

New and Forgotten Pathways Reducing Tension in Contract between University, Society and Authorities

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The article is dedicated to the analysis of the reasons of possible misunderstandings in contract between University, society and the authorities. Some ways for the convention are proposed. Dynamism of the range of societal groups, growing complexity of modern economics and the protracted process of current economic downturn stimulate broad investigation pursuing identification the essential landmarks of society's development as well as boosters of the economics pursuing possible common causes of current embarrassments. In this paper the attempt is made to investigate the vigor of one pillar of the current economics. That is quality of manpower acting in the conditions of the postmodern economics. It is assumed among many causes of economic downturn as well as society's alienation and detune a whole chain of interconnected reasons. At the very beginning of the chain supposed to be the erosion of spiritual values of community members acting in current economics. It is claimed in the article that disremembered and muted spiritual values could be the reason of released greediness, boosted corruption and undercut confidence between partners. Those circumstances grounded conditions and influenced the emerging and afterwards consecutive fall of the expanded fictional business pyramids in many countries. Globalism of economic downturn demonstrates that those circumstances are common to American and European continent. In that connection it is important to have a look to relevance of education and training of human resources as well as to investigate the essentials of education including cultivation of the spirituality of graduates in every study programme. Discussing the content of study programmes adequate attention to interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study programmes is underlined as well. It is mentioned that those programmes could enable educating pathfinders with the broader scope of spirituality, knowledge and skills. Those graduates could become leaders in making reasonable sustainable long-run oriented innovations in the industry and society. Maintaining the European concept of university's diversity worth development of entrepreneurial universities with clear specific mission and regional involvement is supported as another essential improvement relevant to the current situation in the education and training field of the postmodern European society. In the article University multidimensional ranking as another political instrument for enhancing of their quality is overviewed and recommended. It is stated that strenghtening the autonomy of universities as well as increasing investments in education and training are enabling preconditions for the

improvement of the performances of universities in European countries. The specific accent is made to the fact that relations of autonomy and financing as well as quality of universities are inseparable. The main objective of the article is to discuss the mix-up in contract between university, society and authorities as well as circumstances and instruments for enabling universities to realise their assumed long run mission and the particularly mission in strengthening knowledge-based economy and society in Europe.

Keywords: economic downturn, education and training, spirituality of graduates, university's diversity, interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study programmes, entrepreneurial university, university's autonomy, university's ranking.

Introduction

Dynamism of societal groups, growing complexity of modern economics (Colander, 2000) and especially the protracted process of current economic downturn stimulate broad investigation pursuing to identify the essential landmarks of society's development as well as boosters of economics searching possible common causes of current embarrassments. Among various causes of economic downturn as well as society's alienation and detune it is possible to identify a whole chain of interconnected reasons, substantially connected with education and training field. Factors that weaken the triple contract between university, society and authorities should be carefully scrutinised and reasons of misunderstandings opened.

European University Association's Charter of lifelong learning (2008) states "Since their foundation over 800 years ago, Europe's universities have championed research, fostered a civilised and tolerant society and prepared young people for their role in society and the economy. They have also shown themselves to be remarkably resilient and adaptable institutions, continually developing their role as society evolves ". Impossible to oppose the point that universities have to be close to society but it should not be neglected that they have never forgotten that they should be sustainable as institutions. Therefore the balance between orientation to the market needs and academic conservatism should always prevail (Krisciunas, 2002).

Current economic downturn specifies and points the **research problem**: How mix-up in contract between university, society and authorities could be reduced? The answers are searched in the article.

Thus, the object chosen for research of the article is current social preconditions for relevant universities' actions.

The particular aim of the article is to designate some misunderstandings in contract between universities, society and authorities as well as to formulate necessary preconditions of universities' actions for enhancing the relevance of universities graduates' quality essential for leadership in the current economics.

To achieve this aim there are several tasks to be solved:

- Identification mix-up in social contract between universities, community and authorities.
- Disclosing possible changes in the structure of studies and in the content of graduates' quality relevance to current development of the society.
- Argumentation of the position that strengthening universities' diversity is the advantage.
- Setting likely requirements for University rankings enabling to enhance quality of university actions.
- Strengthening the autonomy and sustainable financing as essential preconditions of universities flexibility for searching consecutive improvement of the university's activity in general.

As the research method there was taken theoretical multidisciplinary analysis of the scientific works in the fields of economics, higher education history and philosophy as well as societal development.

Scientific novelty and practical significance of the article consists in:

- Concretised mix-up in social contract between universities, community and authorities.
- Several important features of the university's graduates relevant for the current society are highlighted.
- Important preconditions for universities effective actions in enhancing relevance of the graduates run-up to the current society's needs are identified.
- Concrete recommendations for relevant actions of higher education policymakers and universities leadership are suggested.

Mix-up in social contract between universities, community and authorities

Current society and backing economy insistently tend to use intensively knowledge in a global scope. Scientific and academic involvement in this transformation process is crucial.

Although almost global community declares the same vision of knowledge society which is backing by the knowledge economy unfortunately community felt into deep financial crisis and economic downturn.

This circumstance stimulates to analyse the subservience of the link between academia and society which has varied over time and there is no doubt that in the 21th century the mission of the university has to be substantially re-arranged (in particular by the nation states).

There are basically three categories of social mission that the university has adopted or has been given: a cultural mission (that includes the cultivation of science); an economic mission (that entails professional education and research for technological innovation) and a political mission (that ensures the high level of critical and sophisticated information and knowledge needed for democratic debates). Some suggest that universities have yet another social function, an egalitarian mission (that makes certain that the world of higher education is available to all): however, it is not at all clear whether the institution is equipped to take up such duties, even though it may endeavour to do so, for instance, through liberal access policy or lifelong learning (Jonasson, 2008).

Since Plato's Academy European universities have remained the central European institutions of reason, knowledge, criticism and learning. In nowadays academia - and in particular universities - stand at the centre of national and regional research and innovation systems. 800 universities and more from 46 countries across Europe, consolidated by European University Association (EUA), have been systematically discussing the best ways of participation of universities in that economic and societal development. "The central task is to equip Europe's populations - young and old - to play their part within the Knowledge Society, in which economic, social and cultural development depends primarily on the creation and dissemination of knowledge and skills. Modern societies, much more than the agricultural and manufacturing societies of the past centuries, depend on the application of knowledge, high-level skills, entrepreneurial acumen and the exploitation of communications and information technology" - it is pointed out in (EUA Lisbon declaration: "Europe's Universities beyond 2010: Diversity with a Common Purpose, 2007). Intentions are supportive but reality demonstrates that there are some gaps in the linkage between universities and society.

Analysing current economic downturn among the causes there could be assumed a whole chain of the connected reasons. At the bottom could be distinguished the erosion of spiritual values of active community members. Disremembered and muted spiritual values released greediness, boosted corruption, undercut the confidence between partners (individuals, companies, banks and state institutions). Consecutive fall of expanded fictional business pyramids in many countries caused financial instability and ultimately global economic downturn. Why did we get this situation?

The reasons and circumstances of financial crisis which expanded to later economic downturn demonstrate that global community has lost the tune of triple capital - material, social and spiritual globally and particularly in national states. Modern societies have to support enhancing of the spirituality (in the broadest possible sense) of society's members. Spirituality should not be the missed dimension in the triple contract because it plays visible role in the society and economy as well.

Other important reason of the economic downturn could be distinguished: the immaturity of current state economics which is mainly moving now by inordinate but

primitive individual consuming. This circumstance is connected with spiritual values as well.

EUA and other university groups and local universities with authorities as well as European and local social partners have organised a great number of various conferences and seminars searching for the best schemes and methods of universities involvement in universities' developmental process. A great number of proposals for improvements are presented, many positive results are reached. Bologna Process has proven to have become one of the most successful and popular recent policy innovations in European higher education. Created Europe's of knowledge conception based on the complementarities of European higher education and research area and various prepared and published political support schemes.

In spite of that great commotion in European supranational and national level during last ten years, the lack of common understanding about university mission in the society as well as about quality and relevance of university graduates to the society's needs still could be noticed. Some mismatch exists even between understanding of the current situation by authority (policymakers), academicians and society at large (Krisciunas et al, 2007).

Something wrong has to be in the fundamentals (Rhodes, F. H. T. 2006). As Rhodes, F. H. T. says "What we lack is some substantial articulation of our national and international expertise to broader issues of society (Rhodes, F. H. T. 2010)."

It seems that deficit in the sphere of spiritual values of graduates such as humanistic and democratic mentality, respect of human rights, nurturance of cultural heritage and identity, sustainable development, etc. is among them. But it is not cognized and perceived by all sides of contract at the same level.

In fact, some mismatch exists between understanding of the situation and ways of its improvement by policymakers and academicians. From one side, policymakers, especially at the national level, usually are in the force position. They are in the position that relevant and precise corrections of traditional mission, organisation and activity forms of universities done by the universities themselves are not able to solve still existing problems. Trying to improve the situation policymakers predicate more radical changes involving even some governmental regulations especially concerning governance, financing, internal structure and even academic matters.

From the other side, university professors fairly understand the challenges coming with the new economic and societal transformations (Krisciunas et al, 2006), but they are bounded by university's developmental history lasting hundreds of years. Universities protect and still believe in institutional autonomy which is world-wide recognised factor as crucial for universities effective activity in the society. Universities cannot break the traditions which are carefully enshrined from the very beginning and became fundamental.

Policymakers and academicians are in the position, that strong research basis in the universities is the pipeline for knowledge and technology transfer to industry and

society. In this context there arises the question, whether the research as the university's activity was not overvalued and, contrary, education and training became undervalued? As the result of that overall quality of graduates started to cripple. Not in sciences or technology, but mainly in spirituality. This might made the influence of the problems in question? As one of the results of commotion mentioned above new versions of higher education law in many countries are adopted.

In the list of graduate's learning outcomes the adequate requirements about implanted spiritual values to their mentality is lacking.

Other weakness seems to be lack of interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary study programmes in Universities' portfolio.

Spiritually mature graduates having interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary education could become the pathfinders with broader abilities to act correctly. Those graduates could become the leaders in making reasonable sustainable long-run oriented innovations in industry and society. It should be emphasised that this approach used to be expressed quite often in the public documents, but not in real practice.

European Universities and the knowledge society: likely shifts in the organisation and content of education and training

Excellently trained specialists are the trademark of universities in Europe. Intensification of knowledge-based economy and society demands to use knowledge in quite new contexts. In European political level this tendency got a strong acknowledgment and validation. Documents confirm the fact that scientific and academic involvement in this transformation process is crucial.

University graduates, especially new, should be involved and lead the process. It is essential that cultivation of traditional and modern skills should be based on the fundamental research which plays a particular role in the university system. Traditional and new abilities of university graduates have to enable the emerging cohort of knowledge workers in modern companies and organisations (Kersyte et al, 2008). They have to realise modern knowledge obtained in the field as well as relevant skills which should be postulated on the foundation of spiritualities.

Unfortunately, as it was mentioned above, current financial crisis and economic downturn visibly demonstrate that global community has lost the tune of triple capital - material, social and spiritual.

Politicians want to obtain the results immediately but they have to respect the fact that universities cannot and should not be too dynamic. Academics ground the process of adapting of universities as well as the environment about universities to new economic and societal situation searching best compromise between current urgent requirements and long-range perspective of society's development, look fundamentally searching for the best improvement of the university's activity.

Discussing about learning outcomes of graduates someone might desiderate requirements about implanted

spiritual values to the mentality of graduates in every study programme (spiritual - in broad understanding as was described above).

High technology units incorporate and bind knowledge from traditionally different scientific fields (Krisciunas et al, 2007). Nevertheless, evident mismatch still exists between highly specialized degree programmes well fitted to industrial society needs and new, mostly interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary which are necessary for emerging knowledge-based society. Of course, knowledge based industry and services demand both kinds of graduates: generalists from multi-and inter-disciplinary programmes as well as highly specialized. Labour market demands both groups. Qualification structure of study programmes in universities as well as in Ministries or national registers might be friendlier and realise the qualification scheme described above.

In the structure of learning outcomes alongside with knowledge obtained in the field transferable skills are becoming of utmost important (Labi, 2009). Very important among skills in current situation seems to be the ability to find and formulate the problem, to organise or make research and utilise the research results in practice.

Rapid extension of new knowledge and technology flow commits everybody to learn continuously. Infusion to graduates lifelong learning skills and individual urge to learn continuously became serious task to universities.

Communication skills got extremely important. Every university graduate should be able to prepare documents: from personal essay expressing his thoughts or scientific paper placing evidence against hypotheses up to business plan (Etzkowitz, 2008). Graduate's skills of working in groups and networks, and some other skills have to become ordinary.

Globalisation of human activity urges to equip students to deal with changing local and global situations. Graduates should become spiritually strong and dynamic personalities and to have necessary knowledge in the field as well as transferable and specific skills to work in international landscape.

It is evident that existing current transformations in society and economy force to make serious corrections of standing social contract between universities, state and community. The content of education and training should be a central point of discussions and decisions making.

Is diversity of universities advantage or weakness?

By 1970-1980 European universities had integrated changes needed to mass higher education. They had also learned to cope with organisation of studies while receiving less support per student. Mass higher education had contributed to erection of new institutions that were competing with older universities. As the result institutional and qualification systems of higher education became much more divers. Nevertheless, research profile of the universities still stands as central and quite modern although its origins are coming from the early nineteenth century (1807) Universities are asked now to contribute to the knowledge society by providing access to an increasing

number and wider variety of learners and through innovative research (Lester et al, 2004). Of course, every university has to maintain the quality of studies and take care about employability of graduates.

As it was defined in EUA report Trends I, diversity of universities in Europe really is great. Is it advantage or weakness? During the recent conference on "International comparison of education systems: a European model?" (Paris, 13-14 November 2008) the European Commission made it clear that it sees diversity as a major challenge for the further development of European higher education and that it intends diversity to be made more transparent. The importance of the diversity of European higher education is regularly emphasized in other European political papers.

The issue of institutional diversity has moved to the centre of policy discussions in Europe with such questions as how to ensure the competitiveness of knowledge-based societies and respond to the diversity of students' and stakeholders' demands and needs. Institutional diversity is seen as a positive goal; yet, when no parity of esteem exists across institutional types, institutional drift and mission overload set in, says Lesley Wilson, Secretary General of EUA in the foreword of latest EUA issue "Institutional diversity in European higher education" prepared by Sybille Reichert, (2009).

In the EU policy contexts diversity in higher education is taken as an important point of departure. In 2003 the European Commission argued that the "European university landscape...is characterized by a high degree of heterogeneity which is reflected in organization, governance and operating conditions, including the states and conditions of employment and recruitment of teaching staff and researchers..."

EUA Lisbon declaration points that Universities recognize that moving from an elite to a mass system of higher education implies the existence of universities with different missions and strengths. It requires a system of academic institutions with highly diversified profiles, based on equality of esteem for different missions. Institutions will increasingly offer different kinds of study programmes leading to a wide spectrum of graduate qualifications that allow progression routes from one institution to another and will develop research, innovation and knowledge transfer activities in line with their diverse missions.

But the quality of specific activity of comprehensive universities or of specialised universities not always is connected with scientific visibility. The quality of those institutions should be reflected using other and more appropriate indicators. In these policy contexts the structural convergence of the various national higher education systems is one of the major focuses of attention (Vught, 2009). Increasing compatibility and comparability are crucial objectives.

Traditionally universities and knowledge are inseparable. As Ronald Barnett (Barnett, 2008) postulates "Universities came to have not only knowledge production's function, but more than that, they had a function in safeguarding knowledge, having a care towards knowledge and its validation. The university came to be the arbiter as to what counts as knowledge".

The concept of Research University contains conditions of 'ivory tower' university. Such university was strongly maintained by powerful university senates, representing university professors. Universities of high reputation in reality got conditions of an island in society. However, universities have to be implicated in the formation of 'knowledge society' and to play key role in its development. In EUA Charter of LLL (2008) it is stated "In the twenty first century new expectations and demands on Europe's universities are mounting rapidly, as social and economic development becomes geared around the concept of a Europe of knowledge".

Serious changes of university-state-community contract (relationships) implicated by the vision of "Europe of knowledge" step by step strengthen the preference of the concept of entrepreneurial University instead of the concept of Research University. This shift is based according Ronald Barnett on:

- rise of quasi-market (neo liberalism in public services);
- view that universities were repositories of knowledge products and potential knowledge services that could be put directly to work – 'knowledge transfer';
- view that the value of knowledge could be determined by its market price – 'use value';
- the marketisation of the university was a way of extracting efficiency.

The concept of entrepreneurial university in the author's point of view should be capable of integrating multiple missions and reinventing itself. It should contain strong will for materialization of:

- diversified and wide university-industry/society cooperation,
- life-long learning with recognition of informal learning,
- comprehensive regional involvement,
- upholding sustainable development,
- diversified financing,
- student focused studies.

The attribute "diversified and wide university-industry/society cooperation" should contain all possible forms of scientific contracts and knowledge transfer activities. Some could be mentioned:

- overall shift in the role of universities: from exclusive knowledge maker to public service provider,
- hybrid organizations and actions,
- incubators integrated into academic units,
- classes including on-campus and off-campus participants,
- research groups as quasi-firms: professor as research entrepreneur, team leader, fund raiser and personnel manager,
- collaboration among graduate students, post-doctoral fellows and technicians (feels like a small business; absence of direct profit motive).

Student centred studies involves encouraging use of learning outcomes and being explicit about what graduates are expected to know and be able to do, but also

encouraging critical thinking and the active engagement of students. Particular efforts need to be made to motivate and train academic staff to work within such a student-centred paradigm.

The conclusion of that paragraph could be done: Europe might need several or several dozens of research universities with high international prestige, excellent infrastructure and highly visible professors. The others should seek recognition as entrepreneurial universities having clear specific mission and regional involvement. Both types of universities should have the same overall prestige. Politicians and academics should simply never put parity sign when assess the quality of concrete universities.

University rankings - for quality's enhancing (firstly)

One of the hottest current issues still continuing to attract world-wide attention is university rankings. Globalization leads to increasing competitive pressures on higher education institutions, in particular related to their position on global university rankings, i.e. the so-called "reputation race" (Van Vught, 2009), for which their research performance currently is almost exclusively the measure. The two highest profile ranking systems in current time are Shanghai Jiao Tong University's and the Times Higher education rankings, both of which focus on what might constitute a world class university. They suggest that there is in fact only one model that can have global standing: the large comprehensive research university. Evidently Shanghai system privileges the USA universities.

This concept contradicts the European concept that diversity is university's great value, confirmed at Salamanca and many other meetings. There is evident the heavy deficit of European ranking approach which refers to the diversity of institutional profiles and thus takes into account the high degree of linguistic, academic, educational and cultural diversity that is strength of European higher education in a global context. Such one-sided competition also jeopardizes the status of activities that universities undertake in other areas, such as undergraduate teaching, innovation, their contribution to regional development, to lifelong learning, etc. and of institutions with different missions (Kivinen et al, 2006) and profiles. Europe severely needs multi-dimensional ranking system, which enables to evaluate the quality of universities implementing different missions.

Strong support is deserved by authorities position that multi-dimensional European classification of higher education institutions and a European approach to multi-dimensional global ranking can be seen as major instruments to create transparency in higher education as well as decision to carry out a feasibility study on the design and testing of a new multi-dimensional global university ranking.

The winning bid comes from CHERPA-Network consortium. Transparency instruments that make diversity transparent rather than hide it, may be a first step towards creating a more diversified incentive structure and thus contribute to the maintenance of the necessary diversity in

higher education worldwide are emphasised in the project's of CHERPA-Network consortium description (CHEPS, 2009)

The project anticipates two-level analysis (Focused Institutional Rankings and Field-based Rankings). Universities will be scrutinized along five groups of indicators:

- teaching and learning, incl. employability,
- research,
- knowledge exchange,
- internationalisation,
- regional engagement.

Project team looks for customized rankings enabling the important advantages for social stakeholders:

- for students and academic staff when they search for higher education and research institutes corresponding with their individual preferences, or partners for co-operation and identifying their competitive position;
- for policy-makers stimulating innovation of a higher education sector;
- for European business and industry, searching transparency about the diversity of the European higher education system in the global context;

It really seems that politicians and academics in the nearest future will get effective and reliable instrument enabling strengthening and modernising the European universities, promoting diversity and quality of them. Students and society at large will get a reliable and comprehensive continuous information source about the profile of higher education institutions and quality of study programmes.

Autonomy of universities and sustainable financing as the preconditions for systematic improvement of their activity to serve the needs of new European economy

Institutional autonomy as a necessary precondition to implement university mission in the society was stressed in European University Charter on 1988, repeated in Salamanca and other meetings, expressed in many EC documents.

Universities advocate a balance between autonomy and accountability through institutional audit procedures which: embody fitness for a purpose approach that is culturally adapted to countries and institutions and in line with their different missions and profiles; are aimed at strategic improvement and change rather than quality control (*Glasgow declaration, 2005.*).

The European and national state authorities have recognised the need for university autonomy. In Communication "Delivering on the Modernisation Agenda for Universities: Education, Research and Innovation" (May 2006), the European Commission marks as a priority the creation of new frameworks for universities, characterised by improved autonomy and accountability. The Council of the European Union (2007) confirms this approach and makes an explicit link between autonomy

and the ability of universities to respond to society expectations.

University professors welcomed European Commission president's J.M. Barosso speech in EUA Glasgow convention "*Strong Universities for Europe*" 2005, when he said: "but if universities are to use the limited financial resources they have act as efficiently as possible, if they are to maximise the social return on the investment society makes in them, they must have more freedom to manage themselves as they see fit. That is why this liberation of universities should also extend to their governance. Universities need to improve their management of research and other activities and should be allowed to do so, while public authorities focus on the strategic orientation of the system as a whole. Universities should also be allowed to develop innovative ways of closing the gap between new knowledge and the world of enterprise and commerce – a gap that must be closed if the Lisbon Agenda is to deliver on its promise to use knowledge and innovation as engines of growth and jobs". Nothing to add, only implementation is needed in both: national and European level.

The search for institutional autonomy and the effects of emerging common markets generate a dynamism which may well create a new and diversified university structure in Europe (Winckler, 2010).

EUA recently published survey (exploratory study) on really existing university autonomy prepared by Thomas Estermann and Terhi Nokkala (Esterman et al, 2009) under the umbrella of EUA. The study compares and analyses a series of elements of financial, organisational, staffing and academic autonomy in 34 European countries. The study seeks to offer the preliminary analysis of great diversity of models available. It enabled governments to benchmark their progress on governance and autonomy reforms comparing other systems and gave policymakers feedback on their reforms from an institutional perspective.

Juxtaposition of situations across Europe reflects the multiple approaches for a balance between autonomy and accountability. Although the study confirms the existence of a general trend towards an increase in university autonomy throughout Europe, there are still a large number of countries that do not grant their universities enough autonomy, thereby limiting their performances. There are equally cases where autonomy previously granted has now been reduced. Quite often there is also a gap between formal autonomy and the real degree of a university's ability to act with certain independence.

It is a very well known fact that Europe's universities are not sufficiently funded and cannot be expected to compete with other systems without comparable levels of funding. At present, European Union countries spend on universities about half of the proportion of their GDP compared to the United States. While Europe's Lisbon Strategy goals are ambitious, public funding for research and higher education is stagnating at best. Universities maintain that weakened public support erodes their role in sustaining democracy and their capacity for promoting cultural, social and technological innovations (EUA Lisbon declaration, 2007).

Governments must increase in an efficient and sustained way the investments in education and training. They have to ensure necessary levels of funding appropriate to maintain and raise the quality of institutions.

Financing and quality of universities are inseparable.

Conclusions

1. In spite of great commotion in European supranational and national level during last ten years the lack of common understanding about university mission in the society as well as about quality and relevance of university graduates to the society's needs still could be noticed. Some mismatch exists even between understanding of the current situation by authority (policymakers), academicians and society at large.

2. Factors mentioned above suppose the thought that something wrong has to be in fundamentals – in social contract between university, community and state as well as in managerial matters important in policies' implementation phase.

3. It seems, that some segments of universities graduates' quality started to cripple. Not in obtained knowledge in sciences or technology, but mainly in spirituality and skills. Elevation of spiritual values of graduates such as humanistic and democratic mentality, respect of human rights, nurturance of cultural heritage and identity, sustainable development, etc. have to become the urgent task of every university.

In the structure of learning outcomes of university graduates among the knowledge obtained in the field spiritual values as well as generic and transferable skills are becoming of utmost important.

Evident mismatch still exists between highly specialized degree programmes well fitted to industrial

society needs and new, mostly interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary which are necessary for emerging knowledge-based society. Of course, knowledge based industry and services demand both kinds of graduates: generalists with multi-and inter-disciplinary education as well as highly specialized.

4. Europe possesses strong and diverse universities. It is of utmost important to recognize equality of esteem for different universities missions.

5. The concept of autonomous, well financed entrepreneurial university has to integrate multiple missions and allow reinventing itself. It should contain strong will for materialization of:

- research based studies,
- interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary education, containing strong dimension of cultivation of valuables and training of transferable skills;
- diversified and wide university-industry/society cooperation,
- life-long learning for everybody with recognition of informal learning,
- strong comprehensive regional involvement,
- upholding green and sustainable development,
- diversified sustainable financing,
- student focused studies.

6. Factors mentioned above are likely requirements for University rankings. They would enable to enhance quality of university's actions.

7. Very well coordinated concepts and implementation actions of policymakers and academicians based on mutual institutional respect could enable universities to realise their assumed long run diverse mission and a particular mission in strengthening knowledge-based economy and society in Europe.

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Kęstutis Kriščiūnas

Nauji ir primiršti įtampoms universitetų, visuomenės ir valdžių kontrakte mažinimo būdai

Santrauka

Straipsnyje analizuojamos galimos priežastys, dėl kurių atsirado pozicijų skirtumai vadinamajame socialiniame kontrakte tarp universitetų, valdžių ir visuomenės. Taip pat siūlomi nauji būdai ir primenami jau gerai žinomi bei primiršti, kaip mažinti susidariusią įtampą tarp minėtų socialinių institucijų dėl universitetų veiklos prioritetų ir sąlygų, sąlygojančių žmogiškųjų išteklių kokybę. Dabartiniame socialinių grupių interesų dinamizmo ir modernios ekonomikos kompleksiskumo fone užsitęsęs dabartinės ekonomikos nuosmukis skatina gilintis į visuomenės plėtojimosi pamatinius principus ir procesus, ieškant tam tikrų orientyrų ir gairių, leidžiančių atsigaivinti ir pakilti ekonomikai, įveikti dabar išryškėjusias visuomenės darnios raidos kliūtis. Straipsnyje siekiama panagrinėti vieną itin svarbų ekonomikos plėtros ramsčio – žmogiškųjų išteklių kokybės adekvatumo ekonomikos raidos sąlygoms problemą. Straipsnyje daroma prielaida, kad iš daugelio veiksmų, sukėlusių ne tik šiuolaikinę ekonomikos nuosmukį, bet ir tam tikrą visuomenės grupių susvetimėjimą ir jų interesų išsiderinimą, yra daugybė bendrų, susijusių ir persipynusių priežasčių. Tarp jų yra ir jau minėtas žmogiškųjų išteklių kokybės adekvatumas postmodernios ekonomikos sąlygoms. Priežastčių grandinė pradžioje matomos aktyvaus ekonomikoje žmogaus dvasinės vertybės, nutolusios ir primirštos, tačiau nepraradusios savo svarbos žmogaus veikloje. Jų suirimas iškreipė visuomenės elgseną, sudarydama sąlygas vežėti gobšumui, įsigalėti korupcijai ir kitoms neigatyvioms visuomenės narių savybėms. Tai silpnino pasitikėjimo fenomeną visose grandyse: tarp žmonių, tarp verslo partnerių, tarp žmonių bei verslo grupių, tarp verslo grupių ir valstybės institucijų ir t. t. Daugelyje šalių pastaruoju metu buvo įsigalėjusios ir seneniai griuvo fiktyvios finansinės piramidės, kurios sukėlė finansinę krizę. Ekonomikos globalumas į tą procesą įtraukė ne tik JAV, bet ir Europos šalis. Nepasitikėjimo virusas, kuris globaliai plinta į įvairias žmogaus veiklos sritis, tampa vis pavojingesnis. Su juo kovojama, skelbiamos vis griežtesnės ir globalesnės priemonės. Vis stiprėja visuomenės vartotojiškumas, kuriame dominuoja individualus primityvus vartojimas. Tas pats virusas daro įtaką ir nesutarimams tarp universitetų, valdžios ir visuomenės, dėl kurių susidaro skirtingi socialinio kontrakto partnerių požiūriai į visuomenės raidą ir universitetų vaidmenį sprendžiant iškilančias problemas. Šiame straipsnyje bandoma atsakyti į klausimą, ar dabartinė universitetų studijų ir kvalifikacijos palaikymo sistema yra visiškai tinkama, ar žmonių išteklių kokybė yra adekvati ekonominio kūrimo poreikiams ir visuomenės lūkesčiams, ar kokybės defektai neprisidėjo prie nagrinėjamo trilypio kapitalo - materialaus, socialinio ir dvasinio - dermės suirimo. Daroma prielaida, kad sistema turi trūkumų. Tačiau tuos trūkumus socialinio kontrakto partneriai įvardija skirtingai ir siūlo nevienodas priemones, kaip juos pašalinti. Valdžių atstovai (politikai) siekia greitų rezultatų, kurie nebūtinai gali užtikrinti sėkmingą tolesnę universitetų akademinę raidą. Akademikai siekia, kad universitetai geriausiu būdu prisitaikytų prie besikeičiančios visuomenės poreikių, tačiau jie negali sutikti su tokiomis politikų siūlomomis priemonėmis, galinčiomis pakirsti universitetų gyvybingumą, kurio veiksniai yra susigulėję per amžius. Pirmiausia – universitetų veiklos nepriklausymas nuo tiesmukiškos politinės ir ekonominės valdžios. Pastaroji – fundamentali - sąlyga buvo įtvirtinta Didžiojoje universitetų chartijoje. Jos principais buvo grindžiamas Bolonijos procesas, įrodęs, koks produktyvus gali būti valdžių ir universitetų akademinės bendruomenės bendradarbiavimo rezultatas. Nepaisant vis gaudesnės Europos studijų erdvės, pasižymincios nauja akademinė kvalifikacijų sistema ir nauja kvalifikacijų struktūra, įvesta studijų rezultatų samprata ir kitais esminiais pasiekimais, prieštaravimai tarp socialinio kontrakto partnerių išlieka. Straipsnyje siūlomi būdai, nenagrinėti ar nepakankamai įtvirtinti Bolonijos proceso, kaip pagerinti universitetų absolventų tinkamumą dabartinio ekonominio kūrimo sąlygomis. Pirmiausia – studijų metu sustiprinti visų absolventų dvasingumą, nepaisant to kokią programą jie bestudijuotų. Atkreipiamas dėmesys į kitą labai svarbų studijų ir lavinimo aspektą – nuolatos atnaujinti studijų turinį ir iš esmės jį modernizuoti, siekiant išplesti studijų ir universitetinių tyrimų tarpdiscipliniškumą ir

daugiakryptiškumą. Monodisciplininis lavinimas universitetuose jau nebetenkina šiuolaikinės ekonomikos poreikių, nes realios problemos gyvenime ir ekonominėje veikloje vis labiau tampa tarpdisciplininės ir daugiadisciplininės. Absolventai, baigę tarpdisciplininės ar daugiadisciplininės studijas, turėtų naują darbinį potencialą, kurį naudodami jie galėtų tapti naujų kelių politinėje, ekonominėje ir technologinėje veikloje grindėjais, svarbiausių inovacijų ekonomikoje ir visuomenėje iniciatoriais ir diegėjais. Pastarieji kartu su monodisciplininių studijų absolventais sudarytų modernų darinį, padedantį sveikai augti ekonomikai. Kitas ekonominei veiklai leidžiantis augti aspektas yra susijęs su universitetų misijos savitumo ir institucinės įvairovės siekimu. Šis Europinis fenomenas yra šiek tiek praradęs savo ankstesnį tvirtumą. Europos universitetinis mokslas ir studijos sėmėsi stiprybės iš universitetų misijos įvairovės, kai buvo siekiama misijos savitumo ir kokybės. Kai kuriose šalyse jau kurį laiką dominuoja ta nuostata, kad universiteto strategijoje pirmumas suteikiamas mokslui, o ne mokslui ir studijų darnai. Tokie mokslo universitetai, stiprindami savo pozicijas mokslinių tyrimų lauke, tampa „dramblio kaulo bokštais“, palaiapsniui apleidžia studijas. Dėl to nukenčia absolventų parengtumo veiklai sudėtingomis kompleksinės ekonomikos sąlygomis kokybė. Universitetų tikroji stiprybė - racionali pusiausvyra tarp vykdomų mokslinių tyrimų ir studijų – moksliniais tyrimais grįstos studijos. Universitetų esminės veiklos kriterijais nepagrįsti universitetų reitingai, niekaip neatspindintys universitetų misijos įvairovės ir ją užtikrinančios mokslo ir studijų vienovės, pvz. Šanchajaus universiteto ir pan. daro žalą visuminiam daugialypiam žiniomis grįstos visuomenės plėtojimuisi. Šiuo metu labiau pagrįsta siekti tapti visapusišku, orientuotu į regiono ir šalies reikmes universitetu - enterprenerišku universitetu. Jo koncepcijos svarbiausi principai – vykdyti daugialypę misiją ir turėti galimybę iš esmės keistis. Tokia koncepcija būtų pagrįsta kelių veiksnių derme: įvairaus ir daugiaplanio universiteto ir pramonės bei visuomenės bendradarbiavimu; visą gyvenimą trunkančių studijų teikimu bei įgyto neformalaus išsilavinimo pripažinimu; daugialypiu išitraukimu spręsti regiono problemas; skatinančiu darniąją plėtrą; gebančiu tvarkytis su finansavimu iš įvairių šaltinių; teikiančiu studento poreikiams tenkinti skirtas studijas. Tokios misijos besilaikantis universitetas turėtų būti adekvačiai vertinamas. Iš čia išplaukia kita būtinybė – šalyse ir tarptautiniu mastu naudoti daugiadimensį universitetų reitingavimą, kuris leistų atspindėti įvairiapusę veiklos kokybę, nepaisant to, kokią misiją vykdyti yra užsibrėžęs tas ar kitas universitetas. Todėl straipsnyje pritariama Europos Komisijos ir CHERPA tinklo kuriamam universitetų veiklos daugiadimensiam reitingui. Šis reitingas siūlo daugybę rodiklių, kurie taikomi tiek instituciniam vertinimui, tiek studijų sričių vertinimui. Jie skirstomi į šias penkias grupes: mokymas, studijos ir įsidarbinamumas; moksliniai tyrimai; žinių ir technologijų perdavimas bei sklaida; tarptautiškumas; išitraukimas į regiono problemas. Visi šie pasvarstymai apie universitetų veiklos kokybę būtų nevertingi, jei universitetai neturėtų pakankamo autonomijos laipsnio, įgalinančio nuolat keistis ir pasirinkti savo konkurencingą misiją šiame moderniam pasaulyje su tokia kompleksiška ekonomika. Dėl to universitetai linę prisiimti visuomenės raidos diktuojamas veiklos sąlygas ir tikisi iš visuomenės ir valdžių adekvataus universitetų finansavimo. Universitetai nevengia atsiskaityti visuomenei, bet reikalauja pakankamos autonomijos ir finansavimo, kad deramai galėtų taikytis prie visuomenės raidos ir būti jos plėtojimosi „flagmanais“. Straipsnyje pasiūlytos priemonės ir minimos kitos universitetų ir akademinės visuomenės vykdomos iniciatyvos susijusios su visais trim socialinio kontrakto partneriais. Šių priemonių taikymas turėtų (ilgainiui) pagerinti universitetų, visuomenės ir valdžių kontrakto dermę.

Raktažodžiai: *ekonomikos nuosmukis, absolventų dvasingumas, lavinimas ir kvalifikacijos palaikymas, universitetų misijos įvairovė, tarpdalykinės ir daugiadalykinės studijos, enterpreneriškas universitetas, universiteto autonomija, universitetų reitingai.*

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