Such a broad definition presents obvious difficulties because, at a conceptual level, it includes both access and equity and, at a more practical analytical level, it covers both quantitative and qualitative factors (including enrolment ratios, participation rates and graduate outcomes). However, to confine access to just one of these dimensions is, first, to neglect the important interconnections between these various dimensions and also to ignore its wider political resonances (and so policy significance).

From 1945 until the early 1980s few would have contested the claim of access in this broad sense to be the fundamental principle around which modern higher education systems were constructed. The fact that for the past two decades access has been relegated to a secondary principle, the safeguarding of reasonable standards of social equity within higher education systems increasingly enthused by the market, should not be allowed to detract from its underlying importance. Even this re-designation of access as a secondary and essentially ameliorative project instead of being recognised as a fundamental developmental driver has never been complete. In the US issues of access have remained dominant, even if they have tended to be mediated through protests about rising fee levels. In the United Kingdom, superficially the most complete convert to neo-liberal policies during the Prime Ministerships of Margaret Thatcher and Tony Blair, the principal driver has remained the increasing number of applicants for places in universities and colleges rather than top-down projections of future workforce requirements for graduate-level skills. In the rest of Europe the coded caveat which is always used to qualify discussions about the modernisation of higher education– the 'social dimension' – has continued to highlight issues of access and entitlement.

This paper is divided into four sections. The first is a continuation of the discussion begun in this introduction, about the role of access in defining the purposes and principles of higher education, and also provides a brief statistical review of the growth of higher education systems. The second is a discussion of the impact of massification on access. The third is a more detailed examination of policies designed to promote access. The final section is a review of possible future scenarios.

Access and Expansion

The development of mass higher education systems (and mass institutions) has led to subtle but significant shifts in how the purposes of higher education are defined and also in how access is conceptualised. In general terms massification has led to greater emphasis on the instrumentality of higher education – although this effect is not the sole responsibility of massification; the development of a knowledge-led global economy and the dominance of 'knowledge society' discourse (especially in its neo-liberal form) have also contributed to this shift. It has several components:

– One is the reduced emphasis placed on the reproduction of elites, inevitable perhaps in mass systems enrolled approaching half or more of the relevant age group.

Their complex articulations with contemporary social structures, which themselves have become much more fluid, is very different from the simpler relationship between elite university systems and traditional elites, whether quasi-hereditary or meritocratic. Of course, mass systems still contain elite segments. But decades of welfare-state egalitarianism, succeeded by an emphasis on the market in public policy (which, although not egalitarian in terms of desired outcomes, is nevertheless have a tendency to undermine traditional hierarchies), have made it more difficult to justify the special role of elite universities in these terms. It is revealing that most elite universities now define themselves in terms of their production of world-class research rather than the reproduction of national (or global) elites, a justification that is easier to sustain in the United States perhaps than in Europe because of the scientific dominance of American institutions. New concepts of knowledge production, which emphasise the applicability of research or its wider social distribution, have made even this justification problematical (Gibbons et al., 1994; Nowotny, Scott and Gibbons, 2001). As a result, the continued existence of elite universities has not mitigated the shift towards instrumentality in mass higher education systems; indeed their predominant twenty-first century justification, their eminence in research, may even have compounded it;

– A second component of this shift is closer engagement between higher education and the economy. The value of a degree today appears to be defined more in terms of its (immediate) attractiveness to potential employers or its premium with regard to life-time earnings and less in terms of the (longer-term) scientific / cultural capital it provides – certainly in the expressed views of most policy makers and institutional leaders. The comparative weight of professional, and other vocational, disciplines has increased in the modern university while that of the liberal arts and sciences has declined (mainly as a result of the incorporation of other postsecondary institutions into higher education systems rather than as a result of large-scale shifts in student choices). Even the latter have tended to redefine their utility in terms either of their relevance to the 'cultural [or creative] industries' or of their capacity to develop in their students transferable and problem-solving 'skills'. In mass systems there is also a tendency to relate postgraduate education to 'continuing professional development' (and even PhD students are deliberately prepared for wider, non-research, careers). In some countries specific programmes have been developed to encourage greater 'employer engagement'. But it is probably a mistake to regard this, often politically mandated, engagement between higher education and the economy as a passing neo-liberal fashion. Even in the early phases of massification, when welfare-state ideas were dominant, the pressure for closer engagement was building – although it then took more social / liberal forms. It appears to be part of a wider phenomenon, the inter-penetration under conditions of post-industrialism (and post-modernity?) of the institutionalised categories of modernity such as the academy and the economy (as of the individual and the collective, and the local and the global);

– A third component of the shift to instrumentality is more straightforward. The development of mass higher education systems has involved not only the expansion in the number (and size) of universities, a process which itself has led to substantial diversification (and democratisation) of those institutions, but also the incorporation of

non-university institutions (Teichler, 2004, 3-16). Some of these new institutions were no more instrumental in their focus than traditional universities (art academies and adult education institutions, for example), but the origins of most of these non-university institutions were firmly in professional and vocational education. In some cases, as with the former polytechnics in England, these institutions have themselves become universities (and thereby acquired broader – and more 'academic'? – missions); in other cases they have remained distinct from, and subordinate to, the established universities. But their overall impact has probably been to shift the centre-of-gravity of mass higher education systems towards greater instrumentality. The incorporation of non-university institutions into higher education systems is also related to the wider differentiation of these systems which has accompanied massification.

As a result the purposes of higher education have changed. Less (formal) emphasis is placed on the role played even by traditional universities in the reproduction of elites – partly out of political, and wider cultural, embarrassment; but mainly because elites have become more fluid (and volatile). Less emphasis too is placed on higher education as education, as a process of enlightenment, emancipation, self-improvement for individuals which universities once shared with primary and secondary schools (and, indeed, had a primary responsibility for fostering and delivering). Secondary (or high) schools and further education (or community) colleges are now more typically regarded as providing higher education with a 'supply chain', and the 'civic engagement' of universities defined in terms of their key economic and cultural role in building 'clever cities' than in terms of their role in building democratic societies (Florida, 2005). The emphasis has switched to the role of universities as 'knowledge organisations' (or even 'knowledge businesses' in their own right), producing highly (and appropriately) skilled graduates to service the workforce needs of the knowledge economy and generating the useful knowledge which is the primary resource of the 'knowledge society' (and the key to global economic competitiveness). It is within the context of these changed purposes of higher education that the significance of access must be examined.

The discourse of access has also changed in important ways. In the twenty-first century it is less likely to be applied to the totality of higher education development, a pervasive phenomenon that animates the forward momentum of the whole system. Instead it is more likely to be used to describe a key but more limited project, the drive to recruit a fairer proportion of students from more socially disadvantaged backgrounds (sometimes justified in terms of the need for a more workforce that is more representative of the general population, so maximising a nation's human resources, particularly highly skilled workers, to compete in the global knowledge economy).

This shift is perhaps more marked in Europe than in North America. In the United States there have always been two distinct policy discourses – one of general expansion with its origins in the post-Second World War GI Bill (or even earlier) which emphasises the democratic entitlement of all Americans to higher education; and a discourse of affirmative action reflecting the central importance of civil rights from the 1960s onwards which emphasises the need to reduce barriers to participation by particular ethnic groups, in particular African and Spanish-speaking Americans.

In Europe the latter discourse, although present, has been less pronounced. The main reason is that multi-ethnicity is a more recent feature of (at any rate, western) European societies, and is still regarded by some as an exogenous, or imported, phenomenon, while in the United States it is a deeply rooted feature of American society, present at the birth of the Republic and the cause of its disastrous Civil War in the mid-nineteenth century.

In Europe the discourse of general expansion has been more dominant, although not as aggressively pursued as in the United States until the 1990s. It is only recently that most European countries have acknowledged they now possess mass higher education systems, reluctantly as the unwillingness to integrate traditional universities and other post-secondary education institutions into single systems tends to suggest. Although a simplification, it could be said that, while the United States positively willed higher education expansion (in the sense that it was fully absorbed in its political and academic culture), in Europe it just 'happened' (and the consequences of expansion have still not been fully acknowledged in either the political or the academic culture of many European countries). Perhaps for that reason, the more limited legitimacy of massification in Europe compared with the United States, the shift from seeing access as a general movement to regarding it as a more focused project has been smoothly accomplished in most parts of Europe, even those countries with the most developed and most extensive higher education systems.

In the United Kingdom, for example, a distinction is now drawn between 'increasing participation' – in other words, general expansion – and 'widening participation' – the positive reduction of barriers to access experienced by students from less privileged social backgrounds. Until 10 years ago this distinction would have made little sense; it was accepted as axiomatic that higher level of participation by such students could only be achieved if the total number of students continued to expand. The origins of this dis-articulation of access from expansion are varied; they include disenchantment with the results of expansion on the overall composition of the student population; a belief perhaps that the social dynamics of mass higher education systems are different (and less socially progressive?) than those of elite systems, at any rate elite systems of the meritocratic variety; and an unwillingness to fund further student growth combined with a reluctance to abandon the access agenda entirely. But this dis-articulation has had important consequences, at both normative and conceptual and policy and organisational levels.

These far-reaching changes in how the purposes of higher education are defined and in the discourse(s) of access have taken place against a background of substantial growth in higher education in North America and in most European countries. In the United States the total number of institutions increased from 4009 in 1996 to 4314 in 2006. Although there was a small increase in the number of public four-year institutions (including universities), the core institutions in the American higher education system, from 614 to 643, the bulk of the growth was in private institutions (and, in particular, private for-profit institutions). An analysis of the expansion in the number of students tells a similar story. The total number of student enrolments increased from 14.8 million in 1999-2000 to 17.5 million seven years later (2005-06). This was a faster growth rate than in the 1990s, broadly

equivalent to the growth rates experienced in the 1980s and 1970s but slower than during the expansionary 1960s, the decade when American higher education took off as a mass system. There has also been significant growth in the number of awards at all levels – Associate degrees (from 564,000 to 713,000); Bachelor's degrees (1.24 million to 1.49 million); Master's degrees (457,000 to 594,000); and Doctoral degrees (44,000 to 56,000). Growth rates in the as-yet-incomplete first decade of the twenty-first century certainly suggest no decline in the appetite for higher education in the United States, although there is some evidence that more of this demand is being channelled into vocational programmes and private for-profit institutions. For example, enrolments in public four-year institutions, including universities, increased by 15 percent, while enrolments in private four-year colleges grew by just under 30 percent (US Department of Education, 2007).

In Europe a very similar pattern of growth can be observed. In the United Kingdom the total number of students in tertiary education increased from 1.94 million in 1998 to 2.34 million in 2006. In Sweden the growth rate was even more rapid – from 280,000 to 423,000. In Poland student numbers increased by almost 90 percent over the same nine-year period (from 1.19 million to 2.15 million). There were rapid growth rates in many other central and eastern European countries (with private institutions increasing their overall share of student numbers). In the other big western European countries, apart from the United Kingdom, growth was slower. In France the total increased from 2.03 million to 2.2 million; in Germany from 2.1 million to 2.29 million; in Italy from 1.87 million to 2.03 million; and in Spain from 1.75 million to 1.79 million. The total number of tertiary-level students (university and non-university) in the 25 countries of the European Union plus Norway, Turkey, Croatia and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia increased from just over 15 million to 18.8 million. In terms of the total number of graduates (Bachelor's, Master's and doctoral awards) a similar pattern can be observed. Once again one of the most rapid growth rates was in the United Kingdom – from 374,000 in 1998 to 514,000 nine years later. The Czech Republic produced the most impressive increase in central and Eastern Europe – up from 22,000 to more than 60,000. Even in France (356,000 to 435,000), Germany (213,000 to 311,000) and Italy (164,000 to 380,000) there was substantial growth in the number of graduates, reflecting perhaps the lower wastage rates which were one of the (implicit) objectives of the move to a Bachelor's/Master's pattern as a result of the Bologna process (OECD, 2008, European Commission, 2008a, 173-179, 180-182).

The changes in how the purposes of higher education is defined, the result partly of massification and partly of the shift from welfare-state to neo-liberal market discourse, and the (parallel?) shift in how access is conceptualised, with the emphasis narrowing from the forward movement of overall higher education development (and expansion) to more specific measures to increase participation by targeted social groups, might have been expected to be reflected in different patterns of student growth – slower growth overall, perhaps; and also faster growth in students on vocational programmes and/or enrolled in private institutions. In fact the evidence is far from conclusive. Expansion has continued – in most countries at a rate not experienced since the 1960s. The private sector has expanded rapidly, in particular, in

Central and Eastern Europe (although not as rapidly in the immediate post-Communist years) and in for-profit institutions in the United States. But in both North America and especially in Europe the bulk of students continue to be enrolled in public institutions (or not-for-profit private institutions) (Santiago et al., 2008, (1), Fig 2.5, p. 46).

The available statistics also suggest there has been a more limited shift away from academic subjects and towards vocational programmes among students than has been often supposed. The more detailed ebbs-and-flows of student choices do not appear to have been substantially different in character during the past decade from the changing patterns of student choices in previous decades. There is also little actual evidence of the dis-articulation of 'expansion' from 'access', which has become a prominent policy theme in some countries. It remains to be seen whether, in practice, it would be possible to improve levels of participation by socially, ethnically or otherwise culturally deprived groups in a steady-state system – for the simple reason that the continuing rapid growth rates in nearly every country in the first decade of the twenty-first century mean that it has never been attempted. The overall impression is that the redefinition of the purposes of higher education and the narrowing of the focus with regard to access have – so far – been largely political phenomena; to a significant degree the *longue durée* of mass higher education has remain undisturbed.

Massification, Access and Equity

For a long time it was assumed that the development of mass higher education systems in north America and Europe would not only promote access in quantitative terms but also in qualitative terms; the former, expansion of student numbers, would lead to the latter, fairer as well as wider participation. In the past decade, for reasons which have already been discussed, that assumption has begun to be questioned. For example, a recent article by three Italian economists suggested the impact of higher education expansion in Italy on improving educational opportunities had been limited (Bratti, Checchi and de Blasio, 2008, 53-88). A common view, exemplified most recently in OECD's impressive report on tertiary education in the knowledge society, is that tertiary education plays a limited role in producing inter-generational mobility (compared with primary education); and, indeed, that the major task is to prevent tertiary education damaging the prospects for inter-generational mobility (Santiago et al., 2008, 15-17, 60-61).

Conservatives, always unhappy about the effects of massification, have argued that expansion has mainly benefited the middle classes, leading to near-universal levels of participation among the socially privileged while leaving participation rates among the less privileged virtually unchanged (or even worse than in elite systems based on meritocratic principles); one of the most powerful justification for introducing, or increasing, tuition fees has been the belief that the balance of contributions and benefits in mass higher education systems had become regressive – with the poor paying for the higher education of the rich (an argument which ignored the more regressive patterns prevailing in the elite university systems of the past and also, with the decline of the welfare state and the triumph of neo-liberal discourse, the

abandonment of progressive tax systems which had the effect of making many universal as opposed to targeted public services open to the same charge of favouring the rich at the expense of the poor). However, radicals have also criticised the way in which the middle classes have predominantly benefited from the expansion of higher education, although they draw very different policy conclusions – arguing for even more rapid expansion, an end to the hegemony (or, at any rate, favoured treatment) of elite institutions within mass systems and more aggressive forms of affirmative action rather than for the introduction of (or increases in) fees.

The development of mass higher education systems has modified the discourse of access in two other ways which are related:

– The first is that the parallel differentiation of these systems, and the proliferation of institutions (not all traditional universities), have raised new questions – the most important of which is whether degrees of access should be to graded according to different sectors within these expanded systems? For example, it is argued that the claims of fair access have not been met if new types of student (for example, from less privileged socio-economic groups or ethnic-cultural minorities) are over-represented in less prestigious institutions and under-represented in more prestigious institutions. But it is also argued that some institutions (perhaps the former?) should have a stronger orientation to access, and widening participation, while others (maybe the latter?) should focus more on their research missions. To some extent both arguments miss the point because differentiation has more often taken the form of 'mission stretch', the addition of new roles, which has affected most if not all institutions, than of institutional variation, whereby different institutions adopt distinctive and different missions;

– The second way in which the discourse of access has been modified by massification is that much higher levels of participation have tended to distract from higher education's own responsibilities with regard to fairer access and widening participation and focus attention instead on educational disadvantage at lower levels in education systems, even in primary / elementary education. Many of the targeted access initiatives discussed later in this paper are directed at younger age groups rather than at higher education entrants. This helps to explain the paradox that elite university systems were more preoccupied with questions of access than their mass successors.

These two modifications have merged into a new policy discourse composed of different ingredients – the desirability of institutional differentiation (with the implicit, or explicit, assumption that 'new' students are best catered for by less traditional – and prestigious – institutions), the need to target interventions on educational disadvantage among younger age groups; and the focus on the (poverty of?) aspirations among the educationally disadvantaged rather than the structural obstacles they face – which nevertheless have the general effect of absolving higher education, and in particular elite universities, from responsibilities to promote access (at any rate as a mainstream development, if not as an ameliorative project).

So the question must be squarely faced – has massification promoted wider access? In a simple quantitative sense the answer is clearly yes; far higher proportions (and absolute numbers) of all social classes, all ethnic groups, now participate in

higher education. Of course, the socially and economically privileged still cluster in elite universities. Despite the best efforts of the latter to develop needs-blind admissions policies and to reach out to socially deprived communities, little has changed – for two main reasons. First, these efforts are a feeble counter-weight to historically entrenched structures of social hierarchy (and in the past two decades social inequalities have increased in nearly every developed country as a result of neo-liberal economic and social policies). Secondly, these efforts have always been compromised by the insistence of elite universities that their students must be the best and the brightest; indeed, these efforts are postulated on the need to discover such exceptional talent and potential in inner cities and among socially and ethnically marginalised groups. Yet, even when conventional measures of educational achievement (SATs scores, A-level grades, *baccalaureat* or *abitur* graduation) have not been applied, notions of talent and potential are still culturally constructed and so to some degree socially determined.

As a result quantitative growth, the increase in the overall number of students, although increasing opportunities for less privileged individuals (and participation by less privileged groups in absolute numbers), may not have substantially improved their comparative position compared with that of more privileged individuals and groups – an effect compounded by the fact that massification has sometimes been accompanied by a more explicit segmentation of higher education systems. But it is important not to exaggerate this effect; studying in non-elite institutions which nevertheless are now firmly regarded as part of higher education systems alongside elite universities is probably an advance, in terms of increased cultural capital, social mobility and labour-market opportunities, on studying in higher technical schools or an adult education institutes. In some cases the formal distinction between traditional universities and other higher education institutions has been dissolved, notably in Sweden in the 1970s and most dramatically in the United Kingdom in the 1990s when the former polytechnics became universities; even if informal institutional hierarchies inevitably remain, they are more fluid and open.

Whether massification has promoted fairer access in a qualitative sense is even more difficult to answer. There are two problems – one conceptual; the other practical. The conceptual issue is whether access should be determined solely in fairer admissions policies – equal opportunities; or whether it should be determined in terms of fairer outcomes (in terms of academic performance, career prospects and, more generally, life-chances) – affirmative action. The dilemma can also be expressed as a choice between 'access for' underprivileged groups currently under-represented in higher education – in other words, inputs – and 'access to' better careers and more improved life-chances – in other words, outputs. In the past much has been made of this distinction, with 'access for' being regarded as liberally intentioned (and, therefore, not too threatening to the status quo) and 'access to' as social engineering (and, therefore, more dangerous). In fact, experience has shown that the distinction has often been difficult to sustain. Fairer admissions policies inevitably involve some diminution of opportunities because they tend to crowd out students from more privileged backgrounds who might otherwise have gained access to elite institutions (or, indeed, to higher education). Similarly the test of whether fairer access to higher

education is really working is whether access to prestigious and privileged professions, and other forms of social and cultural capital, becomes more open. It is also worth noting that 'affirmative action' policies have been more aggressively pursued in the United States, no friend to even the mildest 'socialist' discourse, than in Europe where social democracy has remained a powerful if no longer dominant force. The conclusion, therefore, must be that the choice between equal opportunities and equal outcomes is not an especially helpful guide to policy-makers, although it continues to divide leaders of elite, or traditional, universities (who are happy with fair admissions – but no more, because they argue it would undermine academic standards and they may also suspect it would compromise the status of their institutions) from enthusiasts for mass higher education (who support a much wider interpretation of fairer access – and more equal outcomes).

The practical issue is that the changing demographic patterns, shifts in occupational structures and even the evolution of new life-styles (and consequent the transformation of individual aspirations) make it difficult to compare the impact of massification, whether overall expansion or specific policies designed to promote wider participation, on levels of access over anything but a short period (European Commission, 2008b, 16-39, Scott, 2007). In outline the position is relatively clear:

– Participation by women in higher education, a generation ago an under-represented group, has increased in every country in North America and Europe – and in nearly every case they now represent the majority of students (Santiago et al., 2008 (1), Fig. 2.6, p 48). This has been a far-reaching and universally welcome change. But its limitations must also be recognised. First, participation by women is uneven across types of institution (although there is little evidence of continuing discrimination by elite universities), by level (women make up a smaller share of postgraduates than of undergraduates) and by academic disciplines. This may help to explain, although not fully, the second limitation – which the rapid rise in female participation has not been matched by an equivalent improvement in the opportunities for female graduates to enter elite professions. Nor is this disparity not wholly explained either by the alternative explanation, women's still disproportionate share of responsibility for child rearing;

– Participation by ethnic minorities, and immigrant communities, has also improved substantially – in Canada and the United States and in Western Europe (the position in some southern and central and eastern European countries is different, either because they have fewer minorities or because such improvement has not been made, or both). But, as with women, this undoubted success must be qualified. First, the enthusiasm of minority communities to participate in higher education may itself be evidence of their continuing social marginalisation; they are obliged to seek the formal credentialisation provided by higher education because they do not have such ready access to less formal sources of social and cultural capital (which may explain the bunching of minority community students in subjects like medicine and law). Secondly, minority community students still tend to be concentrated in less prestigious institutions, with the effect that while their overall participation rate is high (higher in some cases than the native population) their access to elite institutions may still be constrained. For example, in the United Kingdom, the bulk of minority community students are bunched in a relatively

small number of big-city 'new' universities (*i.e.,* former polytechnics). Thirdly, participation rates vary widely among different minority communities – with high rates in some Asian communities (although often with lower levels of female participation) and much lower rates in other Asian and black communities. Some minority communities are still almost entirely excluded from higher education, such as Roma people in some parts of central and eastern Europe;

– Participation by students from working-class communities, especially those from home populations, does not appear to have improved to the same degree. The available data suggests there has only been a gradual narrowing of the differential between participation rates among the most privileged and the least privileged over the past two decades – and in some central and eastern European countries it has actually widened. However, once again, important qualifications must be made. First, occupational structures, and so socio-economic classifications, have been transformed over the past four decades – with the waning of traditional forms of manufacturing industry and waxing of the service sector and, more recently, the emergence of a powerful 'knowledge' sector of the economy. The overall effect has been to shrink the size of the working class, certainly in its traditional proletarian form, and to increase the size of the middle class, although this new middle class is very different from the classic bourgeoisie of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. But, while inequalities have been maintained (and even increased), social structures have become more fluid – as status signifiers and also as determinants of participation in higher education. A second important qualification illustrates the need for a finer-grain analysis. In the United Kingdom certainly (and it is unlikely to be an exception in this respect) working-class women are much more likely to be participate in higher education than working-class men; indeed, among working-class students the ratio between female and male participation rates is greater than among middle-class students.

There are, of course, other dimensions of access/equity such as age (mature students tend to be discriminated against in terms of student support), disability and place of residence (participation s nearly always higher in metropolitan and urban areas than in geographical remote regions). But these three examples illustrate the difficulty of drawing up a clear balance sheet about the contribution of massification to improved access. What they indicate rather is that mass higher education systems are more deeply contextualised, far more embedded in their societies, than the elite university systems of the past. There are two main reasons for this. First, pragmatically, they are much more extensive, touching the individual lives of many more people and producing a substantially higher proportion of the future workforce. So their articulation with society is correspondingly denser. Secondly, and more speculatively perhaps, the emergence of a post-industrial 'knowledge' society, and of a post-modern culture, have tended to break down the old distinctions between society, the economy, politics, culture, science – and, of course, education. As a result, mass higher education systems are more substantial and extensive than the elite systems of the past – but they are also more fluid and more porous. This makes it more difficult, in considering the contribution of massification to improved access, to distinguish clearly between apparently 'external' (or structural) factors – such as demographic

changes, including the growth of minority communities [now, of course, majority communities in some cities and regions] or shifts in occupational structures – from 'internal' (or policy) factors – such as expansion in student numbers and specific policies, national and institutional, for widening participation. This, in turn, makes many of familiar policy analyses, and prescriptions, appear both under-theorised and under-researched. Without a more sophisticated understanding of the complex, and highly reflexive, relationships between mass higher education systems, social structures, economic system and cultural identities it is difficult to offer clear answers.

Strategies on Fair Access and Widening Participation

Since the emergence of mass higher education systems between the 1960s and 1980s three broad types of access strategy have been employed. The first has been to modify the student mix in favour of previously disadvantaged groups through various forms of social engineering. The second has been to trust that the general growth in student numbers will increase participation by students from these social groups. The third has been to develop targeted initiatives which aim to improve participation rates among specific groups, usually through earmarked funding or by other incentives to institutions.

The classic example of the first strategy remains the sometimes aggressive affirmation action programmes pursued in the United States from the 1950s onwards, reaching a climax in the 1960s and 1970s and declining in potency thereafter. Immediately after the end of the Second World War the GI Bill gave preferential access rights to ex-service personnel, establishing a precedent for more sharply discriminatory policies in the future. Some European countries established similar, but lower-profile policies. Mild discrimination in favour of the children of 'workers' was exercised for a while in Social Democrat Scandinavia (as well as in Communist central and eastern Europe). In what later became the Federal Republic of Germany so-called 'victims of Nazism (Fascism)' were also given preferential rights of access. In the United Kingdom returning service personnel, who had deferred entry to higher education because of the war, were also encouraged to resume their studies. But, in general terms, there was little appetite in Europe for large-scale programmes on the scale of those initiated by the GI Bill in the United States, which transformed notions of access and participation (and triggered the advance to mass higher education two decades later) The UK example was more typical, modest measures to return to 'business as usual' in terms of access to higher education not to produce a step-change in participation. The synergies between higher education participation and democratic entitlement, taken for granted in the United States, were largely ignored in Europe.

The climax of affirmative action was reached in the mid-1960s. It can be argued that affirmative action is perhaps better regarded as an 'external' force, as one of the most powerful expressions of the Civil Rights movement, rather than as an element within the 'internal' dynamic of mass higher education systems, although the former was absorbed into and transformed the latter. There was little echo of this emancipatory project in Europe (outside social-democrat Sweden in the 1960s and

1970s perhaps) – perhaps for two main reasons. First, at that period the multi-culturalism and ethnic diversity, which today are as pronounced in Berlin, London and Paris (but not, yet, further east) as in New York, still lay in the future. The politics of social class rather than ethnic identity were remained dominant. Secondly, affirmative action in the United States was driven as much by legal activism as by political action, which explains why its momentum was not significantly slowed by the election of more conservative Republican administrations at both Federal and State levels. It grew out of a particularly American veneration for constitutional principles (Greene, 1989). In Europe the courts in the 1960s played a more subordinate and secondary role; European legal institutions were still in their infancy and national legal systems retained relatively narrow interpretations of matters that legitimately came within the ambit of the law. To the extent that the law intervened at all it was to outlaw the positive discrimination which was at the heart of affirmative action – for example, by entrenching the rights of *baccalaureate* and *abitur* holders to places in universities (even when it was recognised that such entitlements favoured the privileged rather than the poor). Europe's unease about affirmative action, as an activist political project as opposed to a 'politically correct' label, has continued to this day. Paradoxically welfare-state Europe has had less appetite for social engineering in higher education than free-market America.

During the 1990s, and in the past decade, less (overt) emphasis has been placed on affirmative action as an access strategy even in the United States. One reason for this is that some legal barriers were established in the 1980s to the root-and-branch application of affirmative action programmes. But another, and perhaps more important, reason is that affirmative action has been internalised in the American higher education system, as well as being a significant success in terms of equalising access opportunities for students from different ethnic groups. This has happened partly because of a far-reaching shift in social and cultural attitudes towards different forms of discrimination (a global shift, but spearheaded in the United States) – which, for example, is apparent in attitudes to homosexuality (also a major issue on campus); but partly because the United States has remained exceptional in its sensitivity to issues of ethnic difference (today as much in relation to Spanish-speaking citizens as to African Americans) and perhaps also its respect for democratic culture as embodied in the quasi-sacred US Constitution. The first factor, the relaxation of discrimination against minority groups, has also had an impact in Europe – but less so perhaps in the context of access to and participation in higher education. The second factor has become more important as multi-ethnic communities have developed, particularly in western European cities, and has been more directly linked to access policies. But the impact of neither has significantly reduced European scepticism about US-style affirmative action.

The second major access strategy has been to trust to expansion, on the assumption that the growth of student numbers will suck in more students from less privileged social groups. This was the strategy pursued, with different degrees of deliberation, in most European countries in the 1980s and 1990s. But, as has already been discussed, the expansion of higher education was typically justified, first, in terms of the need to produce a more skilled workforce; secondly, in terms of the need to ensure sufficient

places for available for all those who were qualified, and wished, to enter higher education (whether through automatic entitlement, as in most subjects in continental Europe, or because levels of achievement in secondary education were consistently rising so increasing the pool of qualified applicants, as in the United Kingdom); only thirdly, in terms of promoting fairer access. In a similar way the expansion in the number of higher education institutions, whether by associating higher professional and technical schools more closely with universities or by outright abandonment of so-called 'binary systems', also had the effect of widening the social base of most European higher education systems – but, once again, as a secondary effect of the primary purpose of such expansion, to relate higher education more closely to the economy. Limited attempts have been made systematically to address equity issues in the context of general expansion. 'New' students, *i.e.,* students from less privileged social or ethnic groups, have continued to be clustered in 'new' institutions, *i.e.,* non-elite universities or non-university institutions. The apparent decline of access (in terms of promoting greater social equity as opposed to maximising human resources) as the driving force in determining higher education development underlines another key shift, the declining drive towards greater equality in both north America and Europe during the era of (not collapsing) neo-liberal ascendancy.

It is hardly surprizing, therefore, that expansion has sometimes seemed to produce disappointing results in terms of widening access; that was almost never its primary purpose. Probably the results with regard to access are no more, or less, disappointing than the effects of higher education expansion in producing a highly skilled post-industrial workforce; creeping credentialisation without necessarily significant enhancement of skill levels has sometimes been as prominent as genuine up-skilling. So disappointment may not connote failure. Any 'failure' is a more general phenomenon, of collapsing faith in the possibility of successfully combining social justice with economic efficiency, rather than a specific failure of higher education policy. The difficulties, conceptual and practical, of precisely determining the impact of expansion on the relative opportunities of different social and ethnic groups have been discussed in the previous section of this paper. But this discussion did suggest that the overall impact of expansion on access has generally been positive, while falling some way short of the social transformation produced by affirmative action in American higher education between the 1960s and 1980s. Certainly there is little evidence to sustain claims about the *embourgeoisement* of mass higher education systems which are sometimes made.

The third broad strategy has been to develop more targeted programmes designed to widen participation by under-represented social and ethnic groups. The wide range of programmes is set out schematically but clearly in the OECD report on tertiary education (Santiago et al., 2008, p 42). This strategy has had two main components – targeting student financial assistance; and giving institutions incentives (typically, in terms of additional funding) to recruit more students from these selected groups. In the United States student aid has always been targeted rather than universally available, and financial assistance from the Federal and State Governments has often been supplemented generous needs-based scholarships and other forms of support (for example, guaranteed paid work on campus) offered by institutions. This

approach grew out of the commitment to affirmative action. In Europe a different approach to student support developed, rooted in the universal-benefits culture of the welfare state. As a result it was less targeted; all students were entitled to some degree of financial assistance (if only, through subsidised housing and travel). In the past decade there has been a tendency in Europe to develop more targeted student financial assistance programmes, mirroring perhaps the larger shift from the universal social benefits provided by the welfare state to the selective support provided the emerging 'market state'.

In the United Kingdom, for example, grants to students to cover living expenses were first frozen, then supplemented and finally replaced by student loans during the course of the 1990s. Today there is a complex web of different forms of financial assistance available to students in secondary, further and higher education, all of it determined according to assessed need. When tuition fees were introduced four years ago institutions were also obliged to offer bursaries to poorer students as a condition for being allowed to charge these higher fees; a new agency, the Office for Fair Access (OFFA), was established to approve, and police, these 'access agreements'. However, at the same time (and in response to the same political pressures from opponents of charging fees), all students – rich as well as poor; from over-represented as well as under-represented groups – became eligible to receive low-interest loans, provided by the State, to pay their tuition fees. This example illustrates the interplay between general trends – in this case, the shift from universal to more targeted forms of student assistance – and political contingencies and local circumstances – which, as in the United Kingdom, compromise or even run contrary to these general trends. As a result generalised predictions often need to be heavily qualified. In particular, the new political environment created by the collapse of the global banking system and consequent economic recession (and the more profound social and cultural transformations it may trigger) may slow, or even reverse, the shift towards more selective student support because it has often been combined with the introduction of, or increase in, tuition fees (which has been closely linked to neo-liberal economic and social policies, themselves now on the cusp of collapse).

The second component of this strategy, the development of incentives to encourage institutions to recruit more students from under-represented groups, is less compromised by any association with neo-liberal 'market' discourse; indeed, it has more in common with affirmative action and other forms of 'social engineering'. It is possible, therefore, that increasing emphasis may be placed in future on incentivising institutions to promote fair access and widen participation and less on targeted student support. If this happens, it will become more important critically to assess the effectiveness of these incentivising initiatives. Although generalising across the very wide range of policies taken in North America by Federal and State/Provincial Governments and in Europe by the European Union and by individual Member States (and regions, *länder* and devolved administrations within them) is difficult, they tend to have three significant weaknesses:

i) First, they are often timid politically. To avoid accusations of positive discrimination, these policies are sometimes designed merely to produce a 'level playing field' – for example, by reimbursing institutions for the extra costs

associated with recruiting students who require additional academic support. The same political timidity may also explain the proliferation of programmes designed to raise awareness (and aspirations) among working-class and minority-community students while they are still in secondary education, so absolving universities from any responsibility for their socially skewed student populations;

ii) The second weakness is that initiatives designed to promote fairer access are often developed alongside other initiatives – for example, to promote world-class research in universities – which may have the effect of reducing their potency. For large multi-faculty institutions (which include most universities) funding incentives to promote wider access are often cancelled out by other funding incentives. Indeed the introduction of funding incentives likely to favour one particular class of institution – for example, those most engaged in widening participation – often leads to demands that other funding incentives should be introduced to counter-balance this effect, producing a form of policy grid-lock;

iii) The third weakness is that they are inevitably heterogeneous – and, therefore, fragmented. They seek to address a wide range of different forms of potential discrimination – the obvious categories such as gender, ethno-cultural origin, disability and social class; but others, such as geographical situation (whether in the more deprived areas of big cities or geographically remote areas). These different forms of discrimination comprise a complex mosaic, with many overlapping pieces. As a result policy prescriptions are equally wide-ranging (and fragmented?) – ranging from financial (targeted student assistance) through pedagogic and curricular (targeted academic support, particularly in the first years of higher education) to legislative and administrative (reformed admissions policies).

Despite these weaknesses this third strategy has become increasingly prominent during the past decade. In the next decade, if the collapse of the neo-liberal ascendancy slows the progress towards introducing (or increasing) tuition fees and developing other 'market' strategies in higher education and leads to a revival of State interventions (and acknowledgment of their legitimacy), more emphasis may be placed on incentivising institutions to promote fairer access – and, as has already been suggested, less on targeting student financial aid (because it has been so closely linked with charging fees). The first strategy – affirmative action – was decisive in the first phase of the development of mass higher education systems, but been on the retreat during the past decade. The second strategy – the general expansion of student numbers – has remained a constant (as has been demonstrated, there has been little evidence of a slowing of growth rates since 2000); but an unpredictable constant, because both the demand for higher education and the supply of student places, particularly the former, is shaped by larger social forces, many of which are external to higher education itself. As such, general expansion must be regarded as a necessary condition, but not a decisive condition, for promoting access.

Future Scenarios

An important theme of this paper has been that the erosion of the neo-liberal world consensus which has held sway since the 1980s, and which has made significant influence over the evolution of higher education policies, could have a significant impact on both how access, equity and participation are conceptualised and also the future shape of policies designed to promote these objectives. That consensus has indicated a 'single path' of development for higher education, with only secondary adaptations to local circumstances – in brief, the development of more explicit market mechanisms (including, most prominently, student fees). That 'single path', in turn, has framed debates and policies on access tending to regard access policies as essentially corrective mechanisms rather than developmental drivers and to emphasise student aid packages rather than institutional steering. A new, or revised, consensus – in which, for example, state action had a more prominent place – is likely to lead to changes in strategies for the development of higher education and, consequently, for access policies.

Naturally there is a reluctance to accept this conclusion, even when stated in such general terms. For almost three decades the higher education 'policy class' has invested heavily in market scenarios – which have been partially implemented, although with different degrees of enthusiasm and rigour, by Governments. It will be argued that countries which have been most ready to adopt market mechanisms in higher education have also created the most extensive higher education systems – with, arguably, the most advanced forms of access (Santiago et al., 2008, Figure 4.9, p. 187). However, the implied causality can be questioned – first, because these countries included richest nations (although there are also examples of rich nations with well developed – and, arguably, more accessible – higher education systems that did not follow this path, for example in Scandinavia); and secondly, because the most dynamic economies since 1980 have been those which most fully espoused the neo-liberal path (although the sustainability of that economic growth is now in doubt). If the emphasis is placed on more equitable outcomes rather than access, as narrowly defined by enrolment ratios, a different picture emerges. A recent study has demonstrated the relationship between social equality and a whole range of positive social and economic indicators (Pickett and Wilkinson, 2009).

It has been argued in this paper that access has been, and continues to be, the primary driver of higher education development – in two senses. First, increasing aspirations to participate in higher education, which have extended far beyond the privileged social and ethnic groups (and gender) from which the bulk of students was drawn in elite university systems, have led to growing demand for places in universities and colleges – and it is this growing demand that has fuelled expansion (and, therefore, produced massification). Although many policy makers and institutional leaders have emphasised the 'pull' of the rising demand for highly skilled graduates in the knowledge economy, the 'push' of social demand, the desire to participate in a higher education, has been the dominant force shaping contemporary higher education. Put simply, without access there would be no mass higher education. Secondly, because the impact of massification has been qualitative

as well as quantitative, it is through access that the 'social' has entered more fully into modern higher education. Universities, of course, have always been social institutions – in the sense that they reproduced and reshaped social (as well as – or more than? – academic) elites and, over the long haul, they have modified social structures through the application of the science and scholarship they have generated. But contemporary higher education institutions are now expected directly to address social agendas – through their admissions policies, their curriculum, their teaching methods and their research. They have become major components of contemporary society, often dominating presences in cityscapes and powerful contributors to social and cultural values as well as the engines of urban, regional and national economies. It is even argued that the boundaries between the academy and society have become so porous that they are being absorbed into each other. Again, put simply, access has put the 'social' into contemporary higher education.

The significance of access in shaping the future development of higher education will remain. But it may be expressed in different forms, depending on future scenarios. The three most likely scenarios are (i) 'steady state', the end of more than half a century of growth; (ii) continuing expansion at, or even above, the growth rate in the past 10 years; and (iii) expansion – but accompanied by a transformation of higher education on the scale of the massification of the past three decades, involving perhaps its evolution into a truly comprehensive lifelong-learning system.

'Steady State'

The first scenario is 'steady state' – which is both possible and at the same time would be unprecedented. It is possible for two main reasons:

– The first is that the number of young adults will decline in the second decade of the twenty-first century in many European countries (sharply so in some central and eastern European countries), although not in the United States and Canada where fertility rates did not decline during the 1990s and where immigration rates are actually increasing (or were increasing before the current economic difficulties). Even in Europe demographic patterns are uneven. In many Western Europe countries, notably the United Kingdom, inward migration will more than compensate for any past declines in fertility. As a result the major metropolitan centres (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, London and Paris) and their surrounding regions, which have important concentrations of higher education, will experience increases rather than decline. In addition declines in fertility in the 1990s were most pronounced in native working-class populations, who were (and are) least likely to participate in higher education, while among high-participation groups such as native middle-class and immigrant populations family sizes were maintained (and actually increased in the case of the former):

– The second reason why 'steady state' is a plausible scenario is that Governments may struggle to maintain current levels of public expenditure on higher education as tax yields decline and social security costs rise, while at the same time perhaps finding it more difficult to shift the financial burden more on to students and their families (or future employers) because of unfavourable credit conditions and also because of the discrediting of neo-liberal policies. The likelihood of this happening is even more

difficult to assess than the impact of demography. In the short run Governments are increasing expenditure to stimulate economic activity, although this may not be sustainable in the medium and long term. Also the experience of previous post-war economic down-turns is that the social demand for higher education tends to increase during these periods.

This first scenario is unprecedented because the number of students has continued to increase year-on-year for more than half a century. The last significant dip in student numbers took place in the 1930s – during a world depression (deeper and longer-lasting than even the most pessimistic economists foresee today); and, more crucially perhaps, in an era before mass higher education when universities and colleges did not have the same degree of social penetration they have in the first decade of the twenty-first century. Today not only is the economy (excessively?) growth-oriented; society as a whole is characterised by a sense of movement, and fluidity, which was either absent or much less pronounced 80 years ago. This dip also happened before the emergence of a knowledge economy in which skills and knowledge are primary resources. As a result, it may be that mass higher education systems simply do not have a reverse gear.

However, if higher education moves into 'steady state', it will have important consequences for access. The possibility of improving access by expanding the overall size of the system will disappear. Two reactions are possible. The first would be to abandon the drive towards fairer access. Although this might be possible in the short run, it might be difficult to sustain because it would make it more difficult for Government to pursue 'social inclusion' policies at a time when the need for such policies had been reinforced. The other reaction would be to re-double the efforts to improve access and widen participation, no longer relying on the gentle upward momentum of the growth in student numbers to produce greater equity. This, of course, would involve a return to more aggressive affirmative action policies, and other forms of positive discrimination and social engineering. It is doubtful whether a post-welfare state political culture in which notions of community have been transformed by virtual 'social networking' would be sufficiently robust to introduce and maintain such policies. Either way, whether leading to the abandonment of fair access (and, more widely, social inclusion) or to the re-introduction of positive discrimination in higher education admissions, 'steady state' is a bleak scenario for access.

Continuing Growth

The second scenario is that higher education systems in North America and Europe will continue to expand during the next decade at a similar rate to that experienced in the past decade. This is perhaps the most plausible of the three scenarios because it represents a continuation of the historic rate of expansion, the long-established growth trend. The rate, of course, will be likely to vary between different countries (and also regions within countries). For example, expansion may be difficult to sustain in countries hard hit by the present recession and also by demographic decline (especially if intensified by outward migration); this may be the fate of some smaller central and eastern European countries. Another trend that can already be observed, the growing

attraction of universities in large metropolitan areas and the declining popularity of universities in older industrial cities, may also be accelerated. But overall higher education will continue to grow – even if funding fails to keep pace.

This is also the most familiar scenario. The broad mix of access policies which have been pursued in the past – affirmative action (perhaps in decline in policy terms); general expansion (leading to a more mixed – and, hopefully, more socially representative – student population); and targeted policies (in terms both of student financial aid and institutional incentives to widen participation) – will continue. The difficult choices produced by 'steady state' will be absent, or muted. However, the second scenario would not simply represent 'business as usual'. A major change might be that on balance expansion is likely to be less able to deliver wider participation – for several reasons:

i) In some countries the number of young adults, who still comprise the bulk of students, will decline significantly which will make it more difficult to sustain past growth rates. Although the impact of these demographic factors can be exaggerated, future growth is likely to depend (even more) on near-universal rates of participation among middle-class students. This – structural – discrimination against working-class students will be difficult to avoid because of different fertility rates among different social classes over the past 12 years;

ii) There is already evidence that the relationship between student growth and fairer access, which was direct and transparent a generation ago, has become less clear-cut. Changes in the occupational structure (and so the relative weight of different socio-economic groups) have led to more complex articulations between extending opportunities and promoting access – in higher education, as in many other public services;

iii) It is also possible that the cost to individual students of future growth will rise if public support fails to keep pace, which could act as a further disincentive for students from less privileged social classes to participate in higher education systems which seem to be increasingly weighted to more privileged students;

iv) Finally, further expansion is likely to increase the diversity of higher education systems (and, potentially, exacerbate institutional hierarchies – which, in turn, may widen differentials in graduate earnings).

If overall growth is less able to deliver fairer access, it means that one, other or both of the two other access strategies – affirmative action and targeted widening participation policies – may have to take up the slack. It is difficult to imagine a return to the more aggressive affirmative action policies of the past. Not only is the public support for such policies – and, therefore, the political will to implement – likely to be lacking; but also affirmative action might also need to be more aggressive to achieve the same results because in mature mass higher education systems with near-universal levels of middle-class participation there would be less head-room for non-threatening forms of positive discrimination (in other words, there might have to be as many losers as winners, which was not in the case in the 1960s and 1970s). However, the scope for widening participation policies, designed to incentivise institutions to deliver fairer access, taking up the slack may also be limited. They would face a similar degree of

political resistance, orchestrated perhaps by elite universities which felt they would lose funding. But, to be effective, they would have to be expanded and made more effective – which would lead to even greater resistance. On examination, therefore, this second scenario also has serious limitations in terms of access.

Lifelong Learning

The third scenario is the transformation of higher education systems into lifelong learning systems in a step-change at least as significant as the shift from elite to mass higher education a generation ago (Field, 2006). There is not space in this paper, nor is it appropriate, to analyse what such a transformation might involve in detail. But, in order to appreciate its potential impact on access, it is necessary to sketch its main contours. These include the radical extension of the scope of higher education / lifelong learning to embrace existing and new types of informal learning and learning in communities and workplaces; far-reaching processes of de-institutionalisation in higher education (or, perhaps, re-institutionalisation with both voluntary bodies, representing civil society, and commercial organisations, representing the market, playing a more significant role alongside – or even in competition with – traditional public and not-for-profit private institutions); equally challenging redefinitions of academic standards (and also of excellence in research); and the re-focusing of attention on the continuing education of more diverse social groups and older students (so ending the dominant focus on the initial, and terminal, education of, generally privileged, young adults).

The impact of such a transformation on access cannot be over-estimated. First, the conceptual landscape would be utterly changed, rendering redundant contemporary notions of qualification, entitlement and even participation. The language of 'fair access' and 'widening participation' would have to be replaced by new terminology. Secondly, current tensions (even contradictions) between fairer access, academic quality and graduate employment might disappear – but only to be replaced by new tensions (and contradictions). For example, the relationship between higher education and elite careers (in the elite university systems of the past) and/or graduate work-forces (in the mass higher education systems of the present) might be replaced by new articulations – at once more targeted and reductionist (for example, subordinating higher education to skill formation, especially at the postgraduate or continuing education level) and more open and emancipatory (by placing more emphasis on enhancing life-chances through a 'graduate culture'). Thirdly, the familiar basket of strategies and policies, which have been discussed in this and the preceding sections of this paper, would have to be re-thought. Affirmative action might need to be broadened into lifetime entitlement; the expansion of (formal and initial) higher education might be over-shadowed by an even more ambitious project, the networking of a growing array of diverse 'knowledge' institutions (formal and informal, public and private); and targeted widening participation policies (which, in spite or perhaps because of massification, are designed to make it easier for 'non-standard' students to access a 'standard' higher education experience) might become just one element, and possibly a comparatively minor element, in more open systems offering multiple, even discordant, experiences.

This third scenario is an exhilarating but also threatening prospect. On the one hand it offers a way-out, a final termination, of what is still perceived to be, even in the mass higher education systems of the twenty-first century, a fundamental contradiction between 'access' and 'qualification'; only when higher education has ceased to be 'higher' and become something else can this contradiction be resolved. On the other hand it is full of dangers – to academic standards and to academic freedom (and so scientific and intellectual creativity) perhaps; but also maybe to equal opportunities and social justice (because more open systems do not always, or often, produce greater equality). This third scenario is also perhaps the least likely – not simply in the short term, the next decade, in the sense that neither the conceptual nor the policy landscape can change radically in such a short space of time (and, so often, in order for things to change they must stay the same); but also because large-scale and fundamental transformations are only truly appreciated in retrospect.

Summary and Conclusion

This paper has considered trends and developments in access in North America and Europe. Its starting point was that access has always been, and remains, the key driver of higher education development – despite the emphasis placed on other dimensions including the quality dimension and, in particular, workforce demands (which have become more prominent within 'knowledge society' discourse during the past decade). Access, as expressed through the social demand for higher education, has not only determined the overall size (and scope) of contemporary higher education systems but also deeply influenced their practices and values.

The paper has considered these trends and development in access under four headings – and in four sections:

– In the first the degree to which the purposes and values of higher education have been modified by the development of mass systems was considered. Massification has been a pervasive phenomenon affecting all institutions including (and, perhaps, especially elite universities). Statistics relating to the growth of student numbers in higher education during the past decade were also considered. From these figures it appears that there has been no slackening in the pace of expansion;

– In the second section the question of whether massification had been successful in delivering fairer access was considered, and the counter-argument that mass higher education had been less dynamic in terms of promoting social mobility was addressed. While there had been some disappointments, participation by women and minority communities in particular had made substantial advances. There is little evidence to support the conclusion that mass higher education systems has been 'captured' by the growing middle class;

– The third section considered the main access strategies pursued during the last, and preceding, decade. Distinctions were drawn between: (i) affirmative action, or positive discrimination in favour of disadvantaged social groups; (ii) the general effects of growth in promoting fairer access; and (iii) more targeted widening

participation policies, whether through student financial assistance or incentives to institutions to recruit more students from under-represented groups. It is clear that the priority attached to these three strategies, and their efficacy, has varied over time;

– In the final section three scenarios for the future, and their likely impact on access, were discussed. These were (i) 'steady state', or the radical reduction in historic growth rates; (ii) continuing growth, at or about these historic rates; and (iii) the transformation of higher education systems into more extensive and open lifelong learning systems. It is clear that the first of these scenarios would make it more difficult to pursue access; that the second would have ambiguous results; and that the third would offer both exhilarating opportunities but also pose serious challenges (and even threats).

The overall conclusion of this paper is that, despite the mixed results produced by the strategies that had been pursued in the past and the uncertainties posed by these three scenarios for the future, there is little prospect of access ceasing to be the dominant driver of higher education development – although it may no longer be defined almost exclusively in familiar terms of 'fairer access' and 'widening participation'. Instead access is likely to be interpreted in much broader, and more fluid, terms giving rise to new strategies and novel policies.

Policy Implications

The major policy implications arising from this paper are:

1. In order to ensure effective and holistic policies on access a broad definition is required embracing overall expansion and participation rates, enrolment ratios and graduate outcomes. To concentrate on one or two elements is likely to produce partial analyses – and lead to ineffective policies;

2. A basket of access policies is needed to meet this broad definition – including measures to raise aspirations among under-represented groups (but also to remove obstacles to their participation) and to ensure retention and success, incentives (and directives) to institutions and student support packages;

3. The erosion of the neo-liberal consensus in economic (and social) policy is likely to lead to a more critical approach towards the promotion of market mechanisms as the 'single path' for the development in higher education – and to corresponding modifications of strategies for access and participation.

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Values of the University

Andrei Marga

Summary

Higher education institutions are at the same time open and obliged to ensure competitive scientific research, high quality education and specialized services for the community. Universities are caught between the attraction of some classic organizations and the lucid consciousness of the changes in society. They try to ensure their stability within a world that challenges them to take initiatives. Universities satisfy their mission within society by accomplishing functions which develop along with the changes around them. They are asked to integrate in the functioning of societies and to explore better alternatives for their organization and evolution. Universities promote and incorporate values. Is the discussion on values *en contretemps* with the urgencies for action that appear in different countries of the international community? Is discussion on values en contretemps with the requirements for sustainability and operationalization of the action programmes? Does an institution dedicated to formation, scientific research, community services, and the promotion of rational solutions actually need to clarify values or does it need technical solutions? Which perspective on values can explain the financial and economic crisis that began in 2008? At a distance from traditionalism, and from the positivist-utilitarian or functionalist-structural approaches of today, this paper attempts to look at the crucial problems facing universities today, from the point of view of a value-oriented and value-based education. Finally, this paper is analyzing these issues and attempts to provide proposals on policy consequences.

Introduction and Context

Higher education and its place in the system of values in society are now gaining new attention and being considered as having great importance in various productive functioning of the university [a generic reference to various types of higher education institutions]. Such issues as academic freedom, institutional autonomy, promotion of truth, social responsibility, integrity, and also creativity have been used in the public debate on universities. These topics can be looked at from several angles: achievements, social effects, quality, relationships with students etc. We

may also deal with higher education, from *the point of view of incorporating values*, and it is our duty to do so.

The approach to higher education, from the point of view of values, has continual reasons (the organizational traditions and humanistic culture which are at the origins of the European university, the dependence of university achievements on ethical commitments) as well as reasons related to present day reality and characterizing it globalization. It has been rightfully said that "the lives and experiences of youth growing up today will be linked to economic realities, social processes, technological and media innovations, and cultural flows that traverse national boundaries with ever greater momentum. These global transformations, we believe, will require youth to develop new skills that are far ahead of what most educational systems can now deliver. New and broader global visions are needed to prepare children and youth to be informed, engaged, and critical citizens in the new millennium" (Suarez-Orozco and Baolian Qin-Hilliard, 2004).

There is a prevailing view that in the future that has already begun multiple abilities such as; "the disciplined mind", "the synthesizing mind", "the creative mind", "the respectful mind" and "the ethical mind", together with non-instrumental values, will become indispensable qualities of graduates. This is going to require rethinking of our approach to education. As noted Howard Garden:

> "We acknowledge the importance of science and technology but do not teach scientific ways of thinking, let al.one how to develop individuals with synthesizing and creating capacities essential for continual scientific and technological progress. And too often, we think of science as the prototype of all knowledge, rather than one powerful way of knowing that needs to be complemented by artistic and humanistic and perhaps also spiritual stances" (Garden, 2008).

In such case, value-oriented and value-based education is part of the culture characterizing the era of globalization.

Taking into consideration the recent evolution of universities in the countries which are of our particular interest at our conference – those in Europe and North America as well as Israel, the question needs to be studies in the global context. Therefore the following questions become pertinent:

– Can values still be discussed, considering the urgencies for functioning and action, which frequently appear in different countries and in the world community (actions that nowadays are being rightfully directed towards Africa, above all)?

– Is the talk about values nowadays somewhat in contradiction with the requirements for sustainability and the operationalization of such action programmes, for the purpose of productivity and competitiveness demanded by globalization?

– Does an institution dedicated to teaching and learning, research, community services and the promotion of rational solutions, such as the university, need the clarification of values or does it rather require organizations, governance and management capable of mobilizing resources and of being productive and efficient?

– What perspective on values eventually explains the current financial and economic crisis?

When analyzing the way universities function nowadays, it can be observed that some of them remain very **traditional** in which inflexibly following the vision consecrated two centuries ago; other universities act in a **positivistic-utilitarian** way, understanding their mission as a duty to solve educational and scientific research problems within a context; others are dominated by **functionalism**, considering themselves to be accomplishments of pre-established roles within a system. In order to clarify the situation of values within higher education today, one has to go beyond the points of view generated by traditionalism, utilitarian positivism and functionalism, and look upon the new initiatives in university organization and functions. This paper has been written from such perspective and attempting reassessment of academic values in a new environment.

When values are being approached, one may either deconstruct them, by indicating their dependence on the historical contexts of every promotion of values, or postulate a loyalty towards values despite the complexity of experiences people are living. However, another approach is necessary. Let us observe, for instance, **academic freedom**. Thinking freely, exercising education and scientific research without constraints represent, as we know, values to which higher education is intimately and profoundly related. Nowadays, however, it is unrealistic to ignore the factual dependency of the way in which the university professor assumes his/her role under the technical, administrative, legal conditions which are established above him/her. The appeal to academic freedom remains indispensable, as the exercise of the academic profession is conditioned by this value, but, if taken singularly, the appeal is ineffective if it is not organically continued by an analysis of other dependencies and the promotion of the right to academic freedom in their environment. Equally important at this point is the issue of **university autonomy**. To take decisions in situations related to education and scientific research, in matters of internal organization which affect education and scientific research, without external interferences, represents the value that the university's efficient functioning always depends on. However, nowadays, it is not realistic to ignore the fact that universities depend, in both cases, *i.e.,* education and scientific research, on decisions of educational policies and policy of science, on financial resources, which they cannot control. Institutional autonomy is not dispensable, as its absence affects achievements, but now operates under conditions which are more complicated than ever.

The paper is analyzing and trying to give answer to the above-mentioned questions in as well as look at the current issues and alternatives [based on experiences in the countries of UNESCO Europe Region – Europe, North America, and Israel]. It also reflects on political consequences of the university's values which are indispensable in a new era of modern history.

An Assumed History

In the modern era, *comprehensive rationalism* in the setting up of the university, expressed in a classical way by Humboldt and John Henry Newman has won a durable profile and as such it generates nostalgias which has repercussions, so that

the clarification of the values of higher education today requires some reflection on this classical concepts of the university.

Responsible for the organization of the University of Berlin (1810), Wilhelm von Humboldt, saw higher education as "the highest peak where all exclusively made for the nation's moral culture is brought together" (Von Humboldt, 1990). Within a university, knowledge, under the advanced form of sciences, is promoted without obstacles, but this promotion is delineated by a "moral culture". The institution itself is organized on "principles", such as academic freedom, the disinterested pursuit of truth, institutional autonomy, while philosophy and arts crown it.

Half a century later, Cardinal Newman considered the university as "one of those greatest works, great in their difficulty and their importance, one which are deservedly expended the rarest intellects and the most varied endowments" (Newman, 1996). The university represents the gathering of the main forces consecrated to obtaining and using knowledge, which are dedicated to the promotion of "Truth". "What an empire is in political history, such is a University in the sphere of philosophy and research. It is, as I have said, the high protecting power of all knowledge and science, of fact and principle, of inquiry and discovery, of experiment and speculation; it maps out the territory of the intellect, and sees that the boundaries of each province are religiously respected, and that there is neither encroachment nor surrender on any side. It acts as umpire between truth and truth, and, taking into account the nature and importance of each, assigns to all their due order of precedence. It maintains no one department of thought exclusively, however ample and noble; and it sacrifices none. It is deferential and loyal, according to their respective weight, to the claims of literature, of physical research, of history, of metaphysics, of theological science. It is impartial towards them, and promotes each in its own place and for its own object". The university is comprehensive, not only etymologically, and philosophy represents the field that crowns the curricula of an academic institution, being committed by its own nature in relation to the "Life" of individuals. In this regard Cardinal Newman stated the following:

> "The philosophy of an imperial intellect, for such I am considering a University to be, is based, not so much on simplification as on discrimination. Its true representative defines, rather than analyzes. He aims at no complete catalogue, or interpretation of the subjects of knowledge, but a following out, as far as man can, what in its fullness is mysterious and unfathomable. Taking into his charge all sciences, methods, collections of facts, principles, doctrines, truths, which are the reflections of the universe upon the human intellect, he admits them all, he disregards none, and, in disregarding none, he allows none to exceed or encroach. His watchword is *Live and let live*" (*Ibidem*, p. 220).

The comprehensive rationalism has explicitly placed the university on the foundation of the "disinterested pursuit of truth", considered to be a generator of moral values, and has exalted the importance of philosophy as promoter of an integrative vision upon human life and as a discipline that gives culture a direction.

Another approach to setting of the university derived from *the positivism* which was particularly pertinent in the first part of the nineteenth century. The university

founded by Napoleon (1802) was dedicated to the needs of training personnel capable of management, while the "civic universities" (1852) in England set as one of their purposes to satisfy the needs of training personnel for the emergent economy of that time. Walter Ruegg gives a following description of the Napoleonic model:

> "Napoleonic university policy both retained certain innovations from the eighteenth century, such as specialist colleges, and reversed the opening up of the university system to all, a feature of the radical revolutionary period. There were three primary goals: first, to secure for the post-revolutionary state and its society the officials necessary for political and social stabilization; second, to make sure that their education was carried out in harmony with the new social order and to prevent the emergence of new professional classes; and third, to impose limits on freedom of the intellect if it seemed likely to prove dangerous to the state" (Ruegg, 2004).

Several decades later, in Great Britain, there were created "new institutions which tried to make up for the deficiencies of the traditional universities through private or municipal initiatives. As a result there was a variety of types of higher educational institutes, which in contrast to the French and German models had few internal connections. It is only possible to speak of a 'model' during the period covered at the end of this volume, when a degree of national coherence was imposed on the originally heterogeneous British university system. Various factors played a part in this: the success of the new universities, the influence of the German model, efforts to restructure the old universities, the creation of an academic career path, which, because of the way that the professors in the newer universities looked to Oxbridge, meant that the various universities had a good deal in common" (*Ibidem*, p. 53).

Universities took the responsibility to support, with qualified staff, the functioning of institutions in society and economic development, which have become, in time, direct or indirect criteria for the evaluation of academic achievements. Therefore, higher education was integrated with the developmental programmes of the national administrations.

After the First World War, many European universities were subject to "**politization" within certain ideological interpretations of history**. The autonomy of thought and the solidarity with the values of liberty and justice were not only undermined, but also programmatically attacked. Heidegger is nowadays considered to be the most representative exponent of the offensive against them by arguing that the university began in spirit from Socrates' contemptuous and insolent distancing of himself from the Athenian people, his refusal to accept any command from them to cease asking: What is justice? What is knowledge? What is good? Hence doubting the common stand about such questions and trying to impose the rule of philosopher.

Particularly trying times for the values of the university were the 1930s when persons like Heidegger put academic values at the service of the German culture [as interpreted at that time] (Bloom, 1987). It is the time when Heidegger condemned "academic freedom" and that time rector of the University of Freiburg in Breisgau argued that academic freedom, had to be banished from the university, as it was

"negative" (Heidegger, 1983). Instead of "academic freedom", he proposed three "oaths and services" – "work duty" as service to the community of people; "value duty" as service to the nation and its history; "knowledge duty" in service of the progress of the German people.

The suspicion regarding modern values has persisted. For instance, several decades later, Carl Schmitt reassumed the formula of the "tyranny of values" according to which any value would become tyrannical and, therefore, restrictive (Schmitt, 2008). Values are seen here as constraints, therefore it would be recommended to replace them with direct actions.

Certainly, Heidegger had not been the first advocate for the connection of the university to the objectives of some political forces in society. The thesis formulated during the *Komintern* Congress (1928), *i.e.,* the world conflict due to the "contradiction", considered to be irreconcilable, between the "capitalist world" and "communism", served as justification for the measures taken by the Soviet state to subordinate civil society and for the repression measures taken against their opponents (Negt, 1974). In countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the university had been embodied in the institutional ensemble that promoted a "communist/socialist education" and which submitted to ideological dictate; higher education started to see itself as an instrument for ideological education in support of the state and party politics.

After Second World War, people lived **the moment of engaging universities in the promotion of the open society, under the sign of reviving the classic academic tradition**. At that time, the "renewal of the university" was assumed under the given circumstances of the destruction of autonomy in favor of ideological arguments. This renewal meant the reestablishment of that "idea of university", which preceded the institution's instrumentalization. It also implied the state's self-limitation of its powers over the university. University and dictatorship reciprocally exclude each other (*Ibidem*, p. 17). The university capable of offering the unity of knowledge and the rational interpretation of world events, in a society of the plurality of freely expressed opinions, had once again become the academic ideal.

The year 1968 was an important turning point in post-war social history with profound implications for higher education, particularly in Western Europe and the United States. New generations of students rejected the political and ideological concepts that followed Second World War and requested societies to submit to new requirements of societal organization. During the students' movements, philosophical currents and political doctrines that could hardly reach an agreement were manifested. However, it is clear that they imposed, beyond their diversity, a new sensitivity (Gilbert, 1999). In fact, in 1968, Europe's "old university" collapsed, engaging the crisis of its professional and ethical rigors, the relaxation of elitism and of its obstacles, making room for an organization that is still evolving. Philip Altbach in his analysis of this development concludes that:

> "Without question, the unprecedented student unrest of the period contributed to a sense of disarray in higher education. The unrest was in part precipitated by deteriorating academic conditions that were the result of rapid expansion. In a few instances, students demanded far-reaching reforms in higher education,

> although they did not propose specific changes. Students frequently demanded an end to the rigidly hierarchical organization of the traditional European university, and major reforms were made in this respect. The « chair » system was modified or eliminated and the responsibility for academic decision making, formerly a monopoly of full professors, was expanded – in some countries to include students. At the same time, the walls of the traditional academic disciplines were broken down by various plans for interdisciplinary teaching and research" (Altbach, 1998).

Reforms were actually undertaken in different Western and Eastern countries. However, at the beginning of the '1990s, a general tendency of "restructuring European universities through improving the administrative efficiency and accountability of the universities" was installed. The productive organization has become the dominating topic.

Since the second half of the 1970s, European universities have tried to satisfy **the needs of the advanced industrial society** and to reorganize themselves on grounds of achievements in education, scientific research, and community services. The continuous technical and economic development in modern societies, under the conditions of democracy, was the framework for the enlargement of higher education towards different social classes and for the development of scientific research in universities. The number of universities has increased; the number of professors and students has reached unprecedented sizes; the massification of academic studies has begun; the costs related to scientific research have greatly increased; scientific research has passed to the direct support of industrial development; science has been more and more considered under the aspect of its useful effects on economic growth; the legitimization of the academic programmes and of scientific research have been set to be dependent on relevancy in relation to economic technical development (Lübbe, 1989). Academic freedom and university autonomy have always proved to be prerequisites for a competitive university, so that, by the end of the 1980s, these values started to be formally presented. A particularly place in it has the signing in September 1988 in Bologna of the *Magna Charta Universitatum*. One may see that this historical document made a return towards **the reassuming of classical understanding of the university**, away from the positive or functionalist reductions typical for industrial societies, under changed conditions. It reassumed the concept of the university as "a centre for culture, knowledge and research" and emphasized the autonomy of the university in relation to the political, economic and ideological powers existing in a society: "freedom in research, industry and formation, as fundamental principles of academic life, must be guaranteed and promoted by the public powers and by universities" (*Magna Charta Universitatum*).

The *Magna Charta* considers the academic freedom and university autonomy both as value and right which are essential for the mission, organization and functioning of a university. Respecting and protection of these values and rights is assisted by ***The Magna Charta Observatory*** which gathers information, express opinions and prepare appropriate documents and undertake appropriate actions. The Observatory works together, or in agreement with other national, European or international organizations pursuing similar or compatible aims.

During the 1990s, European universities benefited from **the suppression of the ideological divide of the continent**. On the other hand, the association of the European universities after Second World was premonitory, anticipating the European unification. Above all, after the "historical turn" in Central and Easter Europe, around 1989, universities were confronted with the requirements for competitiveness of the era of globalization, where they tried to handle both sides of European academic history: the orientation towards society from the perspective of the traditional humanism and the orientation towards technological and economic efficiency supported by sciences (Spies, 2000). Finding a common measure for accumulation and transfer of learning outcomes, conceiving the mechanisms for quality assurance, making the academic systems compatible, adopting better practices that favor the efficiency of higher education, and reaching social purposes have become important points on the agenda of higher education.

Nowadays, we are in the same moment, only that we are living in a "super-complex" world, and the "walls" of the university, which separate it from the external environment, are transforming into "bridges" towards industry, economy, and society. It is felt, in many places, that there is a need to complement the acquiring of academic freedom and university autonomy, as well as the commercialization that is spreading together with the assessment of the values proper to the university, within the framework of re-conceptualization of efficiency as effectiveness and social responsibility (De Souza Santos, 2006). Moreover, the tendency to change the "development pattern" of the modern society (Attali, 2008), after the crisis that started in 2008, is now not only on the horizon, but also a fact of experience. New reflections on higher education are being developed at the moment, especially within universities, the quests being stimulated by the new "challenges" of the universities. However, unlike other institutions, universities cannot completely solve their own problems without taking into consideration their own history, and, in a way, without assuming it.

Systemic Changes and Re-Thinking of the Model

Universities today, find themselves in a complex situation. They are actually caught in between the attraction of the classical rationalism, which supports the self-confidence developed on the road to false *grandeur* and the rational awareness of the changes in modern society, which claim the change of the universities themselves. These tensions, we can even argue about the crises of the classical model of the university when looking at such recent developments as:

– the diversification of academic specializations which has exceeded the inherited organization of the faculties at the middle of the nineteenth century;

– development of experimental sciences that they stroke through the philosophical frame prescribed by classicism has diminished the place of philosophy and humanities in knowledge pyramid; and,

– diminishing role and lost monopoly of the university on basic research.

At least three signs are marking this crisis and make pressures on the structure and functioning of the university:

i) the continuing change of the type of knowledge required by the globalised markets in favour of knowledge that can be technically valued, which requires a reorientation towards knowledge with technological impact (taking the term "technology" in a broader sense than industrial technology) and, together with it, a change with implications on the level of materializing the mission in functions;

ii) the universities' loss not only of their monopoly on scientific research, but also of the monopoly on the training of specialists, as a result of the increasing number of education suppliers, universities being therefore determined to re-identify their position within the differentiated societies of our time;

iii) the new concentrations of economic power in the era of globalization, and the concentrations of political and media-related power nowadays increase the university's dependency (under crucial aspects, such as establishing specializations, the orientation of the scientific research, financing) on forces of society, which lead to a new proportioning of dependency and autonomy.

The university is now more than ever before placed in the competitions of a highly differentiated society, where it is "challenged" to find its profile. It is just as true that the university, as an institution, has no rivals as to the capacity to unify knowledge and to elaborate the picture of reality as a whole. Consequently, the investigations carried out by universities, under the conditions of academic freedom and university autonomy, still provide the greatest part of scientific discoveries and the intellectual works of our time. Academic expertise is decisive and the most sought after. A correlation between economic and social development of different countries and the development of higher education has already been noticed. For these reasons, as well others (taking into consideration the exercise of the university's multiple functions), one may legitimately say that the university plays crucially important roles in an era in which the dependence of societies and individual lives on competences, culture, values, integrative visions increases with the "cultural turn" that we are living (Marga, 2005). In this situation, the university's need to find a new profile are inevitable (Daxner, 1996), but the dramatization is just as unrealistic as the grandiloquence, with able action solutions being always necessary.

In the 1960s, on both sides of the Atlantic, proposals for the reorganization of universities had already been noted, in order to overcome the crisis of the classical university and to respond to the new situation. Some pleaded for the recovering of that "common spirit of the university" associated with the Humboldtian university model in order to prevent the university's dispersal under the pressure for greater utility from the point of view of the economic systems (Jaspers and Rosemann, 1961). Others proposed **the revival of the Humboldtian model** as a normative leading model with certain adjustments to the new conditions (Mikat and Schelsky, 1966). However, the long-lasting initiative of those years was undoubtedly the launching of **the research university** – a university based on "three missions": research, teaching and public service, understood as "a company of scholars engaged in discovering and sharing knowledge, with a responsibility to see that such knowledge is used to improve the human condition" (Perkins, 1965).

Meanwhile, the discussions on what universities had to do in view of new challenges have intensified. The promoters of *postmodernism* were already recommending the abandonment of the great integrating visions and of any attempt to make a hierarchy of knowledge, preferring instead the elimination of classical boundaries between various academic disciplines, elimination of discipline-related faculties (Lyotard, 1979). The advocates of structural functionalism argued that the functional differentiation of politics, science and education had already reached the level where the possibility of conceiving them together was closed forever, so that the Humboldtian idea of the university could no longer be re-launched. The representatives of *discursive rationalism* showed that, under the conditions of the continuous differentiation of activities, only communication could provide an environment for the unity assumed by the classical university, so that one should proceed to the reconstruction of that university (Habermas, 1987). The **reconstruction of the Humboldtian university** was also supported by those who advocated for the strengthening of the humanistic culture in late modern society, based on experience of the graduate schools of arts and sciences that assured the achievements of the American universities (Henrich, 1992).

As a reaction to postmodernism, American scholars proposed the revival of that Western rationalistic tradition that made possible the success of the Western university, and, as consequence, argued for the cancellation of the concept of "relativization", reduction of the academic achievement criteria to group adhesion, dissolution of the distinction between professionalized culture and daily culture. In all this would eventually result in dissolution of postmodernism (Searle, 1993).

However, the initiative that has marked, on a particularly great and global scale was launched by Burton Clark project of **the entrepreneurial university**. This involves, before all, the modification of the universities' attitudes in favor of a proactive attitude, associated to a reconciliation of new managerial values with traditional academic ones as well as expanded developmental periphery, interdisciplinary-oriented research centers. This would not only lead to a diversified funding base but would change departments and faculties into "entrepreneurial units". The entrepreneurial university has, among its premises, the availability **to transform the "public university" into a "foundation university",** to change some statutory collegial bodies of the university, the availability to assume together the self-determination and search for academic excellence and the change-oriented and integrated administrative core (Clark, 1998).

Following the "entrepreneurial university", the recent project of **the new university** has emerged. It proposes the reorganization of specializations by "problem-based" criterion, instead of the traditional "discipline-based" criterion. It also brings about reorganization resulting in emergence of new specializations [*e.g.,* cultural engineering, system engineering], the replacement of chairs with departments, the development of faculties as "schools" [*e.g.,* school of human evolution, school of earth studies]. In "the new university", professorships, which maintain their crucial importance, are reconfigured in a new relationship with the environment in which a formula of "shared professorship" becomes dominant. Students spend most of their time in libraries, laboratories and debate clubs, forming wide networks of intellectual

investigation. Such a university, that remains accessible to large categories of persons who study, and becomes very selective towards its research students, needs competitive specialists, who can no longer be obtained unless the occupying of professorships and the establishment of academic leadership are decisively internationalized. Such a university is conditioned by the provision of leaders, who represent much more than a large number of bureaucratic bosses and managers and competitively initiate necessary changes. The evolution of this university depends on the professors' excellence, which can always be verified in relation with two reference points, and on the leaders' culture.

It is worthy paying attention to a more recent project for the university model that of a **public purpose university.** It represents an attempt to maintain university studies, in spite of the privatization trends, among "the public goods", and to the reorganize university considering, at the same time, the inevitable confrontation between the university and the markets in an era of globalization. The "public purpose university" is a modification of the old public universities: an entrepreneurial university, partially financed from public resources, a large part of its programmes being delivered online, oriented towards applied research and the fulfillment of the need for qualified staff, at local level, with the governing board representing several stakeholders. These profound changes in funding and motivation of public universities require a new classification, a new model, identified by mission, not by ownership (Lyall and Sell, 2006). This university is going to lead to a separation within the group of public universities themselves and it will complement "the research university" and "the private research university".

The Mission and Functions of the University in the Context of Values

Placed in a late modern society that recorded structural change and was challenged from many directions, yet also determined to reconcile to some extent contradicting imperatives such as, for instance, gaining economic relevance and promoting autonomy, the university has been forced to explicitly clarify its profile and to reorganize itself. Many of the universities' dilemmas are being solved by clarifying this profile. This means, above all, to clarify its mission and functions. But how can one establish today the mission of the university and what is the role of values in this context?

From the very beginning we have to say that the mission of the university does not allow for a reduction to a 'lists of goals' that are so frequent in the statutes of today's universities. This mission can be established – without deriving it from general outlooks, which have become unrealistic, on knowledge and society and avoiding a restrictive functionalism, which, in turn, is incapable of taking over the diversified functions that contemporary universities fulfill – by taking as a starting point the lasting experience of prominent universities (Marga, 2002). From this point of view, if by "**mission**" is understood the specific task designed for an institution, then it can be said that the mission of today's university is preparing specialists at the higher level of knowledge in order to increase knowledge and to improve people's living conditions.

Several important delimitations are implied with this determination: the mission of the university is not reduced to training, since it includes higher education and the formation of abilities to develop knowledge; this mission cannot be overlapped with scientific research, since it is directed to training; the mission of the university is not exhausted through services, since these are conditioned by training and by its own scientific research.

If by "**function**" is understood the activities that need to be carried out in order to fulfill the mission, then it can be said that the functions of the university are multiple. Parsons and Platt defined, in their work on the "American University", following four main functions: research and the preparation of the new generations of researchers; the academic training for a profession; general training; contributions to the cultural self-understanding and intellectual enlightenment (Parsons and Platt, 1972). In the view that is made possible today, the functions of the university are more than this and are ordered differently, as they have complex inner links.

The mission of training specialists in order to increase knowledge and to improve people's lives, can be achieved today – under the circumstances in which the universities ensure the cooperative search for truth and use their autonomy as an indispensable premise of their excellence, as well as under the circumstances in which the technological, economic and social development of communities depend on this excellence – only if the university assumes **multiple functions**. The following functions are as important as evident: the training of specialists capable of taking over and further knowledge developing through higher education; carrying out competitive scientific research; the training of specialists able to take on and put into practice the application of knowledge through higher training; providing updated technologies through technological innovation; the analysis of the evolutions in the economic, social and administrative environment; the assessment of situations and the commitment for civil rights, social justice and reforms. Therefore, the functions of the university are nowadays comprehensively assumed and have the best chances of success if the university is considered as a formative institution for sharing and increasing knowledge; being a centre of performant scientific research; a formative institution for taking over and applying knowledge; a source of technological innovation; a forum for the critical analysis of situations; a place of committing to civil rights, social justice and reforms.

This range of functions makes one realize the lasting profiling of the university in today's European and American societies without the refuge in a past that has willy-nilly become a part of the museum, and without the surrealist claim to a future inevitably more complicated than one thinks. It means an understanding of the university in which this institution continues to ensure the cooperative and argumentative search for the truth, under the benefice of autonomy, without reclusion and without allowing itself to be dissolved by the evolutions around it.

This range of functions certainly has an explanation based on the understanding of the university mission and on its historical evolution, which was presented in the earlier part of this paper. More important, however, than the possibility of this explanation is the fact that this range of functions allows us to find a solution to on-going reflection on the university as well as resist to those claiming "the death of university"

under the burden of the functionalist grounds, highlighting the clues of the cooperative search for the truth and of the functional autonomy of the university. It can resist giving in to the temptation of reducing university education to the training naturally required by the economic environment, by highlighting the university as a formative institution for the increase of knowledge and as a centre for competitive scientific research. It can face the temptations from inside the universities to imagine them as places for the non-committed search for truth, isolated from the events of society, affirming, in a beneficial way, the university as a source of technological innovation, a forum for critical analysis and a place of commitment to civil rights, social justice and reforms. It can steer clear of the temptation of deforming university courses and seminars, transforming them into places for exchange of information by developing the university as a formative institution for the taking over, sharing and increasing of knowledge, a centre of competitive scientific research and system of specialized community services. In an era of proliferation of institutions only self-entitled as universities and of unprecedented requests addressed to higher education, it can also help to clarify what the university proper means today, and therefore, when we deal with "**true university**" *(Magna Charta Universitatum).*

At least two additional circumstances determine today what a true university means even if relatively few higher education legislations present a clearly defined concept of what higher educations means and even fewer with a precise connotation of the university. It might even be too challenging taking into consideration that there are views that there is no single criterion, necessary and sufficient of what counts as a university (Sutherland, 1994). This does not mean, however, that we should give up searching for criteria. This can be done by extracting **criteria** of the true university by examining the mission and functions of the university.

This discussion touches the phenomenon of the diversification of higher education and growth of specialized higher education institutions concentrated on a very narrow range of academic disciplines, *e.g.,* languages, physical education, etc. Some of the functions of the true university – competitive scientific research, competitive higher education, specialized community services, forum of critical analysis of situations and the public commitment to democratic values – are not followed, and even less fulfilled in many cases (Marga, 2003).

One of the institutional responses of mass higher education has been diversification of the higher education institutions. To the comprehensive universities, specific to the classic era, numerous other types of universities have been added: mono-specialized universities such as some technical universities, medical universities, and universities focused on distance learning, universities that prolong foundations, banks, companies etc. The universities' profile registers a sometimes disconcerting variation, therefore the following question is legitimate: when are we actually dealing with a university and when are we talking of a higher education institution or a "pluriversity"? However, before any other interrogation regarding a placing in the class of universities, it should be underlined that belonging to a class of higher education institutions is conditioned, before any other criterion, by the professors' integrity. In fact, there is no education where integrity is harmed, and any education is built on the credibility ensured by integrity, professionalism and the capacity to form beliefs. The prestige of

the university is conferred, before all, by the professors' integrity and practices. It also confirms that through their mission and functions, **the university embodies values while its functions must be based on certain values and promotes values within society.**

The Presence and Effectiveness of Values

A particularly pertinent question for issues being analyzed in this paper is: Where do values intervene in the organization and functioning of a university?

As any other institution in highly differentiated modern society, **the choice of values** is inevitable also within a university. One may say that, even tacitly, a university or a system of higher education, no matter how rigorously organized they might be, from the legal, administrative or technical point of view, request values and imply options among values. Values are unique, in a precise meaning. Therefore, the practical problem is not that of the existence of values within universities as institutions and within the systems of higher education, as this existence is certain and does not form a topic of discussion. The problem is another: having in view the mission and functions of the university and of the higher education system, **what values does a university have to assume?**

Universities are complex institutions involved in multiple tasks such as professional formation and education of the personality, scientific research and community services, the promotion of knowledge and the high intellectual approach, the function of which is based on rules, legislation, internal regulation, strategies, operational planning etc. A related question can be posed if reference only to its own rules enough for the institution to function according to them? The answer is "no" because, in fact, anywhere in the world, in the case of any institution, not only does *the implementation of rules depend on the values* assumed by those involved, but those values open the horizon where the rules themselves are applied. Values represent conditions for the possibility and efficiency of rules.

It is therefore appropriate to argue about the university in the context of the arguments about the need for the functional democracy to be nurtured by **cultural ideals (**Bobio, 2007). The ideals intervene in the rules of democracy in two decisive moments. First of all, ideals intervene in the genesis itself of the rules and, afterwards, they intervene when rules are applied and when rules cannot become common laws without having the individuals animated by the ideals that made rules possible. In the case of democracy, one may speak of ideals such as tolerance, non-violence, gradual modernization of society, fraternity, which have turned the rules of democracy into reality and support their implementation. Therefore it is right to say that the university is not separated from ideals [in this case of the democratic society] which also intervene in at least two moments: in the genesis of rules and in the support of their implementation. For instance, the rules of the seminar have been possible only under the condition of assuming **the ideal of the cooperative pursuit of truth** and the rules for the knowledge exam cannot be successfully implemented unless all the persons involved are nurtured by **the ideal of knowledge increase** and of **the**

maximization of their own competences. The university has appeared and optimally functions only under circumstances in which those who bring it to life are animated by certain ideals.

The reverse relation cannot be eliminated in which "values" represent condition for the possibility of the rules, but **values themselves can only be promoted under the conditions of certain adequate rules**. Let's take as an example the current debate on equity related to the access to universities. It is well known that the university is an institution open to any citizen that accomplishes certain requirements as to the amount of knowledge and skills they possess. The social achievement of an academic system consists exactly in being accessible to social categories as diverse and wide as possible of the population in society. In fact, each person must have the chance to attend courses of higher education according to his/her personal life project. In other words, *equity* represents one of the founding values of the university. But this value does not actually become real if the system of higher education is so differentiated that those persons with uncompetitive incomes occupy most of the places in permissive universities that lack achievements. Equity does not allow its separation from *quality*, so that university practices affect it from this point of view as well.

Another dimension of this problematique is how "values" can condition the obtaining of achievements within institutions. For instance, if one takes into consideration the preliminary situation of activities, what we call "good work", then one may say that professional skills and abilities, which imply scientific knowledge, are definitely of crucial importance. Are these skills and abilities, as well as the scientific knowledge that uphold them, enough in order to obtain "good work"? In fact, as Howard Gardner observes, there is always a difference between "being a member of a profession" and "acting like a professional", and from many reasons "the individual must be able to step back from daily life and to conceptualize the nature of work and the nature of community" (Gardner, 2008). Current pedagogies confirm, once again, that "science can never constitute a sufficient education" and that "science – even with engineering, technology and mathematics thrown in – is not the only important area of knowledge. Other vast areas of understanding – the social sciences, the humanities, civics, civility, ethics, health, safety, training of one's body – deserve their day in the sun, and, equally, their hours in the curriculum" (*Ibidem*, pp. 14-15). Achievements, therefore beginning with "good work", depend not only on professionalism, but also on the action of other involved.

One may ask the question: why is there in fact a need for society to recognize certain values for higher education, such as academic freedom and university autonomy, which head the list of university values? Obviously, invoking tradition cannot be a decisive argument. On the other hand, the two above-mentioned values cannot be directly derived from the pluralism recognized by the constitutions of the democratic states, for academic freedom and university autonomy are indissolubly connected to the social responsibility for achievements. Certainly, tradition is very important for the university and the pluralism of approaches and political forces in democratic societies is the favorable environment for the academic freedom and the university autonomy. Society recognizes these values, or, at least, has to recognize them, because, in their absence, achievements cannot be reached: any type of creation,

innovation in knowledge, in technological development, organization of an education capable of connecting the present to the future are being ensured in a society by acknowledging the academic freedom and the university autonomy. These values are not instrumental, but they are set up by observing the achievements that make them possible and as such are condition necessary for long-lasting achievements.

Values are a necessary condition not only for the productive functioning of the political, legal, economic and cultural systems. The way in which this exercise is made allows us to make a distinction among the "boss" [one who acquires authority only in the name of his/her appointment or election], the "manager" [one who gains authority based on the ability to lead a system in order to reach an established achievement], and the "leader" [one who has authority due to his/her ability to establish goals, which have to be reached by the system, and alternatives of direction and action] (Marga, 2008). Thus the issue of university leadership needs to be also looked at from the point of view of values.

It clear that there are different ways of exercising leadership, and evaluate those who lead not only according to the delimitation of the terms of boss, manager and leader, but also by considering the different types of leaders. More detailed survey of this issue distinguishes the following principal types of academic leaders: the focused visionary, the focused performer, the prioritiser, the dreamer, the implementer, the maintainer, and the most desirable one – the integrator. The latter one is able to be effective in integrating vision, focus and implementation and in this way is also truly visionary, strategic and transformational leader (Neumann and Neumann, 2000).

Today the university of the developed world are confronted with variety of **challenges specific to the new century**, among them; extending education by continuing education; massification of traditional academic training and increasing the importance of postgraduate studies; response to globalization of the qualification market; internationalization of training; multiplication of higher education providers; setting up a comprehensive electronic world library; expansion of the long distance higher education system; profiling of "constructive learning"; transition from the formation of "individuals" to the formation of "persons" (Marga, 2005a). Evidently, present financial and economic crisis adds to the above list also other "challenges" such as; ensuring an institution's own sustainability; articulation of new knowledge and identification of means to overcome the crisis existing in late modernity; and coping with the risks existing in the globalised society.

It is the general context in which the discussion is held in the academic circles around the following arguments about the university:

– Should it continue the tradition or should push for the reorganization?

– Should it continue classicism or should it embrace functionalism?

– Should it promote humanities and reflexive sciences or should it be oriented towards technologies?

– Should it be selective or should it be transformed into a mass-university?

– Should it concentrate on scientific research or education?

– Should it push for elitism or accessibility therefore is able to promote equity or cope with competitiveness?

– Should it be financed only from public resources or multiplication of the financing resources [in this context the issue of tuition fee comes in the forefront]?

– Should its graduates be capable of doing or persons capable also to undertake an active role in society?

The list is a sample of challenge to today's academic leaders. In this context the values to which the leadership of the particular university adheres individually and/or collectively is particularly relevant.

One may say that the **educational profile of the university** must be clarified and, in some cases, radically redesigned. One may notice that the development of civic skills which implies the ability to systematically formulate and test hypotheses, to argue, to comprehensively approach an issue, to take up civic initiatives, has to become an important priority. On the other hand, one cannot provide competitive training without foreign languages and without participating, with original projects, in the innovation process. The existing teaching methodology and pedagogy must be reconstructed, book reading should be revived, and formation must accompany professional training.

However of no lesser importance is the issue of **the cultural profile of universities**. Taking into consideration that students need to be trained so that, at the end of the very first cycle, they possess the abilities, skills and competences enabling them to embrace and solve concrete problems. Their training must be oriented towards the concrete demands of technology, economy, administration, and culture. Universities can reach a high level of performance by building upon their students' training in the solving of concrete problems, upon their knowledge of the technical, economic and administrative environment and upon a certain institutional culture. Entrepreneurial training has become part of general education so that he/she is capable of assuming professional responsibilities. However no less relevant should be his/her capacity to play an active role in society. In such context importance of values-related education becomes evident.

It is also observed that confusion is made between the study of social sciences and ideological indoctrination which resulted in a generalized elimination of the relevant disciplines from their curriculum. Evidently, social sciences that need to be cultivated are radically different from those we used to have prior the historical changes in the world, and the professors called upon to teach them are different. Above all, however, a performant university is that where the students can integrate their specialized knowledge into a conception that enables them to systematically approach problems, to formulate hypotheses and put them to the test, to examine conflicting points of view and to argue their opinions, to bring in new perspectives and solutions.

In a society undergoing globalization and differentiation, from many points of view, social integration and cohesion have become issues belonging to education. **Social cohesion** cannot be attained in democracy without approaching compulsory education and its duration, confidence in the democratic institutions, equality of education opportunities, education quality, the capacity of bringing up the young generation to become mature citizens, learning how to learn. No institution is more appropriate and ready to assume the issue of social cohesion in the context of the today's complex societies than the university.

Current Issues and New Developments

Which are the crucial problems that have to be solved today? Which are the major decisional alternatives, **in relation to the values**, that current universities face?

In a forefront of the list is **"university autonomy"**. It has gained recognition in most national legislations, and universities benefit from freedom in establishing their leadership and the major orientations in education and research. Meanwhile, in current societies, new concentrations of economic, political and media-related power are produced, and the decisions of academic policy are conditioned by them to a larger extent. The problem that appears now is that of promoting university autonomy – which remains a prerequisite for academic achievements – in an economic, administrative and media-related environment, which is rather oriented towards institution determination than towards encouraging autonomy. Nowadays, neither the parochial exercise of the autonomy nor the mere adaptation to contexts gives results, while a new solution has become indispensable.

The universities in general, including the public one, are financed from different sources. Under these circumstances, many universities carry out activities that are somewhat non-traditional, such as the attraction of a larger number of students that pay fees, community services etc. These activities increase the impact of universities in society, but they affect the quality of the studies and the relevance of their own scientific research, due to the diminution of the financing from the state or communities' budget. This does not diminish under any circumstances the need to defend and promote the core values of the university in an environment that claims at least flexibility, competence and initiative.

Taking into consideration the student numbers, we definitely reached a stage of **mass higher education**. In all countries, the number of students in higher education is still increasing, and the generations considered being older start to go back to school. The professional validity of academic diplomas is no longer unlimited, as it was in the past. However, in many universities, the rapid increase in the number of students has found academic administrations insufficiently prepared particularly with regard to lack of highly qualified teaching personnel. On the other hand, the increase in the number of students, the passage from distance learning to e-learning [and in particular its absorption into traditional forms of study] have claimed the need for development of adequate pedagogy and methodology.

The new reality also brought major change in the way "quality assurance" is being organized and implemented at the national, institutional and growingly also on international level. Imperceptibly, universities have entered **the competition** for the recruitment of competitive professors, student attraction, accession of research grants, and obtaining financial resources.

Indirectly but poignantly this competition is reflected in the context of "university rankings". Since some countries had tried to establish which universities were better placed in such competition, the authorities and institutions themselves were started to compare which universities were the most performant as to the scientific research, prestige, etc. even criteria for such comparisons still need to be elaborated in such a way that they reflect the complexity and diversity of the functions performed by the

university. Rankings cannot be avoided, but their elaboration has to become reflexive. **The most fertile basis to obtain rankings that are publicly trustworthy is to take into consideration the university's values, synthesized in its mission and functions** (Sadlak and Liu, 2007).

One of the cherished values associated with the academe is "**academic solidarity**". It seems that it is no longer in such high regard as in the past. But even more worrying development is increase of the academic malpractices and its most visible forms such as corruption of exams, diploma commercialization, plagiarism, nepotism etc. became subject of public debate. The academic collegiality and the praised academic ethics are submitted to unprecedented pressures. Avoiding the mercantilism of the services provided by universities, under the conditions set by the competitions on the globalised markets, becomes the main preoccupation and requires explicit and elaborated policies in which importance of values must be underlined.

Already from the above-mentioned observations, one can notice different factors and options are determining **the values of the university** and **values inside the university**. Only through respect of the principles of academic freedom and university autonomy combined with response to opportunities of the "knowledge society" we can achieve what Paolo Blasi described as a "wisdom society" by arguing that: "Knowledge is a conscious utilization of information; 'wisdom' means to choose one's behavior based on knowledge and shared values, in order to enhance the well-being of all and awareness that personal actions have social consequences" (Blasi, 2006).

In no lesser way to "institutional autonomy" is important another pillar on which stand the university values is **"academic freedom"** which is eloquently reaffirmed in the *Magna Charta Universitatum*. If these are harmed, the status of an institution changes, or, at least, is affected. This affection is direct under dictatorship, but it can be indirect as well, through politicization – from "political correctness" to the "politicization of the university disciplines", through the excessive corporatism in which "paymaster" plays a decisive role in the decision-making processes, through excessive managerialism and technocratic organizations of the university, and through the legal restriction on institutional autonomy and academic freedom.

In higher education administration the emphasis on the inner connection between academic freedom and the responsibility for the activity's results is always of interest. Without academic freedom, no achievements are possible in higher education, in learning, in scientific research. The tacit assumption of academic freedom is that one who benefits from it has been appointed as a result of certain rigorous selections, dedicates himself/herself, with all his/her energies, to the maximization of the professional achievements, promotes values in relation to adapting interests and is capable of objective evaluations. When this assumption is not satisfied, academic freedom weakens its meaning, and universities have to intervene, at the same time, in favor of the respect for academic freedom and for the promotion of academic integrity, the separation of the two being counterproductive. The intervention has become more necessary as the pressures on the academic have intensified, under the conditions of the competition among universities, where a situation is created according to which values would not count in relation to the directly useful values that bring immediate profit.

It should be pointed out that "academic values" combined with the "cultural heritage" which is embodied with most of the universities and other higher education

institutions can contribute to enhancement of attractiveness for students and scholars. In other words, they can be one of the ways of dealing with challenges of competitiveness. This was well demonstrated at the Bologna Process Official Seminar on "The Culture Heritage and Academic Values of the European University and the Attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area" which took place in 2006 in Vatican City" (*Higher Education in Europe*, 31 (4), 2006).

The values of university are multiple – academic freedom, university autonomy, the pursuit and promotion of truth, integrity, equity, argumentative cooperation, social responsibility etc. – and have to be taken together. These values condition one another, therefore factual research dedicated to higher education in the last decade offer us many pieces of evidence. The reciprocal conditioning of the different values of higher education does not conclude, under any circumstances, that values are necessarily convergent. There are many examples of **divergence or even the conflict of values:** a university's achievement in scientific research can be in conflict with academic freedom understood individualistically; university autonomy and the qualifications framework established by the authorities can be in contradiction; wide participation in decision-making and decision efficiency can be divergent etc. Faced with a conflict of values, neither refuge into formalism nor passivity is the solution, but the continuous finding of a superior and integrative point of view where the personality of the person involved what matters. It is the same situation for disagreements or even for the conflict of approaches between higher education institutions and the agents in the environment or even the university's stakeholders. Neither the appeal to the counterfactual postulation of convergences nor the disarming of will under the saying "there is nothing else to be done now" gives any results. In any situation, personalities change the condition of things, so that nowadays there is, first of all, a need for people who honestly, competently and courageously propose to untie the problems of a complex world, things that otherwise would drag us in directions that are harder and harder to control. Where there are personalities that manifest themselves, new horizons are open and, in fact, solutions are found.

As rightly observes Peter Scott, universities are value-laden institutions as they: "not only express intellectual and scientific values directly thought their teaching and research; they are also embody powerful organizational values notably in terms of collegial governance, institutional autonomy and academic freedom) and equally influential instrumental values (because of the increasingly potent role they play within the knowledge society); finally, universities contribute crucially to the formation of wider social and cultural values" (Scott, 2004).

The university [or higher education in more inclusive terms] has its own values, which have become norms consecrated by constitutions, laws, regulations and statutes. The norm system delineates, on the one hand, higher education from other domains of a given society and also places it, on the other hand, in relation to society. At the same time the new developments which took place in last decades call for reaffirmation as well as modernization of the number of ways academic values are conceived, introduced and applied. In fact, they always remain just the frame and the basis for activities, at most. Nowadays there is a need to consider the values of the university from the following perspectives – the understanding of

values as foundations, the enlargement of communication, and the assuming of communication in order to maximize achievements while at the same time being able to respond to collective and individual expectations.

Conclusion and Policy Consequences

The major conclusions and policy implications arising from above presented analysis are:

a) higher education is *the engine of the technological, institutional and cultural development of local, national and global communities*;

b) higher education has a favorable position, within the complex societies of our time, *to transform the era's "challenges" and crisis into projects* and to contribute to their promotion;

c) the current financial and economic crisis is *the crisis of a development pattern*, in relation to which universities – through their ability of cutting edge knowledge, through their orientation towards the connection of inclusiveness and quality, through values and the non-instrumental character of their own values, through a respect for the past, the present and the future – can prepare improved alternatives, based on adequate regulations and clear answers;

d) higher education institutions, especially universities, have *to establish their mission and functions*, taking into consideration the reality of present society and in line with the stipulations of *The Bucharest Declaration concerning Ethical Values and Principles for Higher Education in the Europe Region*" (*Higher Education in Europe*, 29 (4));

e) after the higher education institutions of Central and Eastern Europe implemented, after the historical changes in 1989, *reforms to recover* the traditions of democratic openness, academic freedom and institutional autonomy, and after *reforms* have been implemented in several countries *to synchronize* the practices of the developed countries, a new generation of reforms – the *reforms to confront the conditions of globalization* – enter the agenda of higher education, and the universities have the duty to prepare and promote these reforms;

f) higher education remains, even under the conditions of the diversification of financing sources, *a public good that society has equally the right to be interested in and the duty to adequately support from a financial point of view, as well as from the legal regulations point of view*;

g) *a constellation of multiple values – academic freedom, university autonomy, protection of truth, social responsibility, integrity, argumentative cooperation, equity, creativity* – result from the well understood mission and functions of the university, and these values *have to be assumed together* in new and variable contexts of the individuals' life development;

h) the values of the university can be legitimated by considering them as performant conditions, but they do not reduce their content to the use of instruments, as they have a richer meaning, and *the programmatic preoccupation of the university for the formation of a creative and responsible personalities is of present acuteness, in a new era of modernity*;

i) the knowledge society needs *to complement knowledge with wisdom and elaborated visions*, so that it is the universities' duty to work on the elaboration of visions that are appropriate for the new era of history;

j) *values are crucial to overcome the financial and economic crisis started in 2008*; new organizations and governance and management solutions, a new language to lead beyond the positivist-utilitarian, functionalist or traditionalistic approaches are indispensable in universities and in their economic, administrative and cultural environment;

k) virtue of their mission and functions, but also in order to face the "challenges" and defiance of the new era in world history, *universities act wisely, proactively manifesting* in relation to themselves and to the world around and engaging changes within them and outside them: the proactive university today is inclusive, being open to larger categories of population, under circumstances of education quality; it valuates its function of a research institution; it develops "interactions" with the internal and external environment, under conditions of the efficiency of its activities; and it assumes the values of higher education based on and enhancing the intellectual and moral integrity of the scholars, and the academic freedom and university autonomy as well as other values of the university.

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“Quality” in Higher Education

Jürgen Kohler

A. Introduction: Setting the Scene

I. Linking “Quality” to the Thematic Context of the Conference

Within the four aspects “access, values, quality, competitiveness” considered at the UNESCO-CEPES Forum, “quality” is placed roughly in the middle. This **positioning** may be interpreted in conflicting ways: either as indicating the **pivotal significance** of quality in its relation to access, values, and competitiveness; or as being **under challenge**, as if being ground between two millstones, *i.e.,* by fluffy concepts of values on the one hand and harsh realities of doubtful competitiveness in daily struggles for survival on the other. In fact, there is **truth in both** these views on “quality”, which has become a **big buzz word** at least since quality assurance in higher education has more and more come to the fore in recent years, in Europe mainly within the Bologna Process.

As for the positive connotation of the term, for various reasons “quality” is an issue of **decisive significance** with regard to access, values, and competitiveness. For instance, **competitiveness** is obviously linked to the notion of quality since substantial ‘quality’ is a valid selling point at least in the long run when taking the case beyond the use, or abuse, of mere deceptive marketing ploys. Providing quality education appears to be a **core value** when taking students as partners – or for that matter, even as clients or customers – seriously since the ambition to provide quality education encompasses that their time and effort should not be wasted by subjecting them to inferior, useless learning experience. **Access** is technically dependent on the reliable and understandable identification of interface structures and their requirements both with a view towards prior learning and towards successive learning opportunities, which in turn depends on trustworthy identification of qualities of learning provisions. When seen from students’ perspectives in particular, using access opportunities is based on transparency of qualitative benefits to be expected from the learning experiences offered.

“Quality” is nevertheless **challenged** by notions of values and competitiveness, and even of access. As for values, **freedom** of teaching and learning and the very essence of innovation brought about by unimpeded integration of teaching and research may be **jeopardized** if and when study programmes are put into straightjackets of programme templates, standardisation, and external surveillance

which might mutate into censorship in the name of 'quality assurance'. **Competitiveness** may be **at risk** by the very same effects, if not by quality as such but by quality assurance when misunderstood and malpractised. Moreover, quality design and quality assurance slow down processes; this in itself tends to be detrimental to competitiveness. Even **access** may be at odds with quality if quality expectations define **qualitative entry requirements** in an inappropriate manner.

II. Ambivalence of Sentiments

While these observations are tentative at this stage and need to be considered more closely in context later, it is fair to say that the **quest for "quality"** bears some **ambivalence**. This very fact may be the first common denominator in the European debate, that is to say: officially, "quality" is **high on the agenda**, and there are good reasons for that. However, at least behind closed doors there is **unease** as to defining quality, measuring and judging quality, effectiveness of quality processes and their implementation, the rule of bureaucracy, educational as well as institutional and political wisdom; moreover, there is doubt as to real effectiveness of structured quality assurance undertakings. While all these sentiments of doubt may not affect the appreciation of quality and the endorsement of quality enhancement they certainly do as far as quality assurance as a specific internal or external process is concerned.[1]

III. Outline of Issues and Presentation

While **considering these** positive and negative **links** of quality and quality assurance to access, values, and competitiveness throughout the exploration of the issue of 'quality', and while **limiting** the aspects of research and services to society in general to their interplay with quality teaching and learning, this **presentation** undertakes **to explore** the issue of "quality" – including quality assurance – along the following lines:

(a) Which "**politics**" are there **behind** the **quest for quality**? That is to ask: what are the reasons for – or behind – questioning, demanding, defining, measuring, judging quality in European higher education, and for drawing conclusions from quality assurance findings?

(b) What are the **concepts of quality**, both in terms of **definitions** per se and in terms of **societal connotations** and preferred **political choices** – with at least the latter taking up matters from the previous question?

(c) **Internal quality assurance**, following from the development of quality concepts: which tools are discussed and used in order to safeguard, support, create, and enhance quality in a formative sense within higher education institutions?

(d) **External quality assurance**, when seen as scrutinizing study programme quality while linking up with internal quality measures: which means of external assessment of quality are in place, and what effect does external quality assurance provide?

(e) Does the quest for quality reach **beyond management** in two ways: by embracing the notion of **quality culture**; and by realizing the context with necessities of "**good governance**" in higher education institutions and indeed entire educational systems?

(f) With external quality assurance of study programmes being accompanied by **assessment** and explicit **identification** of **programme providers' qualities** by

means of **description**, **classification** and **typology** or possibly even **ranking** of higher education **institutions**: what does this **trend towards** yet another **institutional approach** carry with it in terms of opportunities and risks, and what are adequate tools fit for valid purposes?

In attempting to answer these questions mainly from a **pan-European perspective**, the report will largely refer to documents produced in the course of the **Bologna Process**. Among these the so-called Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education – in short: **ESG** – will obviously feature strongly.[2] This is so because they stipulate key concepts and methods of quality development and quality assurance in Europe. In addition, being an annex to the Bergen Communiqué of 2005, they can also claim considerable political weight.

IV. Limits of Scope

The outline of issues to be covered needs to be completed by a statement on what will not be dealt with, or only to a lesser degree.

Firstly, the conference focusses on higher education. Hence quality aspects concerning **research activities** will **not** be considered here. Any attempt to cover research as well would extend the report **beyond feasible limits**. Moreover, omitting this aspect here seems justified since developing and judging quality in research is a broad field which requires **criteria and processes different** from those applied in areas of teaching and learning. In fact, it is largely due to this reason that many systems – though not all – keep research activities separate as far as quality assurance processes are concerned.[3] However, since research is necessarily intertwined with teaching and learning in tertiary education there are interfaces to be considered in developing and judging the quality of study programmes.

Secondly, there should be a caveat as to **geographic coverage**. This report will largely concentrate on recent and impending European developments. The rationale for this option does not just lie in the fact that the report would be **excessive in** terms of inacceptable **quantity** at the price of **superficiality in** terms of **qualitative analysis** if all systems in the UNESCO-CEPES 'Europe region' were comprehensively explicated. Instead, choosing a geographically focussed approach is feasible since most procedural and substantive issues in terms of quality policies, definitions of quality and internal and external quality assurance are **universal** by their very nature, and so most aspects covered **can** easily **be related** to matters in North America and Israel, too, without explicit reference to these systems. Moreover, when having to make choices the European developments brought about by the **Bologna Process** seem to be most significant, and so they deserve special attention. This is true both in terms of substance of essential changes as well as in terms of **recent global relevance**, bearing in mind that the Bologna Process and the quality assurance issues it has brought with it, meet remarkable interest in other parts of the world, notably in Latin America, Australia, and countries in South East Asia.

However, despite concentration in terms of geography traditional **hallmarks** of the **American system** will be considered, in particular since they impact upon developments in other regions. One of these is **classification** along the line of a typology **of higher education institutions**, which will be considered in view of the recent

emergence of institutional classification in Europe. Arguably the spreading of institutional typology, if not ranking in the wake of the Shanghai list of proclaimed top-ranking research institutions, is a sign of transatlantic systems convergence worth noting. Since this development may be seen as a major – though indirect and implicit – element of cross-systems inspiration, a specifically American approach to indicating qualitative features in higher education will be highlighted when commenting on the new European phenomenon of institutional classification as a public responsibility. The same holds true for increasing influence of American-based **professional accreditation of programmes** in some European systems, as will be dealt with more closely later.

B. "Politics" behind the Quest for Quality in Higher Education

Ulterior purposes for, and motives behind, the call for – assured – quality in higher education across the globe[4] and in Europe as well, which in the case of Europe dates back mainly in north-western and northern Europe well over a decade before the commencement of the Bologna Process in 1999, are **manifold**, with **not all** of them being **explicit**. These purposes and motives may be categorized as being either societal, economic and – hence – political *prima facie*, or as politically induced technocracy, or as political *Zeitgeist*.

I. *Prima facie* Societal, Economic and Political Reasoning

The first of these three groups, which is concerned with *prima facie* societal, economic and political reasoning, can be itemized as follows:[5]

1. Global Challenge and Europe's Future

The new millennium was heralded by a programmatic wake-up call which is still resounding today. The EU **Lisbon Agenda** proclaimed the aspiration and the necessity to establish Europe globally as the "most advanced knowledge-based region". Although the EU, Europe and the Bologna Process area are by no means identical – neither in terms of geography nor political endeavours[6] –, there is a common belief in the political arena that Europe needs to **secure** its socio-economic and in effect its political **position** in the world by fully endorsing the concept of the "knowledge society" – and it may be added, also of the "wisdom society" or "civic society" in view of threats to peace, social stability and the environment. In order to do so, **adequate education** is seen as essential for translating this concept and aspiration into reality. At an instrumental level, this aspiration breaks down into demanding larger **quantities** of people to be educated – prediction of hundreds of thousands of research-oriented job vacancies in the near future warrant for this –, but also into **quality** of education. Seen in this context, the call for quality and quality assurance is a cry of fear in view of possible failure as much as a cry of confidence in terms of capability to make it happen if ranked as a priority and if tackled adequately. In short, if taking it to the extreme, the call for quality has become a call for a tool to

survival. At any rate, it signals major societal interest in higher education operations, and the call for quality and quality assurance is intended to address safeguarding that very basic societal concern.[7]

Two facets may be seen as a **subset** to the Lisbon Agenda: Emphasis on employability, and on mobility in all its various aspects.

Employability on the European labour market has featured high in discussions throughout the entire Bologna Process.[8] From a European perspective, this objective reflects both the ambition to enhance freedom of citizens as well as European social and economic integration, and to foster collective and individual prosperity. The quality debate and the demand to ensure tangibly effective quality in European higher education is expected to address this objective and to translate it into meaningful concepts in terms of clarifying features of employability and matching learning experiences and outcomes both in specific academic areas and in generic terms of so-called soft skills. These are quality challenges *par excellence* which need to be followed up in the course of quality programmes and quality assurance.

Incidentally, it is noteworthy and must be seen as a strong indicator in pursuit of aims addressed by the EU Lisbon Agenda drafted at about the same time as the emergence of the Bologna Process that the **Bologna Declaration** in 1999 highlighted employability on the European labour market as a key objective of higher education while being **silent on other overarching educational purposes**. It was not until a tentative attempt in the Bergen Communiqué of 2005 and, eventually, an explicit statement in the **London Communiqué** of 2007 that several more educational purposes of higher education were mentioned. Following long-standing views of the Council of Europe,[9] in addition aspects such as 'preparing students for life as **active citizens** in a democratic society, … enabling their **personal development**, **creating** and **maintaining** a **broad, advanced knowledge base'** and, which is partly linked to the last item, '**stimulating research** and **innovation'** are to be pursued. So, it is only at long last that familiar concepts of *Bildung* in its own right, both to the benefit of the individual and of democratic societies, and preservation and production of knowledge, *i.e.,* maintaining knowledge gathered over time and research orientation as valid purposes as such, have gained specific, explicit status alongside 'employability' in the Bologna Process.

Moreover, very much from the beginning – and therefore, at least initially, indicating strong links to the concept of 'employability on the European labour market' and to the underpinnings by the EU Lisbon Agenda – the demand to foster **mobility** has featured high in the Bologna Process debate on quality. Mobility is to be understood in a comprehensive way, *i.e.,* as three-fold **permeability**. Permeability in terms of traditional concepts of mobility obviously means movement of people in 'real' **space**, but in fact also in 'virtual' space by providing distant learning facilities via new media, namely the internet. Mobility in this sense meets economic globalisation as an economic factor as much as European integration and cohesion as a socio-political aspiration and an individual benefit. However, mobility in a broader sense covers more features.

In particular, the concept of mobility when interpreted broadly as permeability may also be seen as covering **time** factors as well when extending, or transferring,

the 'classic' mobility concept of mental adaptation to new environments as they arise to similar **life-long learning** challenges to the human mind posed by the very course of time. If seen that way, the issue of maintaining a highly skilled workforce enters the stage, which is of paramount importance for European societies characterised both by acceleration of socio-economic change and the need to keep people in ageing societies in work for longer periods than before.

Moreover, social mobility in a wider political sense of flexibility of learning paths in open societies also includes the notion to allow for, and encourage, **transversal access** in particular, but not solely, between different types of formal education and experience gained elsewhere, in particular on the labour market. The term 'Copenhagen Process' of the EU comes in here, which denotes the aspiration to ensure interplay between vocational expertise gained and academic learning.

It is in this broad context of mobility in terms of permeability and flexibility that a new **scope of access policies** and **tools** broadens. These encompass easy recognition of mobile learners' achievements as well as of prior learning and the establishment of interface structures which facilitate the integration of mobile and of non-traditional learners into academic programmes. These political motives make higher education institutions face new qualitative requirements which they are expected to address; qualifications frameworks and the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) come in here as political elements of quality.

So, all in all, quality in higher education covers additional facets of political demands and needs. Quality assurance is expected to ensure that this fact is paid heed to.

2. Massification

Access policies in general **impact upon quality and** the call for **quality assurance**. For various reasons, amongst which there are valid ones such as broadening capacity to meet future needs of the knowledge society but also dubious ones such as hiding unemployment, European countries have witnessed considerable increases in the number of students since the 1960's or at least since the 1990's in central and Eastern European states. In a number of countries this has taken place without simultaneous proportional increases in higher education resources. As a consequence, large quantities of students without adequate funding aggravate the challenge to maintain quality services; moreover, political demands to accept and graduate more and more students while in some cases funding mechanisms linked to student intake and success rates may have put the question of standards on the agenda of higher education institutions and politicians. It is in this context that the call for quality and quality assurance mechanisms are seen as **antidotes** to balance negative consequences of massification. Whether or not there is some point in this view or whether or not this view serves as a political excuse for underfunding may be open to judgement and may vary from country to country.

3. Efficiency Gain

The appearance of mass higher education has reinforced a particular philosophy which seems to be prevalent due to modern **thinking in terms of economics**:

'Doing more with less' is a commonplace which has taken root throughout the public as much as the private sector.[10] There is a popular belief in many countries that higher education institutions could perform better with the resources available to them. Quality and more so quality assurance is seen as a tool to enquire into the scope for enhancing 'turnover' and reducing 'cost level'. More fundamentally, though, quality and quality assurance is seen as a remedy against ills of high **dropout rates** and unduly **long study duration**.

4. 'Commodification'

Apart from its generic value as a tool for securing the future of European societies at large, the provision of educational opportunities has become a **commodity in itself** and *per se*. This is certainly true for some European countries which run their systems on concepts of **internal competition** and on **international attractiveness** to **fee-paying students**. Obviously the call for quality, and for verifying and demonstrating quality through certification in the course of quality assurance processes, features highly where the notion of the "entrepreneurial university" and of "commodification" of learning opportunities has progressed towards a **market approach** that requires adequate marketing tools and strategies. Part of these is **demonstrable** quality through quality assurance. Another facet, however, is the call for **stratification** amongst higher education institutions and within entire systems, heralded by terms like 'institutional profile and mission' or the practice of ranking.[11]

5. Market Regulation

The phenomenon – which is also part of what has been coined the trend towards 'commodification' of higher education – known as '**mushrooming**' of private and in some cases also public higher education institutions in many countries, particularly so but not exclusively in former socialist countries after 1990, has cast considerable doubt on the founding motives of a number of these establishments and on the quality of their performance. As the pendulum swung back from 'free entrepreneurship' to '**ensuring social responsibility**', demanding quality and investigating into quality through external quality assurance was seen and used as a tool to steer higher education systems as a whole in order to prevent both individual students from falling victim to financial exploitation without adequate services and from national systems as a whole from over-fragmentation which may lead to numerous underfunded institutions devoid of sufficient critical mass to play a valid role in a knowledge-based, research-driven environment. On a second count and for similar reasons, the advent of **off-shore providers** has added to the very challenge. Here, too, both demanding and checking quality is seen as a device to separate good and bad for purposes of market clearance, although the case of off-shore providers may pose additional problems in translating information gained on matters of quality into straightforward political and legal action.

6. Accountability

While being lower key than outright market regulation, the neighbouring issue of accountability is broadly accepted as a possible driving force behind the quest both

for quality and also for making quality achievement transparent. **Democratic societies** expect governments and those using public funding, such as higher education institutions, to **ensure** and to give **evidence of optimum use** of **public funds**. Providing proven quality in education is part of any such undertaking to demonstrate fair use of tax revenues. While this *ex post* assertion of quality services rendered in the past is part of **administrative correctness** there is, however, also *ex ante* political necessity to do so in order to **convince** members of society as **voters** that funding levels for higher education should be maintained or even raised. Thus accountability takes on **dual significance** in terms of both justifying the past and shaping the future. However, in as much as accountability is based on transparency of performance, providing quality and being able to demonstrate this fact by means of reliable quality assurance processes is key to passing the accountability test on good marks. Accountability per se, and hence quality issues which it entails, is high on political agendas.

With the advent of **fee systems** in a number of countries – a divisive political topic of considerable political potential wherever debated – the demand for accountability has gained another protagonist, *i.e.,* the fee-paying student who is so much the more anxious to experience quality education and services. Moreover, more than before **students** who are subject to fees **expect verification** and **transparency of quality**, either in order to arrive at some valid judgment as to where to study or to demand improvement. In effect, it can be said that this personal expectation is a second element of 'hands-on' accountability which links to quality and quality assurance.

Finally, there is an additional, more recent and more specific reason for the call for quality and quality assurance in higher education in the context of accountability: **accountability** is expected to **balance** an increase in **institutional autonomy** which politics are prepared to grant to higher education institutions. The less there is detail interventionism and micro-inspection into operations, the more there is a call by politicians and governments to ensure that the result in terms of outcome and output of operations run by higher education institutions is deemed satisfactory. In consequence, the call for quality and showing it via external quality assurance becomes the reverse of the same medal which bears the promising word 'autonomy' on its face.

7. Diversity

Institutional autonomy blends with the existence of different traditions and practices in higher education, requirements of highly differentiated labour markets and of diverse social stratification in European systems, which is a strong feature of higher education provision in Europe *de facto* as much as by virtue to be preserved. If so, **diversity** is not only a burden tolerated but a **valid objective** in European higher education. In effect, however, this approach cannot be met with one-fits-all concepts of standardized education run on the principle of implementing a single formatted national or even European template. However, diversification along with decentralisation can be a threat to quality since there may **not** be **sufficient reflection** and **adequate implementation** in all cases to be found within the broad span of autonomous providers of higher education who relish the necessary scope of

institutional freedom. In order to **counterbalance** this threat of negative effects, the call for quality of study programmes, the call for **holding higher education institutions responsible** for ensuring quality, and the call for **checks** via external quality assurance which scrutinizes learning opportunities are obvious reactions.

8. The 'Informed Customer' Concept and the Call for Transparency

Free mover and open access policies which abandon concepts of regulated and closed higher education systems – especially when adding a business-type element by introducing fees – and differentiation of learning opportunities – in particular when and where entrepreneurial approaches to higher education are followed – require 'informed customers' who are in a position to make '**rational choices**' on preferences. It is within this logic that **provision of information on quality**, hence – external – **quality assurance plus transparency** of quality judgments, is essential beyond mere accountability.[12] While the latter is oriented rather to evidence on track record in the past, the 'informed customer' view uses accountability as a **predicator** of **future potential** and opportunities.

It is therefore self-evident that the **call for transparency** is a key feature of the European quality debate. This demand is voiced both by students and certainly no less by employers. This call takes on a **specific facet** when combined with the expectation of **'quick and simple' information** to enable users to make choices between alternatives, be it – from an employer's perspective – between graduates or – from a student perspective – between institutions of higher education. It is probably due to this context and purpose to **facilitate easy comparability** of qualities that **rankings** and **ratings** of various kinds and origin, often highlighted or even produced by the media, have gained considerable ground in the last two decades.

II. Politically Induced Mechanisms

On a **technical level**, these political contexts, objectives, and approaches require certain tools and practices which in return cannot do without quality and quality assurance:

1. Link to Recognition

Ensuring individual freedom and societal relevance in terms of enhancing employability by facilitating access and permeability in terms of space, time, and prior learning **necessitates reliable mechanisms for** academic and professional **recognition**. The Lisbon Recognition Convention[13] and EU directives on professional recognition are instrumental to that end. However, reliability in translating learning outcomes from case to case between systems can only be gained if and when there is **sufficient and reliable, evidence-based transparency** of the **content reality** of the learning experience and achievement to be recognized. Therefore ensuring quality, which is a task for providers in higher education, and assuring existence of sufficient quality, which is a job to be done by internal and external quality assessments, in conjunction with transparency of the quality procured are **prerequisites** for making the elaborate system of recognition work.

2. Link to Qualifications Frameworks

European qualification frameworks[14] are supposed to serve as **calibration instruments** designed to **help with translating qualifications** gained in one European system into another by correlating systems information provided by national qualifications frameworks. Evidently these qualification frameworks are indispensible for easy operation of recognition between diverse systems, provided that national qualification frameworks are accurately tuned to the measurements procured by the relevant European qualification framework. However, there is a missing link for purposes of comparison, *e.g.,* and particularly so in the context of recognition procedures, if there is no additional evidence of the accuracy of the **match between** the relevant **national qualification framework** and the **individual study programme** under scrutiny. In effect, this demands both that there is a quality design innate to each programme which relates it to the descriptor system of the applicable national qualification framework, and that there is sufficient public reliability in this fact, which is backed by adequate internal and external quality assurance. Unless this is in place, the chain stretching from individual programme level via its relevant national qualification framework up to the European qualification framework(s) and back from there via the national qualification framework of the target country to its subsequent programme level is not operational.[15]

3. Link to ECTS

Recognition and qualifications frameworks, especially through level quantifiers, are supported by the European credit transfer system (ECTS).[16] Again quality provision in higher education needs to embrace this concept, and quality assurance must assess whether this is in fact done, in order to make the system work reliably and to make sure that it deserves public trust.

4. Link to Diploma Supplement and Transcript of Records

Eventually, transparency is provided and safeguarded by proper and internationally comprehensible documentation of learning achievements. Such transparency is expected to be brought about by diploma supplements[17] which describe the positioning of a programme within its context, and by transcripts of record which are issued to students to document their personal track record. With diploma supplements in conjunction with transcripts of record indicating programme qualities and relating individual performance to these, these tools are essential to facilitate mobility by means of making recognition of prior learning and of qualifications easier. In that sense and to this end, these – together with the ECTS – are quality elements of considerable weight in practice.

III. Political Zeitgeist

Finally, prevalent **political *Zeitgeist*** should be considered. The following points come to mind:

1. Resuming Items Highlighted Above

First of all, there is *Zeitgeist* at work in many of the items mentioned above. This comes to the fore in particular when considering that quality and quality assurance largely, though not entirely, root in **present-day socio-economic** and **political concerns, aspirations**, and **philosophies**, such as global competition and competitiveness as menacing challenge and education as salvation (Lisbon Agenda); commodification ("external dimension" of the Bologna Process) and the concept of the "informed customer" as basic assumptions of the "entrepreneurial university"; ageing societies and emphasis on life-long learning; the issue of social mix and European integration in relation to open access and transversal opportunities subject to recognition of prior learning. At the level of **mindset**, *Zeitgeist* may also be seen at work with regard to the blending of technocratic managerialism with scepticism, and with blending a rhetoric of trust with a reality of accountability checks.

Beyond these observations derived from the items mentioned before there are other, basically conceptual philosophies at work. These are:

a. From Quality Regulation by Law to Quality Selectivity by Market-style Competition

By tradition many European countries used to consider **quality** in higher education to be a **matter of legal provisions** and administration of legal rules. Course contents were regulated, and running programmes required specific ministerial permission; staffing was supervised by ministries administering specific rules on qualification paths, and student access to programmes followed rules of law in terms of quantity and qualitative expectations; funding of educational processes was subject to legally earmarked budgets. With more modern emphasis on autonomy along with philosophies and practices of '**new public management**',[18] a paradigm shift has taken place, with the concept of **entrepreneurial risk and success** being the new yardstick of quality. In short, the **market** which centres on concepts of 'service provider' and 'client' or 'customer' is about to **succeed** the **law** as the significant **regulator** and major steering device in matters of quality. Quality as reflected in visible **quality assurance** for reasons of accountability to be used as a transparency tool for the '**informed customer**' who makes 'rational choices' in order to match his or her individual expectations in a world of **competing** higher education **providers** would be the extreme version of this approach and quality concept.

b. Quality in Education and Managerialism

Business-like approach is linked to managerialism, which is prevalent in numerous day-to-day operational practices and beliefs. That is to say, quality is considered from the '**can do' perspective**; it is seen as a feature that can be created if only the right recipes are used. As a consequence, highly personalized elements of educational

processes which have little to do with measurable capabilities and identifiable personality features of teaching staff but depend very much on motivating and motivated interaction between individual human beings in specific circumstances are not easily captured by managerial technocracy. However, in failing to incorporate such singular success factors beyond planning the quest for quality in higher education and the inquest into quality of higher education are prone to miss the essential point which raises learning and teaching from routine average quality to those significant moments of true interaction of creative mutual learning. The notion of '**quality culture**' tends to serve as an antithesis to some extent. However, there is quite a number who frown and smile when hearing the word; nevertheless, although those who frown might be wrong, in practice they may well represent the majority position.

c. Educational Quality as being Subject to Measuring

Whether or not linked to managerial approaches as mentioned above, there is a strong belief that **quality** in education can be measured and thus, by and large**, be verified rationally** and **objectively**. The advent and high appreciation of '**performance indicators'**, **at best** of a **quantitative** nature, bears witness to this assumption. While there may be some truth in this belief, the tendency to disregard non-measurable elements of quality follows in line with an **engineering approach** to quality and quality assurance and an overall perspective on reality as a mathematised object. It may be added that the tendency to emphasize the **juridical aspects** of external quality assurance more strongly is likely to support this tendency even more strongly.

5. Trust, Distrust, or 'Guarded Trust' ?

Finally, on a different note of more general, atmospheric observation, there is the **rhetoric of 'trust'** or 'confidence' while this is paralleled at the same time by the demand for external quality assurance. The legal historian David Daube once observed that people tend to talk most about those things which they possess least. If this statement holds true, there is **considerable distrust** in European systems when considering the frequent invocation of 'trust' in discussions on quality in higher education.[19] Indeed there are firm beliefs that higher education institutions could do better in many ways, also in teaching and learning.[20]

Whether or not there is valid reason for distrust in general or in specific cases or circumstances must, and may, be left undecided here. For, at any rate, there is also some indication that there is no way of escaping both the necessity and the feasibility to trust higher education provisions in principle: the very fact that the Bologna Communiqués explicitly state that the prime responsibility for quality rests with higher education institutions indicates the **belief** that these **institutions can be entrusted** with the job to ensure good quality in higher education, which by and large implies that they can be trusted to do so.

When seen in this conflict of views and sentiment, the bridge between trust and distrust lies both in new rhetoric and in a **shift in** formulating the **prime task of external quality assurance**. As for the latter, quality assurance should **not** be seen as **inspectorate-style** surveillance but rather as a supportive **collegial undertaking** – hence, perhaps and among other reasons, the shift from a governmental operation to

peer review approach –, and its main purpose might not be to 'ensure' the existence and further development of quality but rather to make existing quality credibly visible to the general public, *i.e.,* to 'assure' others of qualities available in the higher education system.[21] And as for new rhetoric, the terminological compromise between trust and distrust lies in the phrase '**guarded trust**', which conveys the notion of 'trust – yes, but', *i.e.,* of presuming the availability of quality in higher education while accepting that there needs to be a safety net to underpin this presumption reliably 'just in case'.

C. Quality Concepts

Considering quality in higher education provision assumes that there is understanding of, and some consensus on, the concept of quality. In theory and in political reality, there is and there is not.

I. Defining Quality of Programmes

1. Competing Concepts

In general, there are **a number of quality concepts** as regards higher education programmes. All of these are seen as relevant and competing.[22] In fact, there is a strong belief that a 'one-fits-all' concept of quality is not desirable. Instead, **differentiation** is much **welcome** in view of differences of needs and in order to match a broad spectrum of individual and economic demands. However, so much the more there is differentiation, there is a call to **balance variety** of opportunities and educational results **by** reliable **transparency** of differences.

Among the quality concepts of higher education are – just to mention only the most common ones here –, according to broadly accepted **typology**:[23] quality as (a) the exceptional or excellence, which bears an element of elitism; (b) perfection or consistency, which is linked to the notion of reliability and to conformity through compliance with set standards; (c) fitness for purpose, often linked to the need to address fitness of purpose as the required reference point; (d) value for money, which is sometimes linked to the notion of value for time invested, both of which relate more closely than other definitions of quality to the quality concept of – partly rational and partly emotional – customer satisfaction; (e) transformation, considering the individual gain accrued in the course of a learning experience.

2. Explicitly Open Choices

All of the aforementioned concepts show certain advantages and drawbacks. However, this is not the place to discuss their pros and cons. Instead, the question is whether Europe has made a choice between them. The answer is that there is **no explicit** and **official answer**.

3. Implicit Choices

Nevertheless, **implicit preferences** may be identified. Arguably there is a tendency towards the **'fitness of and for purpose'** concept, *i.e.,* at least in the sense that this

concept appears to capture best certain features of the Bologna Process statements in a consistent way. This is indicated by documents of the Bologna Process in two ways.

First, these documents **formulate educational objectives** to be pursued by higher education programmes. Among these has for long been the call for ensuring '**employability** on the European labour market' – or in more student-centred wording of the London Communiqué of 2007, for 'preparing students for their future careers'. Moreover, at least since the London Communiqué of 2007 additional aims[24] have been identified. These are: 'preparing students for life as **active citizens in a democratic society**, …, enabling their **personal development**, **creating** and **maintaining** a **broad**, **advanced knowledge base'** and, which is partly linked to the last item, '**stimulating research** and **innovation'**. In addition, **overarching systems objectives** have been defined. Among these are ensuring **mobility** and **flexibility** in all aspects mentioned above, and identifiability of programme quality as well as – via reliable **comparability** stemming from **transparency** – **recognition** by using the tools provided, such as ECTS, qualifications frameworks and the Lisbon Recognition Convention. So, all in all **quality**, when defined from an outcomes perspective and bearing in mind overarching political aims, is to be seen as a **complex concept** of desirable features in terms of **content** and **format**, which both internal quality development and external quality assurance need to bear in mind throughout all their activities.

Second, the **shift to** the **learning outcome concept** *per se* indicates leaning towards a fitness for purpose concept of quality. As contrasted to the – at least rhetorically – abandoned input factor approach, looking at learning outcomes signals the need to inquire into the modes and levels and successes of achievement attained vis-à-vis the aforementioned objectives as a result of a structured learning process. In doing so, quality planning and quality judgment cannot avoid considering, but rather needs to focus on, the operational and content circumstances of educational provisions with a view towards identifying their suitability to achieve the objectives set.

Customer satisfaction, be it interpreted in the light of value for money or value for time invested or in any other mode, comes in indirectly, *i.e.,* not as a material quality requirement as such but rather indirectly in that it enters the European quality concept through specifically standardized procedures of 'feed-in and feed-back' in the course of quality development and quality assessment. The broadly shared expectation to include students' and stakeholders' views gathered through feedback loops results from the conviction that students' and employers' opinions on educational offers and effects are significant instruments in developing and judging quality of programmes. Moreover, the expectation to include students and, in some countries, also labour market representatives in 'peer review' based assessments points in the same direction.

Transformation is necessarily included as a qualitative yardstick if and when purposes are defined in view of diversity of systems and learning expectations, and where there is a call for 'profiling' institutions along lines of differences of individual learning objectives at and for various levels and purposes. Seen in this light, autonomy of institutions in the context of the call for institutional profile can, and must, include the concept of transformation in the concept of fitness of and for purpose.

Perfection in the sense of **consistency** and **reliability** undoubtedly links to the quality concept. When seen from the fitness for purpose approach, these features are included since they relate to the demand for accurate – that is to say, reliable and consistent – implementation of model concepts which as such are deemed to be fit for purpose. Moreover, these points also blend in as sub-aspects to consumer satisfaction. Finally, they are related to notions of equality of treatment, hence to the concept of the rule of law in higher education.

In fact, it is worth highlighting here that the **rule of law** as such, for its own merit, is an obvious implicit element and overarching principle of European understanding of quality also in teaching and learning. This is evident in as much as rejection of corruption and nepotism or, generally and positively speaking, acceptance of ethic principles is concerned. However, it must be understood that the notion of the rule of law, especially the concept of egalitarianism under the law and of predictability of decision rationales, reaches deep into routine practices, stretching from admission all the way to examinations and recognition of degrees.

Excellence as a quality criterion comes in where there is political advocacy for stratification due to sympathy for the need of first-class innovation and leadership. In that sense, though excellence is contested in some places it is accepted at least as, and for, a specific niche of the higher education area. With the concept of fitness *for* purpose being derived from and dependent on fitness *of* purpose considerations, excellence as a criterion can be incorporated if fitness of purpose is also interpreted in terms of institutional profile and mission and not merely in terms of general educational objectives.

II. Open and Conflicting Elements of Quality

1. Openness to Interpretation and Limiting Rationale

By their very nature the afore-mentioned four or five overarching educational objectives which the Bologna Process made explicit only rather late, *i.e.,* with a hint in the Bergen Communiqué of 2005 and fully visible only in the London Communiqué in 2007 and again in the Leuven Communiqué of 2009, leave **room for diverse interpretation**. However, this comes as no surprise *de facto* since 'quality' in higher education is a **complex notion** which encompasses **numerous interacting factors** usually described in **terminology** that **requires specification**. Moreover, variants in interpretation are **not detrimental** in a political arena which is prepared not only to accept but rather to **foster diversity** and, following from that, differentiation of programmes offered. Here the true test of quality does not lie in matching a unified answer but in **addressing** the **topical challenge** and in arriving at answers which stand the validity test in terms of **solid reasoning** and **valued achievement**.

2. Conflict

Due to a basically non-normative approach and due to openness of interpretation in principle (with the exception of qualification frameworks, which will be referred to below), there is little surprise in witnessing that there are numerous debates on

interpretations and, perhaps even more so, heated debates on **real or suspected conflicts** between educational objectives and correlated devices. One of the favourites is the never-ending discussion on the conflict between ensuring '**employability**' and '**academic approach**' or, as appears to be close to the topic, between '**practice**' and '**theory**'.[25] As may apply from case to case in European countries which run a dual system of higher education institutions, the debate is aggravated by an implicit institutional conflict between universities in a traditional sense and what used to be known as polytechnics (Fachhochschule et al.) which are now often called universities of applied sciences. This is not the place to enter into this debate, which is usually linked to the term 'profile' used in the Bologna Process documents dealing with qualification frameworks. However, it may be said that the debate tends to be based on reciprocal misinterpretations or undue simplifications of those elements which constitute employability at the relevant level of human profile and which characterize valid approaches in academia when considering the intertwining of 'theory' and 'practice' plus 'soft skills'.[26]

III. Abandoned Quality Concepts, Ambivalent Aftermath and New Orientation

1. Input and outcomes orientation

Positive definition of quality approaches are necessarily paralleled by negating or abandoning others. Here the slogans 'from input factors to **learning outcomes** defined in terms of **competences**'[27] and, which is partly related when seen from the viewpoint of process and approach, '**from teaching to learning**' and '**student-centred learning**' come to mind. Despite **profound** and serious **difficulties** in defining the content of learning outcomes and relevant competences, in validating them, in making them operational, in installing fit-for-purpose learning devices and environments, and in measuring their accomplishment, the shift to learning outcomes and to student-centred learning rather than focussing on input and teacher perspectives has been one of the **key mantras** in the European quality debate. However, there is still **no denying** of the **relevance of input factors**, such as qualification and numbers of staff, of equipment, or of student intake. So in practice, from case to case, there seems to be considerable ambivalence between rhetoric and traditional reality in defining and measuring quality features.

The likely key to consolidating both approaches is that both factors need to be **linked** in a **methodically correct** manner. This is done by not taking input factors as isolated starting points for developing and judging quality. Instead, input factors should rather be seen as elements to be considered incidentally when addressing the question as to whether or not the envisaged educational purposes could, in terms of underpinning both at the level of concept and of its subsequent implementation, feasibly be accomplished.

2. Compliance with Subject Benchmarks and Autonomous Differentiation

There is another facet of **ambivalence** with regard to the relation **between** the concept of programme **profiling** of autonomous, competing higher education institutions

for diverse student requirements by means of providing **programme differentiation** on the one hand and the role of **compliance** by means of implementing nationally or internationally **standardized programme** elements on the other. The latter may occur to a lesser extent than used to be the case, but still there are approaches which advocate implementation of **model templates** for specific programmes or at least part of them. **Subject benchmark statements** could produce similar effects if administered improperly, *i.e.,* rigidly; so could overarching European efforts summarized under the headline 'tuning'.

The answer to the innate conflict between profiled, clearly communicated diversity and concepts which are more geared towards content standardisation can be found by ensuring two factors. First, by **not** misinterpreting any such benchmark statements or findings of 'tuning' or the like as being **normative** and binding **but** as mere **reference points** which to deviate from is permitted if quality is demonstrated concretely *in casu*. Second, by making sure that any such statements and findings refrain from defining specific content or methodological input but rather limit themselves to outlines of competences to be acquired. If not mistaken, the Tuning Project, for instance, attempts to respect this line of thought.

3. Advent of Qualifications Frameworks

The quality debate, and indeed the entire quality development and quality assessment in Europe hinges upon the development and true case-to-case application of qualifications frameworks, which is not often appreciated satisfactorily.[28] With the installation of the three-cycle system of the Bologna Process, and more so in contexts of life-long learning concepts, the development of an **interpretative scheme** emerged as a necessity in order to **facilitate** and **ensure international comparability** based on **transparency** of national educational set-ups in order to foster mobility by facilitating easy and predictable recognition of modules and degrees. With this in mind, the **Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area** emerged as an annex to the Bergen Communiqué in 2005,[29] and a more comprehensive framework of the European Union a couple of years later which attempts to cover entire life cycles.[30] Following the qualification framework of the Bologna Process, the Bologna study scheme is underpinned by interpretations namely in terms of **cycles** and **adequate level descriptors** with specific regard to **learning outcomes** and **competences, credit** and **workload** – and hence indirectly also to **ECTS**, the European credit transfer system, or a comparable national system based on workload –, and **profile**, with the so-called '**Dublin Descriptors**'[31] playing a leading role in structuring expected learning outcomes and competence development along stratification of different levels.

National qualifications frameworks are to be developed across the Bologna Process countries which keep **in line** with the overarching European Qualifications Framework. With this alignment of national and European qualifications frameworks intending to ensure cross-border transparency and translatability, obviously it is absolutely **essential** for **every programme** to be **reliably aligned** to the relevant national qualifications framework lest the entire scheme and its political aspirations fail

altogether. If so, it is mandatory to bear the requirements of the respective qualifications frameworks closely in mind as substantive calibration elements both for purposes of programme design and for quality assurance. So, indeed, at least to that extent there is a **prescriptive** and **normative element** in quality, though not in terms of subject-related statements but rather in terms of types and in-depth characteristics of learning outcomes, competences, and profiles as related to levels and workload invested.

IV. Static or Dynamic Concept of Quality

Finally, there is a notable **shift** in awareness from seeing quality as a static concept which results in merely ensuring and assuring that a specifically defined state of quality is reached and maintained **to** a **dynamic concept** of quality. The latter understands quality operations to be a permanent job of continuous quality **enhancement**, *i.e.,* as a spiral rather than a plateau. Obviously this concept is bound to be a major innovation in places where there has hitherto been a tendency to see quality in terms of **compliance** with a set template of a model programme; obviously it is also more **favourable to concepts of differentiation** and **profile**, autonomy and competitive entrepreneurial approaches. At least in rhetoric and theory, but more and more so also in reality there is support for understanding quality as a challenge to permanent improvement rather than a once-for-all-times undertaking. This indeed influences systems of quality development and of quality evaluation profoundly by moving towards a **formative approach** in quality assurance, as will be outlined hereafter, bearing significance as to the institutional roles and responsibilities – and for that matter, governance – of higher education institutions.

D. Internal Quality Assurance – from Safeguarding via Creating to Enhancing Quality

Looking at quality and quality assurance from the **perspective of concrete activities**, there is the world of criteria and tools. However, these need to be seen on the backdrop of certain overarching principles which constitute the fundamentals of these activities.

I. Fundamentals

In terms of basic framework, the following elements should be addressed, or rather – since they have been touched upon before in different context and for different purposes – be revisited:

1. Agent

Ever since the Berlin Communiqué of 2003 the Bologna Process has made a strong point in saying that the **prime responsibility** for quality of educational provisions rests with **higher education institutions** themselves. This statement signals a number of different things.

First of all, quality is subject to **internal** activity. This signals a marked contrast to believing that quality is to be imported from, or by, externals of whatever kind,

be it ministries or stakeholders, notwithstanding the necessity to incorporate their voices into developmental considerations.

Second, responsibility for quality is vested in the institution as such, *i.e.,* it is expected to be taken up as an **institutionalised** task. This feature denotes two aspects. Matters of quality are **not only** duties to be met by **individual** members as such in areas of their personal activities, although there is no denying that individuals also bear personal responsibility for quality education. Instead, institutionalisation of quality matters means adequate development of **stable organisational structures** and **functional routine processes**. The link to questions of institutional governance becomes visible here.

2. Purposes and Philosophies

In fact, identifying higher education institutions as prime bearers of quality is linked to **ulterior philosophies** and **purposes**. Basically, the lead idea is that taking quality matters to institutional level rather than leaving it with externals addresses questions of **effectiveness** and **efficiency** best. Of course effectiveness and efficiency cannot be judged without identifying objectives to be achieved and correlated philosophies to be met. So, what procures efficiency and effectiveness with regard to these by putting the onus of quality education and quality assurance in education upon higher education institutions?

Enhanced probability to **avoid mere window-dressing** in favour of real action is an obvious first answer. The less there is an atmosphere of an 'inspector calling' from time to time and the more there is day-to-day in-house collaborative activity not primarily in checking but rather in joint development of quality, the more likeliness there is in seeing the truth of true and real activity.

However, there are deeper levels of reasoning which are linked to the overarching understanding of the quality issue in the Bologna Process. In-house institutionalised routines **safeguard permanence of** the **quest for quality**. Therefore institutional responsibility is a useful tool to effectuate the concept of continuous quality enhancement. For this concept is in contrast to two malfunctions of external operations of quality development and assurance at the same time: first, to understanding quality as a matter of fixed status; second, to running the risk that quality enhancement, even when accepted in principle, takes place in steps and leaps only at the moment of imminent external inspection.

Moreover, bringing quality to the institutions of higher education means **decentralisation**. This is not just recommendable in order to **avoid administrative overburdening** at times of mushrooming of public and private institutions. The second reason lies in the fact that decentralisation of responsibilities is the only remedy to **ensure diversity** and **differentiation** of higher education provisions within national systems. Here the link to overarching philosophies in the European higher education area becomes visible quite clearly.

All in all, these reasons indicate that quality is seen as a permanent challenge and task requiring differentiated answers. In effect, this means that there is no mere implementation of externally prefabricated templates but rather the need for in-depth

analysis of changing expectations of specific *clientele* in specific environments along the lines of specified learning outcomes in terms of competences. This, in effect, means that **individuality of missions** of institutions play a role as a prerequisite for identifying credible and feasible choices. **Defining** mission and position in a contextually **meaningful** and purposefully **valid** way **and translating** them correctly into concrete operations within their institutional compound, however, can again be done best by those who define it, *i.e.,* by institutions of higher education.

This is so much the more true as the **institution** as such is eventually **held responsible** for failure; in particular when the educational system of a country or even of Europe is seen as being based on the idea of the 'entrepreneurial university' ready for 'competition'. For if so, **fairness** requires making sure that **responsibility** in its **double meaning** – *i.e.,* being held accountable and being in charge – is concentrated in the **same hand**.

3. Action Lines

In practical effect, the endorsement of an institution-based quality concept has necessarily evolved into the development of two different yet intertwined action lines in the realm of quality assurance.[32]

The first and rather **traditional** one is concerned with **specific programmes as such**. It is concerned with applying what is often called the '**quality cycle**'. Basically following Deming's plan-do-check-act circle, this concept encompasses the following elementary line of thought and practice:

Initially, it identifies valid learning objectives based on considerations in terms of content, desirable competence outcomes and proper formatting within the Bologna model and its level descriptors, as established and defined by relevant qualification frameworks. It then works out a programme concept – including, apart from content, structure, and teaching-learning methodologies, an analysis of the means required, of access principles, and of assessment modalities – which is fit to achieve expected outcomes, whereupon it ensures true implementation of that concept. In assessing and evaluating the effective results some time after implementation, the process eventually ends in iterating the choice of objectives and the adequacy of concepts and success of implementation and outcomes achieved.

However, there is a second strand of action required which stems directly from **holding institutions responsible** for permanent development of quality, and for evaluating quality for the sake of internal improvement and for external transparency both for accountability and for stakeholder-related information purposes. It is here where governance and managerial matters arise, as is evident to the 'Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG) when considering **ESG part 1 items 1** and **2**: "Institutions should have a policy and associated procedures for the assurance of the quality and standards of their programmes and awards;" and "institutions should have formal mechanisms for the approval, periodic review and monitoring of their programmes." This institution-oriented line of action will be considered later.

II. Programme Quality and Internal Quality Assurance – Criteria and Processes

The following items concerning criteria and processes of internal quality assurance in higher education institutions may be highlighted in brief, referencing them to the afore-mentioned 'quality cycle' operated at the level of concrete programmes.

1. Criteria

Looking at practices in Europe, there are numerous variants of sets of substantive quality criteria; these cannot be dealt with here.[33] However, there are some common denominators of good practice, irrespective of variants in wording and arrangement. This comes as no surprise since European institutions are expected to follow the same principles set out by the aforementioned 'Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG).

Amongst these are, subject largely to **part 1 item 2** of the **ESG**, issues on **good design** and **implementation** of **programmes**, their **formal approval**, their **monitoring**, and their **periodic review**. The afore-mentioned 'quality cycle' shines through when considering the more **detailed itemisation** of the ESG here, *i.e.,* development and publication of explicit intended learning outcomes; careful attention to curriculum and programme design and content with due regard, where applicable, to specific needs of different modes of delivery such as full time, part time, distance learning, e-learning, and to types of higher education, *e.g.,* academic, vocational and professional; availability of appropriate learning resources; formal programme approval procedures by a body other than that teaching the programme; monitoring of the progress and achievements of the students; regular periodic reviews of programmes, including external panel members; regular feedback from employers, labour market representatives and other relevant organisations; participation of students in quality assurance activities.

There is also specific concern with the **assessment** of students, as is highlighted in **ESG part 1 item 3**. Here emphasis is on application of published criteria, regulations and procedures, all of which are to be applied constantly. In fact, matters of assessment fit into categories of the 'quality cycle' easily. However, zooming these issues up by highlighting them specifically in the ESG is in keeping with the importance which is attached to this facet both from student and societal perspectives.

As for **input** factors, **ESG part 1 items 4 and 5** deal with matters of quality and quantity of **staff** and of **resources** respectively. Similarly on the level of tools yet with a difference of focus, there is emphasis on the availability of adequate **information systems** and on procuring sufficient **public information** in **ESG part 1 items 6 and 7**. Apart from the latter the ESG here singles out aspects which are also part of the 'quality cycle' as described above.

Beyond these standard points referred to by the ESG there are differences across Europe as regards the availability and significance of **subject benchmark statements** or more rigid modes of **subject-related descriptor systems** or even core **model curricula**. In addition, note should be taken of the fact that there are diverse levels of requirements set by **specific professions**; however, some of these

tend to be more and more standardised due to EU regulation on recognition of professional qualifications.

The ESG do **not** explicitly **address** two major issues of substantial quality: first, specification of socially accepted and expected **overarching learning objectives**, as outlined in the London Communiqué following the Council of Europe; and second, as has been pointed out above, ensuring the link to, and proper application of, the descriptor system behind the Bologna stratification as specified in national **qualifications frameworks**, which are expected to be aligned to the relevant European Qualifications Framework. This is probably largely due to the fact that the ESG were agreed upon in 2005 while the two elements mentioned have emerged only later or, as is the case with the European Qualifications Framework of the Bologna Process, at best simultaneously. However, it is essential for making the Bologna Process functional and for achieving its key objective to ensure mobility and easy recognition along the lines of the Lisbon Recognition Convention that the **ESG** quality requirements are **interpreted** in the light of these recent factors of content substance. Hence, these two factors must necessarily be seen **as integral to the ESG** criteria.

There is a more profound challenge in that the ESG do not really specify criteria in the operational sense of the term. In fact, the ESG largely offer ***topoi*** to be considered as being essential for sufficient or good quality but stop short of describing what actual reasoning should be based upon in terms of **decisive** yes-no-perhaps factors or elements in *concreto*, as the word '**criterion**' suggests. Following from that, there is little on **performance indicators** to be used in order to make the application of criteria in the aforementioned concrete sense operational and objective. So it is no surprise that differences on these counts appear in Europe, varying from more refined fine tuning to confidence in wisdom of peers exercising accurate judgment from case to case.

Moreover, by stating that the ESG merely offer **guidelines** which leave room for deviation there is another element of insecurity as to all-embracing application of the ESG themselves. However, this appears to be more a problem in theory than in reality. There is strong adherence to the wording of the ESG across Europe *de facto*, largely because quality assurance agencies feel on the safe side when simply implementing the ESG as they stand, both vis-à-vis higher education institutions and for securing their own acceptance by ENQA, the European Association for Quality Assurance of Higher Education, and by EQAR, the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education.

2. Processes

Parallel to indicating **material** standards and guidelines higher education institutions are expected to observe certain **procedural rules**.

In essence, quality processes are expected to be **reliable**. To this end, they need to be based on **fact**-finding and must thus be **evidence**-based; hence the emphasis on **information systems** in **ESG part 1 item 6**. Reliability is also seen in ensuring clarity in matters of **institutionalised responsibility** for quality development and quality monitoring[34] leading to regular iteration of reviews,[35] which is in line with the

concept of continuous quality enhancement. Reliability in terms of accuracy and transparency is added by the notion of fairness when higher education institutions are expected not only to avail themselves of policies, criteria, and practices in quality matters at the level of conceptual normativity but also to ensure their consistent application at the level of implementation.

Another key factor is the notion of **participation** and inclusion.[36] This pertains namely to **students** in so far as they are to be included in internal proceedings and evaluations related to quality, but also to **externals**. In particular, this extends to consultation with external stakeholders, namely those who can contribute to aspects of employability and labour market expectations in general.

A final procedural aspect to mention is the call for **transparency**. This feature goes beyond describing and using predefined criteria and processes in a participatory manner, all of which of course are significant features of openness. Moreover, results of findings are expected to be made available to the public.[37] This is to **protect** against couvert deviation from predefined rules and to ensure proper, evidence-based reasoning. Beyond this ancillary role, however, transparency is expected to **raise public trust** in institutions, **help** students and stakeholders with **making** their **personal choices**, and it should provide entire systems of higher education sufficient information in order to **support system wide learning processes**, which is envisaged as a spin-off by **ESG, part 2, item 8**.

E. External Quality Assurance – Approaches, Tools, Effects

I. Practices

Internal quality assurance is to be **backed up by external quality assurance**. External quality assurance has been established practice in many European countries for some time, at least since the nineties and in some cases prior to that time, in many a case well before the advent of the ESG in 2005. External quality assurance is based on the **political viewpoint** that **safeguarding quality** in higher education **by** making **provisions for quality assurance** is a **public responsibility**, while this assumption does **not necessarily** require governments to **carry out** external quality assurance directly **under state auspices** or to define quality criteria and external quality assurance processes by means of legal instruments if autonomous higher education institutions or independent agencies take on this responsibility reliably.

1. Agents: Independent Agencies

It has become common practice to have external quality assurance carried out by **non-governmental external agencies** which act as independent bodies. This development is a **megatrend** indeed, which is strongly supported by the ESG.[38] It may be inspired by long-standing North American practice as regards the concept of regional accreditation authorities, but certainly by a new interpretation of the role of the state in quality assurance. However, the **level of** true **independence** of external quality assurance agencies **varies** de facto and de jure. Many countries operate **one**

quality assurance **agency** established **by national law**, with major features of their operations and the relevant quality criteria being defined by law while granting **independence** mainly as regards concrete **case-to-case judgment**. Others allow **private institutions** to provide external quality assurance, or the quality agencies are entrusted with defining their quality criteria and processes autonomously to a large extent. Many countries still limit recognized external quality assurance to **employing** the **national agency only**. Others see external quality assurance as an area open to **competition** within the **national** system **or** even **beyond**, thus using the potential of EQAR, the European register of trustworthy quality assurance agencies which will be dealt with more closely later.

However, the establishment and practice of external quality assurance by more or less independent external quality assurance agencies is almost all that is common in Europe, apart from certain **procedural consensus** and framework rules provided by the ESG. As for **concrete structure** of **agents**, **criteria**, and **processes** as well as **objects**, **purposes** and **consequences** of scrutiny, but also the question to what extent external quality assurance is **voluntary** or **mandatory**, there certainly are **noticeable differences**, the most important of which need to be mentioned.

2. Approaches, Objects, and Objectives

In substance, European countries – and no less non-European systems – provide **different approaches** to external quality assurance side by side, with considerable shortcomings in clarity of terminology. *Grosso modo* there is the difference between **evaluation** and **accreditation**, each of which can be applied to **programmes** or to **institutional agents and operations** in areas of teaching and learning in particular, thus resulting in a matrix of at least two by two.[39]

The first type of differentiation, usually described by the terms accreditation and evaluation, is based on **modes** and **consequences** of investigations into higher education quality. **Accreditation** is usually linked to the notion of 'minimum standards' which defines **threshold quality** required for a **yes-or-no decision**, in some countries even in terms of **licencing**, pertaining either to a programme or an institution. **Evaluation** tends to be linked to the notion of **support** in order to facilitate quality **enhancement** of a programme or institution, leading to a more open-scale judgment than accreditation. At times the term quality assurance is reserved to evaluations only, though for little reason.

Moreover, again and again a lot of thought is invested in working out extensive philosophies as to the **differences** and also **overlaps** of evaluation and accreditation. In reality the difference is minor in essence. Every process of accreditation includes evaluation when **interpreting evaluation** as an **evidence-based process of fact-finding** leading to **judgements** on quality which are **based on explicit** and **coherently applied criteria** and **processes**. Moreover, most **accreditation decisions contain** elements of **recommendations** in as much as evaluations do. The differences may largely be seen in that accreditation processes bear direct legal consequences whereas evaluations as such do not prescribe hard consequences *per se*; but again, this may also be a fallacy from case to case, in particular when **funding**

mechanisms are **linked to evaluation** result. So the spirit of collegial openness, and with it the extent to which there needs to be reasons for distrust which evokes more in-depth fact finding, may differ; this is usually to the detriment of accreditation, but not necessarily will mere evaluations be the softer approach in all cases.

The **object** of evaluation or accreditation is considered when linking these terms to the choice between programme and institutional approach; the latter is often associated with the term **'audit'**. As for **programme** evaluation or accreditation, external quality assurance **scrutinizes study programmes directly**. As should be the case under the 'Bologna regime', this should no longer be done from the input perspective but rather by considering expected learning outcomes and how these are achieved and verified in terms of fit-to-purpose concepts and implementation as well as iteration for improvement purposes, all of which can be summarized under the heading 'quality cycle'.

An **institutional** approach queries the **capacity** of the higher education institution to **design** and **operate** the aforementioned **quality cycle** successfully, and the way it actually translates this capacity into practice. It is based on the assumption that the availability of such capacity and practice renders a sufficiently high degree of probability as to the accomplishment of qualitatively adequate study programmes. With this proven, confidence in the higher education institution has been established which may lead to 'self-accreditation' and 'delegated authority' or the like with regard to individual programmes, as is the case in some countries. Programme evaluation then takes on a mere secondary role in that it is reduced to the level of sample testing designed to indicate the functionality of the institution's autonomous quality development and assurance systems.

Accreditation and evaluation **processes** may be vested in the hands of one and the same agency, but it **may** also **be split** in various ways. For example, higher education institutions may be invited to present the findings of an external evaluation carried out by an agency of their choice to the accrediting agency; in other cases the results of accreditation findings are to be submitted to the national ministry to grant a decree of accreditation or, as may be the case, of refusal of accreditation. At any rate, the *de facto* and the legal complexity thus created varies in many ways, with more complexity of situations added with differences in the laws and legal cultures of the respective national systems involved.

It may tentatively be said that by and large there is a certain **shift** in Europe **towards institutional approaches**. While many, though by no means all systems apparently tend to start external quality assurance at the level of programmes, the cost factor in view of an abundance of programmes and shortcomings in programme approaches as regards developing true institutional ownership of quality issues and ensuring permanent quality enhancement becomes apparent sooner or later. Moreover, the ESG may be instrumental in supporting this trend because ESG part 2, which deals with external quality assurance requirements, formulates in **ESG part 2 item 1** that 'external quality assurance procedures should take into account the effectiveness of the internal quality assurance processes described in part 1 of the ESG'. In fact, this requirement makes including assessment of institutional steering processes in matters of programme quality essential even within the compound of

programme-oriented approaches to quality assurance. The ESG thus works like a Trojan horse, unwittingly carrying typical features of institutional appraisal.

Programme orientation is of course strong where there is **professional accreditation**. This can be found in particular, though not exclusively, with regard to programmes leading to **regulated professions**. Professional accreditation is usually run by subject-related professional bodies, which are to be distinguished from authorities working along the line of general academic approaches to subject matters and quality notions. The **divide** as far as availability of specific professional accreditation seems **not** to run **between European and non-European**, *e.g.,* North American, systems. Instead, the divide is rather between those systems inside Europe which, like the British system, have long-standing traditions of robust academic independence from state intervention in conjunction with autonomous professional bodies on the one hand, and systems more strongly dependent on traditional state surveillance of academic learning and university qualifications on the other hand. Interestingly there is a noticeable development throughout European higher education institutions to go for specific professional accreditation even in **non-regulated professions**, *e.g.,* in the sciences, engineering, and business management, and to do so by **inviting American agencies** to provide professional accreditation. This tendency is partly due to absence of relevant European agencies for professional accreditation, and partly it is due to gaining an 'internationally recognized seal of quality'. At any rate, both the emergence of a global market for accreditation and for '**global quality branding**' can be observed here, with a strong **advantage** in favour of **North American** agencies.

Finally as for ulterior objectives, it must be noted that external quality assurance is strongly based on **fostering permanent quality enhancement**. This is a core feature of the ESG since they expect periodic external assessment of quality features,[40] emphasise the need to carry out follow-up activities after periodic quality assessments,[41] and require permanent feedback from people involved.[42] All this applies to higher education institutions related to their programmes, but also to external quality assurance agencies.

The notion of quality as being an **unlimited learning process** can also be seen in **ESG part 2 item 7** requiring quality assurance agencies to carry out **systems analyses** based on their case findings. This, in fact, is a challenging perspective in European higher education: ensuring not merely quality operations of higher education institutions and quality assurance agencies, but also of national or regional systems as such. This can be done via identification of strengths and weaknesses of a given political higher education system via direct system analysis, or also in a grass-root approach through **identifying cross-sector issues** as they appear at programme or institutional level due to specific **conditions set by the political and socio-economic environment**. Examples of such activities can be found in various ways, such as through systems evaluations of national agencies, but also through systems analyses undertaken by the EUA or other international organisations in a number of European countries.

However, if emphasis of external quality assurance on permanent quality enhancement and learning processes both at institutional and systems level were seen as

leading to an atmosphere that could be characterized as a 'cordial discussion between the institution in question and critical friends' the reality of external quality assurance would unfortunately be misunderstood in many cases. This is particularly true where accreditation is in place, but also in systems which have introduced external evaluations. Most external quality assurance proceedings carry more significance than being a mere **support tool**. There are elements of **public accountability** attached to the findings. Moreover, in some systems based on a **licencing** approach the **admissibility** of educational programmes – or even institutions – is **legally dependent** on successful external quality assurance results. Other systems relate **funding** to these outcomes. Hence there is a real and atmospheric, at any rate **delicate ambivalence** of **rewards and sanctions**[43] instead of disinterested neutrality in external quality assurance operations, though the mode of blending these elements varies from system to system and needs to be balanced to an optimum again and again.

3. Processes and Procedures

In terms of process and procedure, external quality assurance in Europe follows a **standard pattern** which is, by and large, described in **ESG part 3 item 7**. First, higher education institutions are expected to submit **a self-evaluation report** on the object to be evaluated, accredited, or audited. The self-evaluation report is followed by a **site visit**, or in some cases two site visits, of a panel of experts appointed by the agency concerned. The **evaluation operations** and the subsequent **report** of the evaluating team is expected to **apply predefined criteria** and **processes** and must be **evidence-based**, looking both at concepts and practices of the object concerned. It may limit itself to statements in terms of fact finding, but in most cases it also arrives at conclusions in terms of recommendations or affirmative or negative judgement. This is usually followed by **final judgement** passed by a specific body of the agency established for that purpose, thus making sure that there is a calibrating check across the entire field of operation and thus formally accepted institutional responsibility of the agency. In some cases this judgement is **valid directly** vis-à-vis the institution which applied for the process, in some cases it is **passed on to** the competent **governmental authority**, usually the ministry of education, to adopt the decision formally and to make it known to the institution. If dissatisfied, institutions may **appeal** using specific appeals procedures, and – as may be the case in some systems – to law courts.

While this is widely accepted practice, the presence and **role of students** and **external stakeholders** in evaluation panels is more contested.[44] With **ESG part 3 item 7** having strengthened the role of students, almost all quality assurance agencies include students in their teams, whereas this may be true only to a lesser extent as far as **representation of**, for example, the **labour market** is concerned. However, enhancing roles of students is not always backed by deep conviction, as may be seen in cases where students are not seen as full team members but rather as integrated observers who are entitled to add their comments and to write their own opinions as an annex to the panel report. At any rate, in principle student involvement is widely safeguarded by now, and students will surely keep broadening their effective influence in formal quality assurance processes. Apart from these processes, however, it should

be borne in mind that **students** also bear significant influence by means of their steady **involvement in** key European **policy-making operations** such as the Bologna Process, and no less in voicing their independent opinion on harsh realities of experienced quality deficiencies via publications like 'Bologna through Students' Eyes'.

Along with this issue of participation, or perhaps even at the root of it, there are **different concepts of panellists' competences**. While the ESG mention the term '**expert**', in some cases the term '**peer**' is used more often. The latter term leans more towards the notion that only full academics should be included in panels. This does not only tend to bar students or external stakeholders but sheds some doubt as to the **right definition of the scope of expertise required** for the quality operations in question. While nobody denies that experience of the subject matter is essential, there may have to be a broader understanding of the wider requirements of quality assurance as such, which encompasses **more than mere academic competence** in specific subject fields.

In addition, there is a permanent challenge in **selecting** and **training panellists**, particularly where there is a narrow understanding of the term 'expert'. This issue is specifically serious in systems which combine a narrow understanding of 'expert' in terms of 'academic peer' with the need to involve hundreds of people. This is the case particularly in big systems which operate programme-based approaches to quality assurance. Small systems, on the other hand, may find it more difficult than others to ensure a **non-bias approach** due to limited availability of experts within their systems. Internationalisation of expert panels can serve as a remedy. Apart from that and more generally speaking, integrating international experts is advocated strongly in Europe in order to prevent too narrow a national view on quality criteria and quality processes.

Finally, the ESG attach importance to **reporting** the results of quality assurance activities to the general **public**.[55] Practices across Europe tend to vary as to publication of negative decisions, and as to the extent of publications. However, the principle as such is largely accepted by now. Establishing this principle is not just a matter of due process; it is significant in terms of substance and political concept of quality assurance, as much as the concept of permanent quality enhancement is. This is so because the principle of reporting is intended to foster **public trust** in quality operations by making sure that everyone can judge whether or not there is valid reasoning behind quality assurance decisions. Publication as a means to **make differences in quality transparent** also blends in with efforts to enable students and stakeholders to identify preferable choices. At least *de facto*, therefore, reporting also lends itself to concepts of 'customer orientation', which goes well with 'entrepreneurial' concepts of higher education.

II. European Dimensions

External quality assurance has gained European dimensions beyond the ESG in numerous ways. From an institutional perspective, these are either **civic** in nature or '**official**', in as far as the Bologna Process itself is an inter-governmental undertaking.

1. Civic Society

As for the **civic**, *i.e.,* non-governmental 'grass root' **approach** in the context of quality matters, certainly **ENQA** – the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education – plays a significant role.[46] In essence, ENQA is a membership organisation of European agencies which are active in the realm of external quality assurance of whatever type within the European higher education area. Being an ENQA member bears a hallmark of quality since ENQA strives to maintain a high level of competence of its members, which is safeguarded by formulating challenging membership criteria and extensive vetting procedures which candidates for membership are subject to. *Inter alia*, ENQA serves to represent quality assurance agencies in the European debates, namely in the Bologna Process, on matters of quality assurance, which is fully accepted by participants in the Bologna Process. As for issues of quality assurance as a whole, the following institutions are also involved: **EUA** – the European University Association – as the voice of universities;[47] **EURASHE** – the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education – representing universities of applied sciences and polytechnics of various types across Europe;[48] and **ESU** – the European Students' Union, the successor to what used to be ESIB – as the student representation.[49] These four institutions, jointly labelled "E 4", share the role to define basic European expectations on quality assurance, as is officially recognized by the Bologna Process members since the Berlin Communiqué of 2003.

From a **political** perspective, readiness of governments to endow the "E 4" group with defining core elements of internal and external quality assurance is quite remarkable. For it can be interpreted as strong endorsement of the principle that higher education institutions bear prime responsibility for quality in higher education if this principle is also understood as **asking autonomous**, in that sense non-governmental **institutions** to adopt a **leading role** in shaping the notions and policies in matters of higher education quality and its assessment.

From a **practical** point of view, this is also wiser than enshrining criteria and processes in matters of quality assurance in governmental decrees. Delegating the definition of quality assurance principles to essentially non-governmental organisations helps to retain as much **flexibility** as possible to be able to **adapt** the relevant criteria and processes to new and different environments, tasks, and approaches in terms of philosophies and methodologies. Moreover, such devolution provides **broader acceptance** of quality assurance proceedings by higher education institutions.

Finally, civic society is also involved in the Bologna Process by including **labour market representation**. This applies to both the **employers'** perspective included via Business Europe, the roof organisation of industry and commerce in Europe,[50] and the perspective of **employees** in the educational sector through EI, *i.e.,* Education International as their relevant European representation.[51] These perspectives also filter into quality debates in Europe, formally so in as much as they are dealt with in official Bologna Process activities.

In addition to these activities which are formally integrated into the Bologna Process, numerous national and European **conferences**, presentations, and workshops on issues of quality and quality assurance bear witness of considerable

involvement and incentive at grass root level. *Inter alia*, and probably one of the more sustainable formats, a so-called annual European **quality assurance forum** was established in 2006 which offers a platform of learning and discussion for higher education institutions, quality assurance agencies,[52] and various stakeholders. Activities of this kind are more or less well supported by **research** and **reports**[53]in the field by experts and expert organizations which provide substance in terms of input, follow-up, and counselling.[54]

2. The ESG

The major outcome of "E 4" joint ownership of quality matters is the afore-mentioned ESG annexed to the Bergen Communiqué of 2005. The ESG serve as a **common denominator** in **basics** of quality assurance by providing a **consented reference point** defined by stakeholders and supported by political authority. Their main features are as follows:[55]

The ESG are construed in **three strata**, commencing with **internal quality assurance** at the level of the higher education institution, proceeding from here to **external quality assurance** operations of relevant agencies, ending with **external quality assurance of external quality assurance agencies**. In compiling the material along this line, there is evidence for support of the concept that higher education **institutions** themselves are primarily **responsible** for providing quality of educational opportunities and for ensuring their permanent enhancement. Moreover, the ESG structure reveals that external quality assurance must **primarily consider** the institutional preparedness and effectiveness of that **institutional capacity**, in particular since part 2 item 1 of the ESG expect external quality assurance to consider this factor above all. In addition, part 3 item 1 of the ESG takes up this principal viewpoint when expecting external quality assurance of external quality assurance agencies to investigate the ability of the latter to do exactly that.

The ESG explicitly **refrain** from taking sides in disputes over **preferences between** programme and institutional **approaches**, or between evaluation, accreditation, audit or any other approach. Various methodologies are seen as being of equal rank, in principle. However, since the afore-mentioned items 1 of parts 2 and 3 of the ESG uniformly expect the establishment and subsequently the external assessment of quality assurance capabilities of higher education institutions, there may be a certain **implicit bias** in favour of institutional approaches which emphasize **institutional capacity** to internally define and implement quality processes and quality criteria. In addition, a **certain tendency towards accreditation** in recent years has been detected;[56] yet this is not of the making of the ESG but rather of EU documents, and it may indeed be questionable whether or not this development can in fact be proved.

Eventually, the ESG are relatively **extensive** in **defining processes** and **procedures** in the wider sense, including matters of **participation**, **transparency** in various aspects stretching from examination requirements to outcomes of quality assessments of programmes or institutions, and **redress** in terms of appeal. Moreover, the ESG rightly make a point in emphasizing the need to secure **consistent**

application of **predefined standards**, *i.e.,* of essentials of **normativity**, which is basic to the rule of law. By contrast, by and large the ESG **abstain from** defining these standards in terms of **content substance**, either in general or in relation to specific academic fields, *e.g.,* by defining content-related quality domains, criteria or standards or reference points, and performance indicators. In so far they appear to apply *Niklas Luhmann's* concept of 'legitimacy and acceptance resulting from due process',[57] or perhaps even the concept of material correctness due to due process.

However, with regard to content matters it is essential to **link** the ESG quality expectations **to** other European quality tools which contain more substantive guidance. Among these are the **learning outcome approach** in conjunction with **overarching educational goals** as defined in the Bologna Process Communiqués, the **calibration** methodology instrumented by **qualifications frameworks**, and as may be the case, for good or for bad, of **subject benchmark statements** of various kinds, be it as results emerging from projects like Tuning[58] or requirements defined by specific professions.

3. EQAR – the Register

More recently, the emergence of EQAR – the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education – has added to the European dimension in a tangible, procedural way.[59] The register run by EQAR provides for **listing trustworthy quality assurance agencies** operating in Europe. Since there is supposed to be credibility behind entry in the register, an admittance policy is in place which is hoped to be sufficiently robust both in interpreting the criteria and in applying them in practice from case to case to earn true credibility. The most tangible effect of an EQAR registration lies in the opportunity for higher education institutions to choose agencies from another country to conduct external quality assessment proceedings; however, this applies only if the applicable national regulations grant higher education institutions in the given jurisdiction such a right of choice, which is not usually the case at present. At any rate, once established the register will support **cross-border dissemination of various European traditions** and **diverse approaches** in quality assurance. This effect is hoped to contribute to creating more **mutual understanding** of quality expectations in Europe, which should in return **facilitate innovative programme development**, support designing **joint programmes**, and help with **recognition** of modules and qualifications.

III. Showcase or Good Reality?

Undoubtedly the quest for quality, especially when backed by external quality assurance, has shown some **real effect** to the better of higher education. At least it has put quality issues **on agendas**; it has **alerted** those responsible in higher education institutions; it has **changed perspectives**, *e.g.,* by moving from input factors to slowly embracing, comprehending, and implementing an outcome-oriented concept; it has put some pressure into the development of **national qualifications frameworks**; it has induced more **transparency** and enhanced **participation** of students. However, it is difficult to qualify and quantify these effects across the sector more specifically.

Nevertheless, even if in general there is sufficient – though not necessarily full – **reliability in** the underlying **assumption** of external quality assurance that **track record** in the **past**, which any external quality assurance based on factual evidence is expected to refer to, is an **indicator** of probable **good performance** in the **future**, which is the salient point behind external quality assurance intent on providing information for decision-making purposes, external quality assurance in particular has **not** been a **full success story**. This is not only due to elements of rewards and sanction in the wake of external quality assurance processes. The extent to which true **fact finding** is actually possible in the course of relatively short site visits during external quality assurance processes is questionable, especially where there is ample reason for higher education institutions to prefer window dressing to gathering true opinion on quality. There is some doubt in cross-sector quality and **consistency of judgment** due to **great numbers** to cope with, and due to the **qualification of personnel** which is not always quite fit to meet requirements of the job. In some cases, especially where there is strong emphasis on accreditation of programmes, success in accreditation has even worked to the detriment of quality because **programmes** tend to become **ossified** for the accreditation period; so, at times ensuring dynamics in terms of permanent quality enhancement may have fallen victim to quality assurance. All in all, demands on quality assurance have led to considerable **bureaucracy** and investment of **time** and **money** on the part of institutions concerned and evaluators involved while there is some sentiment at grass-root level that these factors are **not sufficiently balanced by** the extent of **positive returns** on investment;[60] hence, **fatigue** is a tangible phenomenon.

These phenomena, and the call for true effect at less expense in terms of time, bureaucracy, and money, has led to invoking **stronger emphasis on internal, institutional quality assurance**, which respects and rests upon responsibility as the counterpart of institutional autonomy, and to emphasis of 'quality culture'. This notion requires closer analysis.

F. Emergence of Institutional Dimensions: From Quality Management to Quality Culture and Good Governance – towards Institutional Classification

I. Managerial Competence

Both quality and quality assurance in higher education have obviously become a matter of **managerial competence.** Concepts not only for defining, but also for measuring quality must be developed and implemented; along with these tasks, internal data related to programmes and external judgements and visions need to be collected, aggregated, interpreted, and translated into sufficient action, with all this being made transparent through adequate, evidence-based reasoning, documentation and communication, and repeatedly so in view of the iterative effect which follows from the concept of permanent quality enhancement. Achieving this in complex subject areas like higher education, often intertwined with research, general outreach to

society and also funding and staffing practices, with the extra challenge posed by making institutions and staff move ahead relatively quickly require **professional expertise** and practical **managerial skills**. The emergence of 'quality offices' bears witness to that fact, as does the acknowledgment implied in establishing these that there are specific **differences** between '**quality expertise**' and **subject-related 'academic competence'**. In the wake of such developments sooner or later the question of **role share** between 'academic peers' and 'quality experts' may be on the agenda, and questions of **legitimacy** of processes and decisions in quality matters.

However, a mere 'can-do' approach in a technocratic sense is prone to suffocate vivid participation by overburdening **bureaucracy**[61] and will fail if there is to be a real move towards improvement, in particular when there is a prevalence of top-down approach and a strong tendency towards inspectorate for accountability purposes. Mere **window dressing** with **insignificant effect in substance** and mere filing of reports merely for the purpose of shelving them will be the likely result, with **little support in real terms** by those concerned who will pretend support by weary lip service.[62]

II. Quality Culture

By contrast, real success beyond window dressing requires **ownership** of the quality processes of those concerned inside higher education institutions as well as a sentiment of **shared responsibility**, and **insight into** the **benefits** which will accrue due to proper and real quality improvement for everyone, including those inside higher education institutions. This comes as no surprise because **quality** in education eventually **depends on people**, *i.e.,* more concretely, on **competence**, on **motivation** and, which is an essential founding stone of the latter, on **participatory involvement** of **staff** in particular, but also of **students** and of **stakeholders**; all of these need to be seen as **equal partners** in discussions, decision-making and implementation concerning quality development and quality judgment. With these features being in place as an overarching organisational value and tangible priority which shape institutional activities and members' perception, a higher education institution will have aspired to what has become known as '**quality culture**'.[63]

Arguably, the concept of quality culture[64] in the wider sense of the term is **not** an **anti-managerial** concept but rather an **integral** one. Quality culture is an overarching notion which encompasses managerial competence that can avail itself of practical techniques and technical know-how while complementing this facet by quality culture in the narrow sense of the word, signifying communicative integration of all concerned and thus leading to ownership, true insight and enthusiasm. Again, there is reason to believe that even these 'spiritual' components are at least in part subject to managerialism in that there are **tools to foster 'quality culture'**. This can be done by active **inclusion** of fully informed staff, students, and stakeholders concerned in purposes, devices, and effects of providing quality study programmes and quality assurance, by creating and demonstrating **win-win opportunities** for those concerned. It is on this account that there are different situations across Europe, though not primarily across state border lines but rather from institution to institution. Admittedly, rather bureaucratic requirements of quality management and of evidence-based, criteria-oriented quality assurance processes present some permanent challenge

to developing and maintaining such understanding and live practice of quality culture in matters of educational quality.

III. Good Governance

The integrated concept of quality culture as signifying quality management backed by quality enthusiasm indicates the **link to good governance** in higher education. If good governance is tentatively **defined** as the institutional capacity to address and solve challenges to survival and growth effectively and within ethical limits – such as securing freedom of teaching, learning, and research while safeguarding responsibility vis-à-vis society –, good governance is obviously deeply concerned with quality of learning opportunities since these are core 'products' of the institution which determine its positioning. Terms and notions like 'the **entrepreneurial university**" and calls for '**leadership**', but also the increase in **societal intervention**, *e.g.,* through the advent of boards in many European universities for the first time in their history, are mere yet **strong indicators** of such interdependence between institution steering and success in teaching and learning. Moreover, from a narrower perspective of quality assurance and quality enhancement: if external quality judgment on educational provisions shifts from programme assessment to evaluating institutional capacity to develop, operate, and improve programmes, there is a **shift from** – if this terminology is permitted for once here – **'product' to 'producer'** which is bound to **point towards** elements of **institutional good governance** as **essentials of quality**.

Strong interdependence between institution steering and success in teaching and learning is to be found particularly at times when funding may become scarce while there is an influx of students at present with the threat of dropping numbers looming in the future and therefore imminent acute competition in view of negative demographic developments. Moreover, the challenge to foster educational quality by means of good governance is enhanced from a general **institutional** and **conceptual perspective** of modern higher education institutions by the need to bridge cooperation and competition, to make the concept of higher education as a 'public good' feasible in a world depending on fundraising, to serve local needs while aspiring to visibility in a wider world, to balance and integrate learning opportunities with research excellence, and last but not least, to ensure proper freedom for individual creativity and institutional coherence. So, all in all, **quality** is an **integral notion**, pertaining to **institutional vision** embedded in analysis of concrete contexts as much as **hands-on strategies** concerning, *e.g.,* staff development and investment in material resources while making sure that people inside the institution keep being motivated and various stakeholders outside continue to be supportive due to realizing their opportunities and due to being actively involved and accepted.

It is here that probably the most significant trend, challenge, and opportunity of the near future can be seen: the **merger** of the '**quality debate**' with exploring and integrating concepts and practices of '**institutional good governance**'[65] in its multiple facets. The latter stretches from, for example, **concrete** items of **institutional operations** such as hiring and developing staff and funding policies via **organisational matters** in general to internal and external **communication** and creation of a culture of **listening and leading**, while all these aspects need to be widened from a

study perspective to a **broader view** which **integrates research** and **outreach** to society in terms of competence transfer. Moreover, and more fundamentally, since 'quality' is seen as a relative concept which needs to be defined from case to case and individually in view of the mission, vision, and purpose of each institution, **identifying** and promulgating **institutional mission**, vision, and purpose, which is a key feature of 'good governance', becomes an **essential starting point** and precondition for 'quality' in all operations of higher education institutions. In short: strategy, hence governance capacity, determines quality throughout, also in teaching and learning.

Looking at the issue of 'quality' and its link to governance of higher education institutions from the perspective of steering higher education systems as a whole, it is also realized more and more that quality development depends to a large extent on the **autonomy** of a higher education institution to address and organise its own operations adequately.[66] In effect, external autonomy and adequate internal management and governance are seen more and more as a major factor in effecting quality enhancement. Moreover, if the statement of the Bologna Process holds true that prime responsibility for quality in higher education is vested in higher education institutions, their capability to meet this responsibility essentially depends on the adequacy of institutional governance, management, and culture, *i.e.,* on **being institutionally 'fit for purpose'**. For all these valid reasons Europe as a whole is about to witness the **blending** of the **quality debate with debates** on **autonomy** and **good governance** of higher education institutions.

IV. Classification of Higher Education Institutions

If not for reasons of political logic, at least in theory there is a **common denominator** shared by the shift from external assessment of programmes to judging quality culture, governance and management of higher education institutions on the one hand and by a very recent European development on the other which has come to the fore in the Leuven Communiqué: the **emergence of** a debate on, and a call for, **measurement of institutional quality** leading **towards typology-based classification** of higher education **institutions**, if not even rankings and league tables.[67] The common denominator can be seen in **focussing on** the **institution as such**, be it as a whole or its subunits such as faculties, departments or schools, or on particular overarching features of the institution, such as research, or student learning experience.[68] This viewpoint puts emphasis on the identification of qualities of the institution indicated by **specific institutional performance**, with performance elements being a mere 'input factor' used to base judgment on the institution rather than being the objects of scrutiny for their own sake and value. All in all, the call for classification of institutions can be seen as moving **quality judgment** to a **meta-level of institutional capacity** rather than concentrating on specific operations, *e.g.,* at programme level. In shifting the quality focus from 'product' to 'producer', the call for institutional classification is indeed in the same line of thinking as is an institutional approach to quality assurance in areas of teaching and learning.

However, the identification of such a common undercurrent may be misleading if it were understood as being the essential political driver. Instead, it may be more realistic to assume that there are more parochial **reasons behind** the present

political momentum. One factor may be the **external dimension** of the Bologna Process or indeed of the EU Lisbon strategy, *i.e.,* the attempt to **address** and improve Europe's **relatively poor show** – if not reality – **of performance** in international research rankings such as the notorious Shanghai list on the one hand, and on the other hand to **make** strengths of European institutions **more visible** both inside and outside Europe. Another factor may be the attempt to make provisions for an American style grouping of higher education institutions into research institutions and various other categories for internal purposes of '**system steering'** in order to improve quality **through stratification policies** and subsequent **funding** mechanisms along that line. While there may be an element of 'must have' and 'can do' attitude in copying these prior undertakings of others, there are inherent explicit and implicit reasons in terms of objectives for this new approach, though these are not necessarily appreciated by everyone concerned.

Foremost, classification claims to address the call for **transparency** of quality of educational or research provisions by ensuring straightforward transparency of the quality of the provider of such provisions. In that respect, classification serves the '**informed client**' concept of free choice in open access systems not limited by national boundaries. It is in the same line that institutional classification is expected to meet 'flagship' aspirations or indeed more generally, to serve the so-called external dimension of the Bologna Process by ensuring global **visibility** of the type and scale of quality to expect from any given higher education institution in the system. Both endeavours, *i.e.,* ensuring transparency and visibility of qualities in a mode of clear communication, is particularly important in large-scale, fragmented systems with highly different providers, as is the case equally in Europe and in North America. So, it is no surprise that a traditional American feature of the tertiary education system is now taking root in Europe, too.

Transparency of quality is seldom far off from **accountability**. This will also hold true for institutional classification, whether or not this is intended or denied. Accountability will feed into **funding** mechanisms in support of institutional stratification. In the end, classification will be one of those institutional steering devices which are described as **'fostering quality incentives'**, even if by means of instigating academic vanity; more simply, a tool serving a 'stick and carrot' strategy.

The **novelty** of the European drive towards institutional classification does not lie so much in the fact that such classifications have not been available to date. On the contrary, various league tables and rankings have been around for a number of years in many countries. However, the difference and indeed profound novelty of recent developments lies in the fact that Europe is beginning to see institutional classification as a **public responsibility** not to be left just to individual operations of research institutions usually backed and highlighted by media, and that Europe tries to come up with a system which ensures **trans-national calibration** for the purpose of **true cross-border comparability**.

If so, any system trying to turn such far-reaching aspirations into reality needs to be a very **robust** one in terms of **substance** and **process** fit to produce accurate results. This is the case because any such undertaking under the auspices of public authority, whether governmental in the strict sense or not, needs to match the

traditional understanding of **normativity** – or indeed, in the understanding of some systems, needs to stand the test of legality and the rule of law – which the ESG, though in different context and yet succinctly, describe as availability of 'predefined criteria consistently applied'. As a consequence, as for the **substance** of such undertaking, there must be adequate **criteria** in place, and valid **indicators** pointing towards these. In **process**, these need to be **defined** in a meaningful and broadly accepted way, **interpreted** and **communicated**; moreover in concreto, these need to be implemented and **applied** in a **standardized** manner from case to case in different environments. The question may be asked whether and how this is really going to happen, although there are proposals of methodologies by relevant organisations such as, but not only by, the OECD. So, in the end there is some **doubt** as to sufficient **accuracy**, and to avoidance of a **new bureaucracy** in addition to the present-day external quality assurance operators.

While classification policy and adequate tools are in the making of the Bologna Process, there is still sufficient space for **speculation** both on the **type of classification** to go for and on the type of classification that may unintentionally emerge de facto. This is so because 'classification' is a buzz word that leaves **space for interpretation**. Some, however apparently only a minority in Europe, like to interpret classification as **ranking** – 'league tables' would be the same –, which means that institutional quality takes on a note of **relativity** of institutional standing. Others, the majority, see classification as **grouping** – as establishing 'classes' –, subject to specific categorial dimensions, which is a **descriptive concept** of identifying institutional qualities. However, classification in that sense, though descriptive, is not to be mixed up with **mere description**. As such, the latter would not entail a concept of **categorial boxes**, hence of 'tags' or 'labels' which **reference** institutional qualities **to** particular overarching **typological features**, but instead would try to simply **lay open** the **individuality** of the given institution in its own right.

Achieving the latter would suffice to procure transparency. Moreover, in view of safeguarding individuality in a highly diversified system, attempts to turn classification into an exercise in applied typology may be detrimental to fostering profiled institutions.[69] However, though this may be rejected for the time being political **reality** will sooner or later turn to **labelling**, for good and bad reasons. The general public may ask for **simplification of information**, which may best be served through a concept of limited and limiting typology, even if underpinned by mere **typology slogans** or **catchwords**. Governments may feel that the call for '**flagships'** is served best that way, at least if ranking is politically out of reach for the time being. So, at present 'classification' will be heralded as an opportunity to make differences public, but sooner or later description will turn into simplification, thus levelling essential institutional differences while making certain gradual differences between institutions more poignant than they are in reality.

Simplified information via classification will eventually pose the **key question on public responsibility**, which is linked to, though distinct from, the afore-mentioned public responsibility for validity of classification criteria and for accuracy of their case-to-case implementation. In substance, the core question is: how to **safeguard** the notion of **institutional diversity of missions**, *e.g.,* differences in emphasis on

research, learning, service to the region, preserving heritage and others as well as differences in institutional blending of these objectives, **and** to **ensure equality in esteem** at the same time while typologies not only falsify by means of stereotyped description but also tend to be charged with **notions of superiority of certain missions**, at least in the eye of an uninitiated observer but perhaps no less in the practices of politics and of funding authorities. The answer may lie in abstaining from the invention of a single classification scheme under the auspices of governments which *volens nolens* assumes specific public authority; instead, there could be mere acknowledgment of various and competing classification methodologies already available from, or to be developed by, non-governmental agencies while the role of governments could be limited to identifying their different purposes and scopes in order to ensure their adequate, *i.e.,* limited usage both by the general public and by governments alike. At any rate, it is essential that any **classification scheme** accepted or invented or operated by public authorities **matches public responsibility for supporting** a higher education system based on **differences in profile** and **equality in merit**.

G. Future Opportunities and Challenges

European institutions and stakeholders are invited to **shape** the various **trends towards vesting responsibility for quality in** higher education **institutions** effectively yet wisely. As regards in-house activities within higher education institutions, part of this operation will be the development of true quality culture in the broad sense, which will take longer than expected for the ownership component as well as for the managerial element inherent to the concept of quality culture. Still, Europe can be proud of having achieved such a lot within such short time as defined roughly by the existence of the Bologna Process, and by such low degree of prescriptive normativity at the European level. This should give rise to realistic hope for future success.

However, when also bearing in mind the global practice of classification and league tables, it is not only Europe that will need to pay attention to **specific policy issues** arising from present-day experience and expectations of future challenges. Among these issues could be, with all of these being intertwined and equally important:

– Balancing profiled diversity, dynamic improvement and permanent integration of research developments with provision of easy information and reliable comparability of quality and with requirements of fair accountability;

– Providing space for individual academic freedom, innovation and integration of research in study programmes while providing predefined criteria consistently applied in external quality assurance, especially with due regard to risks of standardizing and ossifying effects of subject benchmarks;

– Exploring and safeguarding broader concepts of higher education objectives and the learning outcome approach in context with subject-related benchmarks, both in internal and external quality assurance;

– Addressing internal quality expertise as such vis-à-vis academic competence, *i.e.,* the role of experts and peers, in a system of good governance and adequate administration;

– Ensuring both personal and institutional ownership and quality culture to avoid mere window-dressing;

– Making external quality assurance operational without undue bureaucracy while ensuring meaningfulness;

– De nationalisation of external quality assurance as regards both choice of agency and of criteria and methodology;

– Identifying and valuing consequences which external quality exercises could and should have in educational systems as a whole and inside institutions;

– Ensuring clarity of information in an information system based on institutional 'classification' while safeguarding accuracy in describing the individuality of each higher education institution;

– Maintaining a diverse higher education system based both on differentiated institutional missions and on equality in esteem while facing the effects of a 'classification' scheme.

These ten items may serve as key starting points to further consideration and discussion.

Notes

1. The ambivalence of sentiment is poignantly illustrated, *e.g.*, in Jethro Newton's presentation at the first European Forum for Quality Assurance in Munich in November 2006 by contrasting formal meanings of quality in the early 1990's and situated perceptions of quality of front-line academics post 1990's; cf. Newton, J. 2007. What is Quality?, in: Embedding Quality Culture in Higher Education, A Selection of Papers from the 1st European Forum for Quality Assurance. Munich, 2006. pp. 14 – 20. (EUA Case Studies)

2. The text of the ESG can be found on the website of ENQA, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, under www.enqa.eu/pubs_esg.lasso.

3. Cf. Santiago, P., Tremblay, K., Basri, E. and Arnal, E. *Tertiary Education for the Knowledge Society*. Vol 1 (OECD Publishing), p. 301.

4. A recent comprehensive perspective on the issue both in terms of in-depth analysis and geographic spread is presented by Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, Arnal (n 2), p. 259

5. For a concise survey, readers can also refer to, *e.g.,* Reichert, S. 2008. "Looking Back – Looking Forward: Quality Assurance and the Bologna Process". *In: Implementing and Using Quality Assurance: Strategy and Practice*. A Selection of Papers from the 2nd European Forum for Quality Assurance, Rome, 2007. pp. 5 – 10. (EUA Case Studies)

6. Cf. the juxtaposition and counterpoints highlighted in brief by Eric Froment in his contribution "Quality Assurance and the Bologna and Lisbon Objectives", *in: Embedding Quality Culture in Higher Education*, A Selection of Papers from the 1st European Forum for Quality Assurance Munich 2006, EUA Case Studies 2007, pp. 11 – 13. Cf. for a more extensive coverage Guy Haug, "The Bologna Process and the Lisbon Strategy: Mutual Dependencies"; *in: EUA Bologna Handbook* [edited by Froment, Kohler, Purser, Wilson; Berlin 2006], Chapter A 3.1-1.

7. Cf. the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education (ESG) of 2005, which state in the introduction to parts 1 and 2 under 'basic principles': "The interests of society in the quality and standards of higher education need to be safeguarded."

8. Cf. *Inter alia*, Mantz, Y. 2006. "Employability in Higher Education". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAAB. Chapter B.1.4-1.

9. For this reason, specific reference is made in this context to the exposé of these concepts presented by: Bergan, S. 2006. "Promoting New Approaches to Learning". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAAB. Chapter B.1.1-1.

10. It is worth noting in this context that the European Commission uses the caption 'Making the best use of resources' in one of its lead documents in this field; cf. European Commission, Proposal for a Recommendation of the Council and the European Parliament on further cooperation in quality assurance in higher education, COM (2004), 642 final.

11. This facet will be dealt with more extensively in part F below.

12. *Cf* Amaral, A., Rovio-Johansson, A., Rosa, M. J., and Westerheijden, D. (Eds). 2008. *Trends in Quality in Higher Education – Does EUA Fall into These Trends?* New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc. Chapter 2, p. 21. (Essays on Supportive Peer Review)

13. A short survey can be found in the article: Rauhvargers, A. 2006. "The Lisbon Recognition Convention: Principles and Practical Application". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RRAB. Chapter B.3.4-1.

14. The text of the so-called Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area can be found on the website of the 2009 Bologna Process Conference in Leuven/Louvain under www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeonderwijs/bologna/documents. For basics, cf. 'A framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area', drafted by the Bologna Working Group on Qualifications Framework, published by the Danish Ministry of Science, Technology and Innovation [Copenhagen 2005]; this report is also to be found via the aforementioned website. – Also see: Sursock, A. 2006. "European Frameworks for Quality Assurance". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook.* Berlin: RAABE, Chapter B 4.3-1; Murray, J. 2006. "The Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area: Challenges and Opportunities". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook.* Berlin: RAABE, Chapter B 2.5-1; and Kohler, J. 2006. "Europäische Qualifikationsrahmen und ihre Bedeutung für die einzelstaatlichen Studiensysteme: European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EFQ-LLL) – Qualifications Framework for the European Higher Education Area (QF – EHEA)"; *In*: W. Benz, J. Kohler, and K. Landfried (Eds). *Handbuch Qualität in Studium und Lehre*. Stuttgart: RAABE. Chapter D 1.4.

15. The complexity of the issue connected to qualifications and qualification frameworks and its relevance for the quality debate is thoroughly analysed in: Bergan, S. 2007. "Qualifications – Introduction to a Concept". *In*: D. Carstensen and S. Hofmann. *Qualität in Lehre und Studium: Begriffe und Objekte. Handbuch Qualität in Studium und Lehre*. Berlin: COE. Chapter C.1.1. (Council of Europe Higher Education Series No. 6).

16. Cf., inter alia, Wagenaar, R. 2006. "An introduction to the European Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook.* Berlin: RAABE. Chapter B.2.4-1; also Gehmlich, G. 2006. The Added Value of ECTS. *In*:: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook.* Berlin: RAABE. Chapter C.3.3-1.

17. Cf., inter alia, from a practical perspective, Dahl. E.T. 2006. "The Diploma Supplement at the University of Bergen: Why?, Who?, When?, How?"; *In:* E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook.* Berlin: RAABE. Chapter C.3.3-1.

18. Cf on the role of philosophies of new public management in higher education and quality assurance therein Amaral, A., Rovio-Johansson, A., Rosa, M. J., and Westerheijden, D. (Eds). 2008. *Trends in Quality in Higher Education – Does EUA Fall into These Trends?* New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc. Chapter 2, p. 21 (24-26) (Essays on Supportive Peer Review).

19. The presence of distrust is also observed by Amaral, A., Rovio-Johansson, A., Rosa, M. J., and Westerheijden, D. (Eds). 2008. *Trends in Quality in Higher Education – Does EUA Fall into These Trends?* New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc. Chapter 2, p. 21 (24-26) (Essays on Supportive Peer Review)

20. Cf. ESG, Introduction to Parts 1 and 2, which states under the heading ‚Basic principles': „The quality of academic programmes need[s] to be developed and improved for students and other beneficiaries of higher education across the EHEA."

21. This indeed is the view which the ESG take, cf. introduction to the guidelines of ESG part 1 item 2.

22. Again, cf.: Newton, J.2007. “What is Quality?”. *In*: *Embedding Quality Culture in Higher Education*, A Selection of Papers from the 1st European Forum for Quality Assurance, Munich, 2006. pp. 14 – 20. (EUA Case Studies)

23. The text here follows Harvey, L. 2006. “Understand Quality”. *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook.* Berlin: RAABE., Chapter B.4.1-1; and Carstensen, D. and Hofmann, S. 2004. “Qualität in Lehre und Studium: Begriffe und Objekte, Handbuch Qualität in Studium und Lehre”. *In*: W. Benz, J. Kohler, and K. Landfried (Eds). *Handbuch Qualität in Studium und Lehre*. Stuttgart: RAABE. Chapter C.1.1. Both articles extensively list further references.

24. These follow prior specification of the Council of Europe, cf. n. 9 above.

25. Cf. the critical approach to any such ‘conflict’ by Vukasovic, M. 2006. “Deconstructing and Reconstructing Employability”. *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAABE. Chapter B.1.4-2

26. Readers may find the author’s view on this issue in the Kohler, J. 2006. “Typology of the Degree Structure”. *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAABE. Chapter B.2.2-1, pp. 20-21

27. For first orientation on learning outcome concepts, cf. Adam, St. 2006. An introduction to Learning Outcomes. *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAABE. Chapter B.2.3-1.

28. For reference, cf. paragraph B.II.2. above.

29. For reference, cf. n. 14 above.

30. This article does not intend to deal with matters of coincidence or conflict between these two European qualifications frameworks.

31. These can, for instance, be found on the website of EUA, the European University Association, under ww.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/EUA1_documents/dublin_descriptors.pdf.

32. For detail, cf. Kohler, J. 2006. “Institutional and Programme Approaches to Quality”. *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAABE. Chapter B 4.7-1.

33. Nor can this article consider the problematic (various) concepts of ‚standards’ as such; as an introduction, readers may refer to Lueger, M. and Vettori, O. 2008. “Standards and Quality Models: Theoretical Considerations”. *In*: *Implementing and Using Quality Assurance: Strategy and Practice*. A Selection of Papers from the 2nd European Forum for Quality Assurance, Rome, 2007. 11 pp. (EUA Case Studies) and Kohler, J. 2004. “Sachliche Maßgaben des Entscheidens: Topoi, Kriterien, Standards, Indikatoren”. *In*: W. Benz, J. Kohler, and K. Landfried (Eds). *Handbuch Qualität in Studium und Lehre*. Stuttgart: RAABE chapter D.1.1.

34. ESG part 1, items 1 and 2.

35. ESG part 1, item 2.

36. ESG part 1 item 2.

37. ESG part 1 item 7.

38. Cf. ESG part 3 items 1 and 6.

39. Terminology and meaning (and correlating purposes) are not standardized; for a first coverage of the issue cf. Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, Arnal (n 2), 263 pp.

40. ESG part 2 item 7.

41. ESG part 2 item 6.

42. ESG part 1 item 2.

43. Cf. Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, Arnal (n 2), 291-2.

44. Cf. Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, Arnal (n 2), 281-3. Students are broadly involved in internal quality assurance in terms of questionnaires and as interviewees in the course of external quality assurance processes.

45. ESG part 2 item 5.

46. For further information on ENQA, cf www.enqa.eu.

47. For further information on EUA, cf www.eua.be

48. For further information on EURASHE, cf. www.eurashe.be.

49. For further information on ESU, cf. www.esib.org.

50. For further information on BusinessEurope, cf. www.businesseurope.eu.

51. For further information on Education International, cf. www.ei-ie.org.

52. There are also various formal and informal networks and groupings in Europe which deal mainly with quality assurance matters, such as ECA, the European Consortium for Accreditation, or CEENet, the network of quality assurance agencies of central and eastern Europe, *et al.*

53. Among these reports, the Trends reports provided by the EUA play a major role, as do the reports by ESU, formerly ESIB, on 'Bologna through students' eyes'; moreover, there are stocktaking reports as regular and official features within the Bologna Process.

54. To mention just two organisations as examples, CHEPS in the Netherlands and CHE in Germany.

55. Readers may want to refer to Kohler, J. 2006. "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAABE. Chapter B.4.3-2.

56. This is maintained by Amaral, A., Rovio-Johansson, A., Rosa, M. J., and Westerheijden, D. (Eds). 2008. *Trends in Quality in Higher Education – Does EUA Fall into These Trends?* New York: Nova Science Publishers Inc. Chapter 2, p. 21 (29) (Essays on Supportive Peer Review)

57. Niklas Luhmann, Legitimation durch Verfahren (Frankfurt am Main, 1969)

58. It should be noted here that the project 'Tuning Educational Structures in Europe' (cf www.tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu/ and www.ec.europa.eu/education/policies/educ/tuning/tuning_eu) is another example of non-governmental activities concerned with quality in higher education.

59. For a concise survey, cf Tück, C. 2006. "European Quality Assurance Register: Enhancing Trust through Greater Transparency". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAABE. Chapter B 4.3.-3.

60. Cf. Stensaker, B. 2007. "Impact of Quality Processes. Presentation at the 1st European Forum for Quality Assurance", Munich, 2006. 59 pp. (EUA Case Studies); in addition, Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, Arnal (n. 2). pp. 305-309.

61. 'Bureaucratic' is a widespread lament, and recipes to uphold positive spirit are much sought after; cf., inter alia, Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, Arnal (n 2) p. 206 and Short, A. 2006. "Bureaucracy – The Enemy of a Quality Culture". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAABE. Chapter B.4.5-1

62. Cf. the observations reported by Santiago, Tremblay, Basri, Arnal (n. 2) pp. 292-297.

63. It is mainly the EUA which deserves credit for having put the issue on the table early on, soon after the launch of the organisation in 2001, especially via its 'Quality Culture' projects; cf. EUA. 2006. Quality Culture in European Universities: A Bottom-up Approach. Brussels: EUA.– Cf. also Sursock, A. 2004. "Qualitätskultur und Qualitätsmanagement". *In*: W. Benz, J. Kohler, and K. Landfried (Eds). *Handbuch Qualität in Studium und Lehre*. Stuttgart: RAABE. Chapter C.2.2.

64. Readers may refer to Lanarès, J. 2006. "Developing a Quality Culture". *In*: E. Froment, Y. Kohler, A. Purser, and L. Wilson. (Eds). *EUA Bologna Handbook*. Berlin: RAABE. Chapter C.2.1-1.; also Wolff, K. D. 2004. "Wege zur Qualitätskultur – Die Elemente der Qualitätsentwicklung und ihre Zusammenhänge". *In*: W. Benz, J. Kohler, and K. Landfried (Eds). *Handbuch Qualität in Studium und Lehre*. Stuttgart: RAABE. Chapter C.2.1.

65. Cf. contributions to the Council of Europe fora as published in: Kohler, J. and Huber, J. (Eds). 2006. *Higher Education Governance Between Democratic Culture, Academic Aspirations and Market Forces*. (Council of Europe Higher Education Series No. 5); and: Weber, L. and Dolgova-Dreyer, K. (eds). 2007. The Legitimacy of Quality Assurance in Higher Education. (Council of Europe Higher Education Series No. 9).

66. Cf., *e.g.,* the observation by Sybille Reichert (n. 5 above), p. 8 and 9–10.

67. Alex Usher's contribution to the conference deals with this facet extensively and in particular from a North American aspect, so readers may refer to that article for more detail.

68. For example, as for the latter Alex Usher refers to the (American) National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE).

69. Laying open specific qualities of institutions in a diversified higher education system and safeguarding multitudes of profiles appears to be the aim followed, *e.g.*, by the Council of Europe, as decided by its CDESR plenary in March 2009; this may lead to a merely descriptive approach rather than to 'classification' in terms of establishing 'groupings' and 'labels' as characterized here.

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Internationalization – Mobility, Competition and Co-operation

Christian Bode

I

From the 1990s on, the international dimension of higher education has gradually developed, alongside with the economic, cultural and political process of globalization, at a pace and with a dynamics unprecedented in history. Meanwhile, it has turned into one of the strongest **driving forces of the reform of higher education,** combining a tendency towards expansion and diversification with a strong element of convergence or "harmonization".

Some of the characteristics of this process of internationalization are:

(1) a growing **mobility** of students and academic staff and the emersion of a global "education market", with an increasing number of institutions of higher education competing to attract paying clients or smart brains in an ever fiercer "war of talents";

(2) the **internationalization of curricula** by integrating international and intercultural elements into national study courses, often expanding them into international networks or double degree programmes;

(3) the **dominance of the English language** as the lingua franca of the global scientific community, widely used in international conferences, for the publication of research findings or as teaching language in the international classroom;

(4) an increasing **"exportation"** of education and research services into developing and emerging countries, helping them to cover their domestic demand for highly qualified graduates and experts (transnational education);

(5) a rapidly growing number of transnational **partnerships and networks** in the fields of study and research, as well as of international consortia of higher education;

(6) the implementation of **international research schemes** trying to give answers to global challenges, such as climate change, water shortage, infectious diseases, pollution of the environment, lack of food;

(7) the rapidly growing supra-regional **co-ordination of national policies of higher education,** following similar patterns (*i.e.,* Bologna Process).

II

These elements of internationalization are to be found, to a varying extent, in **all regions of the world**. This is why also *UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in the Europe Region*: *Access*, *Values*, *Quality and Competitiveness* [a regional meeting convened in the context of the **2009 World Conference on Higher Education**, UNESCO, 5-8 July 2009] is addressing these phenomena. Some of these changes are taking place spontaneously and on an individual basis, others result from the massive impact of institutions, governments and supranational organizations.

Europe is, at the moment, the area of the world where this process is most actively being steered by the political sphere and where it is, furthermore, enhanced on two different levels. On the one hand, there is a strong political commitment to the tuned reform of higher education throughout Europe widely known as "Bologna Process". On the other hand, the European Commission has launched an impressive amount of funding schemes to further encourage the implementation of this process (the European mobility scheme ERASMUS and the 8th Research Framework Program in particular).

The major goals of the **Bologna Process** – mobility, quality assurance, competitiveness – are, of course, not restricted to the European Area of Higher Education. Many of them are also being discussed in other parts of the world. So, it is not surprising that there is a growing interest in supra-regional dialogue on these topics and that mutual understanding is close at hand. It is only natural that UNESCO, in partnership with other organizations and institutions, would play an active role in this field.

III

Despite the financial crisis we are facing at present, this development will continue. Most likely, its pace will even **accelerate in future years**. Global challenges ask for global answers and, thus, for enhanced international co-operation. To cooperate across borders means getting to know each other and acquiring a fair amount of intercultural competence. These are only some of the good reasons to put the internationalization of higher education on top of the agenda of national as well as supra-national policies of higher education to be dealt with at various meetings such the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education: *the New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development* and preceding it regional conferences as the UNESCO Forum on Higher Education in Bucharest.

IV

Today's financial and economic crisis shows that globalization tends to be a **risky enterprise** if it runs out of control. Those related to higher education being:

– the growing **commercialization** of higher education in a world where the role of education as a public good is no longer undisputed,

– the application of the **WTO maxims of free trade** to trans-national education, with the risk of limiting the steering capacity of national governments,

– the **brain gain of high potentials** from developing and emerging countries to the industrial countries, with their decreasing population and their need for skilled personnel, and,

– the disappearance of **cultural and linguistic diversity** due to the dominant strategies of harmonization and efficiency.

Therefore, there is a need to take the initiative to define **common goals and standards** for the ongoing process of internationalization of the global system of higher education, thus contributing to adapting it to the needs and interests of all stakeholders.

One of the major challenges of the future will be to fully benefit from the strong capacities of a global and competitive education market to enhance the quality of teaching and research, while at the same time preserving the solid basis of co-operation and solidarity on which the scientific approach in itself relies quite as much as our educational systems- in short, to balance competition and cooperation appropriately. **Competition and co-operation**, as paradoxical as this may seem at first sight, do not exclude each other in the realm of scientific co-operation, but may be developed, with a fair amount of good will and diplomacy, into a win-win situation for all stakeholders.

V

Following the assumption that the internationalization of higher education is as desirable a development as it is indispensable, and nonetheless needs an orientation towards the common welfare**, the invited speakers at the Transversal Session on "Challenges for Internationalization of Higher Education in the European Region in a Globalizing World" are invited to address the following phenomena of internationalization and/or provide comments to the following general questions**:

– Has the internationalization in different regions of the world – and the dialogue between these regions – achieved a level which is in accordance with the global challenges?

– Which additional efforts need to be developed to steer and support the process of internationalization and who should be in charge?

– And specifically: Which role should UNESCO adopt as a global/multilateral organization?

In order to provide a more concrete factual and conceptual framework for our discussion a set of more specific questions have been formulated according to the above mentioned phenomena of internationalization:

(ad. 1) Mobility:

1.1. Considering the fact that only 2.7 million students (*i.e.,* approximately 2 percent of all students) crossed the border to study in a different country in 2007, and considering furthermore that a study abroad not only contributes to personal qualification and education, but as well to mutual understanding and peaceful coexistence, we ask: Does the present extent of international education and mobility meet the needs of the twenty-first century?

– If not, what can we (higher education institutions, national governments, international and multilateral bodies) do in order to increase this rate substantially?

– Should we not establish and promote quantitative benchmarks? (like that one recently adopted at the Conference of the European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, that in 2020, at least 20 percent of those graduating in the European Higher Education Area should have had a study or training period abroad or the "Lincoln Act" promoting the aim of "one million Americans abroad")

– Who has to bear the responsibility for this enhancement of mobility: Mainly the countries of origin of mobile students (push factors), or the destination countries (pull factors), or both sides equally?

– Can we assess the European ERASMUS Programme as best practice and a model for our regions in the world? What are transferable learning outcomes from other mobility programmes?

1.2. Considering the fact that flows of mobility between different countries and regions are extremely unbalanced (principal destination countries in North America, Europe, and Australia; principal sending countries in Asia; deficit balance also in Latin America, and in particular in Africa), we ask:

– What can be done to achieve a more balanced occurrence of exchange and mobility? In particular, how can we increase the number of students from the northern hemisphere heading to countries in the South?

1.3. Considering the fact that study stays abroad in most cases involve considerable additional costs, we ask:

– What can be done to provide talented, but less fortunate students the same opportunities of international mobility? (scholarships, portability of student aid, tuition waiving during stays abroad, study loans for the means of studying abroad etc.)?

1.4. Considering increasing marketing activities of higher education institutions on the global "education market", we ask:

– Should guidelines of good practice in international marketing be installed, preventing from unfair competition and protecting the "consumer" from dubious providers?

– If so: Who should be in charge of defining these guidelines, how should they be developed?

1.5. Considering the fact that large numbers of scholars from developing countries remain in the (industrialized) host countries after having graduated, we ask:

– Is it correct to regard this phenomenon as "brain drain", and does it really constitute always a loss for their home countries? Or would it make sense to regard

this migration (also) as opening new possibilities for international co-operation for the countries of origin?

– How can we avoid or at least mitigate the undesirable effects of "brain drain"(cf. *Sur Place* Stipends; leaves for professionals for study abroad periods with guaranteed return into former position; funding programmes for re-migration and re-integration)?

1.6. Considering our knowledge and data-bases on international mobility, we ask:

– Are the available data on global mobility sufficient and reliable to make the right diagnoses and develop targeted strategies for improvements?

– If not: Who should collect, evaluate and publish data? (*i.e.,* leading publication "Open Doors" by the International Institute on Education, New York; EURODATA by ACA, Brussels; "*Wissenschaft weltoffen* – facts and figures" by DAAD, Bonn)

(ad. 2) Internationalization of Curricula:

2.1. How can we ensure that students, who do not go abroad, learn about the international relevance and interconnections of their discipline? And how can we make sure that they learn foreign languages and acquire intercultural competences? (*e.g.,* "Internationalization @ home")

2.2. How can we ensure that international experience – which is commonly esteemed by employers – receives the same (or even higher) credit in the academic community, generating an incentive to international mobility? How con we ensure a fair and generous recognition of study credits and academic degrees earned abroad?

2.3. What has to be changed in order to integrate "windows of mobility" into the study structure even of shorter programmes in (undergraduate) education?

(ad. 3) Lingua franca and other foreign languages:

3.1 To be sure, there is for a number of pragmatic reasons a need for English as lingua franca as *the* common communication platform in the world. Yet, there is also a strong desire within the world community to retain language diversity and to promote it as a cultural experience. How can these two seemingly opposing approaches be accommodated? What successful concepts for securing multilingualism are there? And, more specifically, how can monolingual countries learn from multilingual countries?

3.2 If English-taught study degrees were to be expanded in non-English speaking countries, which quality standards must be applied for teachers and learners?

(ad. 4) Transnational education 'off-shore':

4.1 There is increasing activity in transnational education, especially regarding study programmes offered by industrial countries to those in the developing world. Must this be regarded as a threat to the domestic tertiary sector and national autonomy? Or is this rather a benefit for these underdeveloped societies because it provides quality education that prevents brain drain of the national elites?

4.2 Is it necessary to establish new regulations, guidelines or a *Code of Good Conduct* in order to secure quality, trustworthiness and fairness of off-shore study programmes? And which role should be assigned to WTO and UNESCO?

(ad. 5) Partnership and Networks:

5.1 Is it true that the tradition of unilateral recruitment strategies in internationalisation is moving towards bilateral and multilateral institutional networks and associations, of which there are already a hundred (see ACA – *Handbook of International Associations in Higher Education*, Brussels, 2009)?

5.2 Obviously, there is an asymmetric distribution of those networks according to region: there are 44 in Europe, 10 in the Americas, 11 in Asia and Oceania, 9 in Africa and 26 interregional or global networks (see 'Handbook'). Thus, what can be done to promote and to strengthen south-south networks and north-south networks?

5.3 Are dual degree or mutual degree schemes for graduates and postgraduates a suitable instrument for promoting mobility, innovation and cooperation? And what can be done to enhance these programmes?

(ad. 6) International Research Programmes:

6.1 Do global problems rightfully enjoy priority on the agendas of research institutions and research promoting bodies? Is this research appropriately coordinated in an international setting? Do we need new mechanisms to reinforce synergy-effects?

6.2. Is academic research in industrialised countries sufficiently concerned about the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)? Have universities in underdeveloped countries taken on the task that has been assigned to them? Is development aid for education and higher education powerful enough to turn these into instruments of sustainable development?

(ad. 7) Coordination of National Politics:

7.1 Is increasing cross-border synchronisation and coordination in higher education policy desirable or even necessary? Are the efforts taken sufficient to meet future challenges?

7.2 What would be the legitimate basis of international or even global coordination of education policies? And which parts should be excluded in order to preserve the "richness in species", and with it, the creative potential of university systems?

7.3 In this sense, is the Bologna Process – now being extended for another ten years – a blueprint for other parts of the world?

7.4 Do we need a supra-regional dialogue? What would be the right platform?

7.5 What might be the contribution of the forthcoming 2009 World Conference on Higher Education: *the New Dynamics of Higher Education and Research for Societal Change and Development* and its follow-up?

Notes on Contributors

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Prof. Ecaterina Andronescu holds the position of Minister of Education, Research and Innovation in the Romanian Government since December 2008, position also held between 2001 and 2003. She was a member of the Chamber of Deputies between 1996 and 2008, in 2008 being elected Senator in the Romanian Parliament. In 2004, she became Rector of one of the largest technical universities in Romania – "Politehnica" Bucharest, as well as the President of the Romanian National Council of Rectors – positions she held until the end of 2008, when she became minister. Prof. Andronescu also held another high-ranking governmental position between 1995 and 1996: Secretary of State for Higher Education.

Prof. Ecaterina Andronescu holds a PhD in Chemistry (1982), she is *Doctor Honoris Causa* of several universities and *Professor of the Science of Materials* at the "Politechnica" University in Bucharest. Among her areas of interest in research there can be mentioned: science and engineering of oxide materials, biomaterials, structural ceramics and nanomaterials, domains in which she has coordinated over 70 research projects and published several books and academic courses, as well as over 200 articles.

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A pluralist believing in consensus and respect for the other, His Royal Highness Prince El Hassan bin Talal believes in societies in which all peoples can live, work and function in freedom and with dignity. This goal has been the moving force behind his interest and involvement in humanitarian and interfaith issues, with particular stress on the human dimension of conflicts.

His Royal Highness has initiated, founded and is actively involved in a number of Jordanian and international institutes and committees. HRH served as a member of the UN's Commission on Legal Empowerment of the Poor, chairs the Integrity Council for the Coalition for the Global Commons, and recently initiated the West Asia – North Africa Forum. In 1983, he co-chaired the Independent Commission on International Humanitarian Issues (ICIHI) calling for a New International Humanitarian Order.

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Dr. Emil Boc is holding the position of Prime-Minister of Romania since December 2008. Between 2004 and 2008 he was elected two times Mayor of Cluj-Napoca, the largest city in Transylvania and one of the largest in Romania. Dr. Boc is the president of one of the largest political parties in Romania – The Democrat-Liberal Party, since 2004. He is also a much appreciated lawyer, member of the Cluj Bar Association, since 1996.

Emil Boc holds a PhD in Political Sciences and is a PhD student in Constitutional Law. He also holds two B.A. degrees – in Political Sciences and in Law, at “Babeș-Bolyai” University in Cluj. Dr. Emil Boc is an Associate Professor at the “Babeș-Bolyai” University since 2001, and teaches courses in Constitutional Law, Romanian Political System, and Public Freedoms in Romania. His research areas are political sciences, public policies, and constitutional law and political institutions, in which he also coordinated several research projects and has published numerous books and dozens of articles.

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He was Secretary General of the ‘Westdeutsche Rektorenkonferenz’ (Association of Universities and other Higher Education Institutions in West Germany) in Bonn and is member of various relevant organisations (including as Vice-President of the Academic Cooperation Association, Brussels).

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He studied Law at the University of Bucharest, and obtained a PhD in Geology from the University of Bucharest, a ScD from Duke University, USA, and honorary doctorates from universities in several other countries. A Romanian scientist, researcher, active politician and committed civil servant, Professor Constantinescu has published extensively on mineralogy as well as on political, economic and educational issues. He has been awarded numerous distinctions and awards.

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Cristian Diaconescu has a PhD in Law. He graduated in 1983 from the Faculty of Law of the University of Bucharest, and in 1992 he completed the specialized courses of the Conflict Prevention Center, in the field of measures to increase confidence and security in Europe.

He was a lecturer in the Public International Law Department of the "Hyperion" University (1993) and the International Relations and European Studies Department of the "Spiru Haret" University (2004). He also taught courses on the topic of European and Euro-Atlantic security cooperation at the National Defense College (1997). Cristian Diaconescu was IRDI professor teaching scientific lectures and courses, also in the thematic meetings and symposia on human rights in Strasbourg, Geneva, London, etc. (1998-2000). He is Founding Member of The National Defense College.

Cristian Diaconescu held several governmental offices: from December 2000 to January 2004, he was a Secretary of State for Bilateral Affairs in the MFA and Chief Negotiator for the Treaty on the Romanian-Ukrainian state border regime, Basic political Treaty between Romania and the Russian Federation, the Law for Hungarians in the states neighboring Hungary. From January to March 2004, Cristian Diaconescu was Secretary of State for European Affairs in the MFA. From March to December 2004 he was Minister of Justice.

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Professor Georges Haddad started his career as an Assistant Lecturer at the University of Tours (1975-1976), then at the University of Paris-Dauphine (1976-1983). From 1983 to 1984, he occupied the post of Lecturer at the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne. Appointed Professor in 1984 at the University of Nice, he has since been Professor at the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne. He was President of that University from 1989 to 1994, and also First Vice-President (Chairman) of the French Conference of University Presidents from 1992 to 1994. Professor Haddad is currently Honorary President of the University of Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne. He participated in the World Conference on Higher Education as Chairperson of its Steering Committee, from 1994 to 1999 and was also a member of the Task Force on Higher Education in Developing Countries (World Bank-UNESCO) from 1998 to 2000.

He founded the 'Marin Mersenne' laboratory for mathematics, informatics and interdisciplinary applications and is a member of several scientific and educational councils. His publications in the field of higher education include: *Higher Education as a Driving Force for Human and Social Development: The point of view of UNESCO* (2008); *Quality of Higher Education: A Complex Approach* (2007), and U*niversity and Society: Responsibilities, Contracts, Partnerships* (2000).

Professor Haddad is a graduate of the 'École Normale Supérieure', holds an M.A. in Mathematical Sciences from the University of Paris VII and a D.E.A. (postgraduate diploma) in mathematics from the University of Paris VI. He also holds the Agrégation in mathematics and a doctorate in mathematical sciences.

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Professor Hüfner studied economics, sociology and political sciences at the 'Freie Universität' Berlin, London School of Economics and Political Science, graduated the Institute for International Studies in Geneva, Princeton University and 'Technischen Hochschule' Darmstadt. He is the author of a large number of articles and studies on the economics and planning of higher education.

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Andrei Marga is Rector of the Babeș-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca, Romania and Professor of Philosophy at this university. Among numerous positions he is Honorary President of the Danubian Rectors Conference, Member of the Collegium of Magna Charta Universitatum Observatory, Member of the Advisory Board of UNESCO-CEPES, and former Romanian Minister of Education.

He won numerous titles and awards, such as Doctor of Humane Letters from the Plymouth State University of New Hampshire State (USA), Medaglia Pontificia. Anno I. Benedictus XVI (Vatican), Herder Prize (Austria – Germany) and Doctor Honoris Causa from Debrecen University (Hungary).

As Romanian philosopher, political scientist, and politician, he has authored a large number of volumes on political science, political philosophy, and the philosophy of history. He has also lectured on specific subjects, such as the philosophic foundations of transition from communism to a market economy, and the evolution of principles guiding European integration. In later works, he approached topics pertaining to the philosophy of religion and to the status of religion in the age of globalization.

SCOTT, Peter,
Sir, Professor, Vice-Chancellor, Kingston University, Kingston upon Thames, United Kingdom; E-mail: p.scott@kingston.ac.uk

Sir Peter Scott is Vice-Chancellor of Kingston University, United Kingdom. Prior to this he was Pro Vice-Chancellor for External Affairs at the University of Leeds. He was also Professor of Education and Director of the Centre for Policy Studies in Education. Before going to Leeds in 1992, he was for sixteen years Editor of the Times Higher Education Supplement.

He was educated at the University of Oxford where he studied history and at the University of California at Berkeley where he was a visiting scholar at the Graduate School of Public Policy while holding a Harkness Fellowship from the Commonwealth Fund of New York.

He has honorary doctorates from the University of Bath, the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology, the (former) Council for National Academic Awards, Anglia Polytechnic University and Grand Valley State University. He is also a Member of the Academia Europea and of the Academy of Learned Societies for the Social Sciences.

PRICOPIE, Remus,
PhD, Associate Professor, Dean, National University for Political Studies and Public Administration, Bucharest, Romania, and Adviser to the Romanian Minister of Education, Research and Innovation; E-mail: remus.pricopie@min.edu.ro

Senior Advisor to the Romanian Minister of Education, Research and Innovation on issues of Higher Education and International Relations, Dr. Remus Pricopie is also Dean of the College for Communication and Public Relations, where he teaches Public Relations and Managerial Communication. Former Secretary General of the Ministry of Education, Research and Youth in 2001, and State Secretary for Higher Education between 2007 and 2008, alumnus of Fulbright New Century Scholar Program, policy maker, and communication specialist, he is also member of the Romanian Association for the Club of Rome, member of the Board of the Romanian Cultural Institute, and President of the Board of Fulbright Romania.

Dr. Remus Pricopie holds a doctoral degree in political sciences and is conducting his MBA in Higher Education Management, at the Institute of Education, London University, UK. He has completed advanced studies programs in International Relations and European Policies, at Université de Liège, Belgium and in International Educational Policy, at the George Washington University, Washington D.C., USA, and coordinates several research projects in areas of public communication, internationalization of higher education, policy dialogue, and active citizenship, areas in which he has published several books and numerous articles.

SADLAK, Jan,
PhD, Director of UNESCO European Centre for Higher Education (UNESCO-CEPES) in Bucharest, and Representative of UNESCO in Romania; E-mail: j.sadlak@cepes.ro

Prior to his appointment as Director of UNESCO-CEPES, Dr. Jan Sadlak was Chief of the Section for Higher Education Policy and Reform in UNESCO, Paris.

In more than twenty-five years of experience in the field of higher education, he has held teaching and research positions in leading universities and research institutions in Poland, Canada and the United States; served as a team-leader for implementation of projects with international governmental organizations such as The World Bank, European Commission, OECD, and the Council of Europe as well as NGOs and foundations. He has been actively involved in the functioning of various international academic organizations and also in higher education rankings, project assessment and peer-review evaluations.

Dr. Sadlak holds an MA degree in economics from the "Oskar Lange" Academy of Economics in Wroc³aw, Poland, and a PhD in educational administration from the University of Buffalo/State University of New York at Buffalo, USA. He was awarded honorary doctorates from several universities and received a number of other high academic awards and national distinctions. He authored several books and numerous articles on higher education and science policy as well as on processes of reform and transformation in higher education and research in Central and Eastern Europe.

TANG, Qian,
PhD, Deputy Assistant Director-General for Education, Representative of the Director-General of UNESCO; E-mail: q.tang@unesco.org

Upon complementation of his graduate studies, Dr Tang began work at the Chinese Embassy in Ottawa, Canada. There he was Second and then First Secretary for Academic/Educational Affairs. He returned to China and worked at the Ministry of Education in Beijing as Director of Division of Policy, Planning and Co-ordination in the Department of Vocational and Technical Education and Assistant Director-General of the Department. In that capacity, he was responsible for the planning and national policy formulation of technical and vocational education system in China. In 1992 he became Deputy Director-General, Bureau of Science and Technology of Shaanxi Provincial Government in Xi'an, China.

Dr. Tang jointed UNESCO in 1993 as Senior Programme Specialist, Section for Technical and Vocational Education of the Organization's Education Sector. He became Chief of the Section in 1996. In 2000, he was appointed as Director, Division of Secondary, Technical and Vocational Education. In that position, he was responsible for the implementation of UNESCO's programme activities in general secondary education, science/technology education as well as technical/vocational education. From July 2001 to June 2005, Dr. Tang was Director of Executive Office responsible for overall programme coordination of the Education Sector. Since July 2005, he has been UNESCO's Deputy Assistant Director-General for Education in addition to his function of Director of Executive Office.

Dr. Tang earned his Bachelor degree in Education from Shanxi University, Shanxi, China. He then taught at the high school level before moving to Canada for graduate studies. Dr. Tang studied at the University of Windsor, Canada, where he earned a Master degree in Exercise Physiology and Doctor of Philosophy in Biology.

USHER, Alex,
Vice-President, Director, The Educational Policy Institute (EPI), Toronto, Canada;
E-mail: ausher@educationalpolicy.org

Alex Usher is Vice-President (Research) and Director of the Educational Policy Institute (EPI) in Toronto, Canada, which is a non-partisan research organization dedicated to improving access to, and quality in, higher education.

He was the first national director of the Canadian Alliance of Student Associations (1995-1996), served as a researcher and lobbyist for the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada (1996-1998), worked as a consultant for the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada and the Government of Canada (1989-1998). Immediately prior to joining EPI, Mr. Usher was the Director of Research and Program Development (2000-2003) for the Canada Millennium Scholarship Foundation, where he was in charge of Canada's largest-ever research project on access to post-secondary education.

He graduated from McGill University and Carleton University. With an academic background in history, economics and political science, Mr. Usher is the author of two dozen articles and monographs on higher education and is a globally-recognized expert on student assistance and quality measurement in higher education.

Annexes

UNESCO Forum Programme

Friday, 22 May 2009

08:00 – 09:00 **Registration**

09:00 – 10:30 **Inaugural Session**

Moderator: **Ecaterina Andronescu**, Minister of Education, Research and Innovation, Romania (see CD attached)

Speakers: **Emil Boc**, Prime Minister of the Romanian Government [message presented on his behalf by Gabriel Bădescu, President, Agency for Governmental Strategies]
Cristian Diaconescu, Minister, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Romania
Message from **Ján Figel'**, Commissioner for Education, Training, Culture and Youth, European Commission [video]
Qian Tang, Deputy Assistant Director-General for Education/Representative of the Director-General of UNESCO
Georges Haddad, Director, Division of Higher Education, UNESCO
Marlies Leegwater, Representative of the Bologna Follow-Up Group

Inaugural Keynote Address: Higher Education for a Democratic Society in the XXI Century

Speaker: **Emil Constantinescu**, President of Romania (1996 – 2000), Rector of the University of Bucharest (1992 – 1996)

11:00 – 13:00 **First Plenary Debate:** ***Ten Years Back and Ten Years Forward***

Moderator: **Vladimir M. Filippov**, Chairperson of 2009 UNESCO World Conference Committee; Rector, the Peoples' Friendship University of Russia, Russian Federation

Speaker: **Alex Usher**, Vice-President, Educational Policy Institute, Canada: ***Forum's Report – Ten Years Back and Ten Years Forward: Developments and Trends in Higher Education in Europe and North America***

Invited Respondents:

Molly Corbett Broad, President, American Council on Education (ACE), USA

Ligia Deca, Chairperson, the European Students' Union (ESU)

Monique Fouilhoux, Deputy General Secretary, Education International (EI)

Lesley Wilson, Secretary General, European University Association (EUA)

Remus Pricopie, Adviser to the Minister, Ministry of Education, Research and Innovation; Former State Secretary for Higher Education; Co-Chair of the Programme Committee of the UNESCO Forum, Romania

14:30 – 16:00 **Parallel Thematic and Transversal Sessions**

1. Access

[Facilitator – OECD]

Chair: **Paulo Santiago**, Directorate for Education, OECD

Speaker: **Peter Scott**, Vice-Chancellor, Kingston University, United Kingdom

Invited Respondents:

Norman Riddell, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, Millennium Scholarship Foundation, Canada

Alma Joensen, Member of the Executive Committee, the European Students' Union (ESU)

Marijke Seresia, President, the Flemish Higher Education Council (VLHORA), Belgium, and **Norberto Tonini**, President, the European Council for Student Affairs (ECStA)

2. Values

[Facilitator – Magna Charta Universitatum Observatory]

Chair: **Michael Daxner**, President, Magna Charta Universitatum Observatory, Italy

Speaker: **Andrei Marga**, Rector, Babeș-Bolyai University, and Member of the Collegium of Magna Charta Universitatum Observatory, Romania

Invited Respondents:

C. Peter Magrath, Interim President, West Virginia University, USA

Dominique Lassarre, Vice-president for Research, University of Nîmes, France, and Vice-Chair of the Education International Europe Standing Committee on Higher Education and Research

Judith Marie Povilus, Vice President of "Sophia University Institute" at Loppiano/Florence, Italy

3. Quality

[Facilitator – Council of Europe]

Chair: **Sjur Bergan**, Head, Department of Higher Education, Council of Europe

Speaker: **Jürgen Kohler**, Professor, University of Greifswald, Germany

Invited Respondents:

Tapio Markkanen, Chairperson, Finnish National Commission for UNESCO, Finland

Tibor Szanto, Vice-President, European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)

Ivan Rozman, Rector, and **Marko Marhl**, Vice-Rector for International Affairs, University of Maribor, Slovenia

4. Competitiveness

[Facilitator – European Commission]

Chair: **Peter van der Hijden**, Principal Administrator, European Commission [DG Research], Brussels

Speaker: **Georg Winckler**, Rector, University of Vienna, Austria

Invited Respondents:

Anton Anton, Former Minister of Education, Research and Youth, Romania

Andrzej Koźmiński, Rector, Koźmiński University, Poland

Krista Varantola, Rector, University of Tampere, and the Chairperson of the Finnish Council of University Rectors, Finland

Toula Onoufriou, School of Engineering and Technology, Cyprus University of Technology, Cyprus

Joseph Shevel, President, Galilee College, Israel

5. Transversal Session on "Challenges for Internationalization of Higher Education in the European Region in a Globalizing World"

[Facilitator – DAAD – The German Academic Exchange Service]

Chair: **Christian Bode**, Secretary General, DAAD – The German Academic Exchange Service

Speakers: [presenting regional and national perspectives as well as those of international organization]

Zhou Nan-zhao, President, UNESCO Asia-Pacific Network for International Education and Values Education (APNIEVE), China

Sibry JM. Tapsoba, Director, African Development Institute, African Development Bank/African Development Fund

Ana Lúcia Gazzola, Executive Director, Inhotim Institute, Brazil

Abdallah Bubtana, former Director of UNESCO Office in the Gulf States, Libya

Radu Mircea Damian, President, Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR), the Council of Europe

16:30 – 18:00 **Parallel Thematic Sessions** (continuation)

18:00 – 18:15 *Opening remarks from*:

Ionel Haiduc, President, Romanian Academy, and

Ioan Dumitrache, President, National University Research Council (CNCSIS), Romania

18:15 – 18:45 Inauguration and visit of the Exhibition
"*Potential and Excellence – Leading Universities and Research Institutions in Romania*" organized by the National University Research Council (CNCSIS) and the National Council of Rectors (CNR)

19:30 – 21:30 **Reception offered by the Prime Minister of the Romanian Government**

Saturday, 23 May 2009

10:00 – 12:00 **Second Plenary Debate:**
Main Challenges for Higher Education – Views from Ministers

Moderator: **Johannes Hahn**, Austrian Federal Minister of Science and Research

Members of the Panel:

Sreten Škuletić, Minister of Education and Science, Republic of Montenegro

Witold Jurek, Undersecretary of State, Ministry of Science and Higher Education, Poland

Andreas Demetriou, Minister of Education and Culture, Cyprus

Vlastimil Ruzicka, Vice Minister for Research and Higher Education of the Czech Republic/Presidency of the Council of the European Union

Cristian Adomniței, former Minister of Education, Research and Innovation, Romania

13:30 – 15:30 **Final Plenary Session**
Main Findings from the Five Parallel Sessions

Moderator: **Jan Sadlak**, Director of UNESCO-CEPES

Closing Keynote Address: Higher Education in Europe and North America – A Pace Setter for Others?

Speaker: **HRH Prince El Hassan bin Talal**, Chairman of the Arab Thought Forum, The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Introduced by: **Mugur Isărescu**, Governor, National Bank of Romania; Member of the Romanian Academy of Sciences

Main findings from the Five Parallel Sessions

Presented by the Chairs of respective session from: OECD, the Magna Charta Observatory, the Council of Europe, the European Commission, and DAAD – The German Academic Exchange Service

Bucharest Message to the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education – Experiences and Recommendations from the Europe Region

Presentation of the draft version by **Klaus Hüfner**, Chairperson of the Advisory Board of UNESCO-CEPES, Co-Chair of the Programme Committee of the UNESCO Forum; general discussion and adoption by acclamation by the participants of the Forum

19:00 **Gala Concert provided by the National University of Music Bucharest followed by Gala Dinner**

Place: Ateneul Român [Romanian Athenaeum]

UNESCO Forum Programme Committee Composition

CO-CHAIRS

Klaus Hüfner, Chairperson, Advisory Board of UNESCO-CEPES
Remus Pricopie, Adviser to the Romanian Minister of Education, Research and Innovation
Jan Sadlak, Director, UNESCO-CEPES

MEMBERS

Representatives of the partner organizations:

Sjur Bergan, Head, Department of Higher Education, Council of Europe
Ligia Deca, Chairperson, European Students' Union (ESU)
Monique Fouilhoux, Deputy General Secretary, Education International (EI)
Peter van der Hijden, Principal Administrator, [DG Research], European Commission
Paulo Santiago, Administrator, Directorate for Education, OECD
Lesley Wilson, Secretary General, European University Association (EUA)

Members of the Advisory Board of UNESCO-CEPES who are also Members of the 2009 WCHE Committee:

Vladimir M. Filippov, Rector, People's Friendship University of Russia, Moscow, Russian Federation; Chairperson of the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education Committee
Suzy Halimi, Director, Institut du Monde Anglophone, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle – Paris 3, Paris, France; Member of the Advisory Board of UNESCO-CEPES, General Rapporteur of the 2009 World Conference on Higher Education

Authors of the regional report and topical studies:

Alex Usher, Vice-President, Educational Policy Institute, Toronto, Canada [author of the ***Regional Report***]
Jürgen Kohler, Professor, University of Greifswald, Germany [author of a topical study on ***Quality***]

Andrei Marga, Rector, Babeș-Bolyai University, Cluj-Napoca, Romania [author of a topical study on ***Values***]

Peter Scott, Vice-Chancellor, Kingston University, Kingston upon-Thames, United Kingdom [author of a topical study on ***Access***]

Georg Winckler, Rector, University of Vienna, Vienna, Austria [author of a topical study on ***Competitiveness***]

Representatives of governmental institutions, academic bodies, foundations and other experts:

Cătălin Baba, Chief of the Prime Minister's Chancellery, Romania

Christian Bode, Secretary-General, DAAD – German Academic Exchange Service, Bonn, Germany

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Jamie Merisotis, President, Lumina Foundation, Indianapolis, USA

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