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Higher education for modern societies: competences and values

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Higher education for modern societies – Competences and values

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Preface

Radu Damian

Why a preface? This was the first question that I asked myself when accepting the responsibility of writing a preface to this new book of the Council of Europe, part of the Higher Education Series. Is a preface really necessary when the reader has the table of contents available? Are prefaces always needed?

My own answer to this "existential" question was obviously positive since you are reading the preface – hopefully with interest. The main motive behind the decision is that for universities a subject such as "converging competences for democratic society" is not usually one found near the top of their list of missions, not to mention their day-to-day practice. For obvious reasons, universities, which I see as "small, autonomous societies" with their own priorities and internal rules, are faced with more and more challenges. The economic dimension of their existence, related to study programmes, teaching methods, learning environment, quality assurance, student numbers, research results leading to prestige in the scientific community and other urgent issues facing them, leaves little room for reflection in the academic community and the university leadership about values they take for granted, such as democracy, citizenship and intercultural dialogue. Therefore, I thought that if this book is meant to become known and to appeal to people from universities, my brief preface should contribute to stimulating their curiosity to read it.

The values of the Council of Europe are well known: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The member states share those values and have committed themselves to fully promote them as part of their internal and international policies.

Recent experience and the results of national elections in many countries, as well as for the Parliament of the European Union, have, however, shown not merely a lack of interest among citizens in participation, but also a relative rise of a rather "radical" political message. The relative success of that message, which questions the essence of democratic values and is something we believed belonged to the past, is indeed very worrying for the future of Europe and the world. We should not forget that, by the "direct or representative vote of the people", Europe or other parts of the world have in the past experienced political "democratic" transitions to extremism and autocracy, with all the consequences that followed. Must we accept this situation and let it happen again in the future?

If the answer is negative, and definitely it should be, our societies must reaffirm their commitment to democracy, must use it, defend it and be aware that democracy is not a gift and is not to be taken for granted. The best way to defend democracy is to understand how it works, to make full use of it to respect human rights and to live by the rule of law. These elements define in fact in simple words what is called a "democratic culture" in society. Defending democracy and making use of

its potential is a task for all citizens, as well as for educators, and an obligation for the political class.

However, in many European countries, statistics have also too often shown an awkward situation: the percentage of those voting in the elections from population groups which did not attend higher education exceeds the percentage of voters from population groups with an academic background. Newspapers and sociologists come up with many different explanations related, for example, to the political situation or the disillusionment of educated voters with politics and politicians. Fundamentally, however, the situation is unacceptable and leads to several questions. Does higher education give its students the essential values of democratic societies? How should universities do that? How can universities educate not only highly skilled specialists for the labour market but also highly motivated citizens for our democratic societies? Are there examples of good practice in Europe and across the world?

If you want to find some answers, I encourage you to read this book which I hope will become a reference point in the process of redefining the role of universities in the modern, global world.

A word from the editors

Sjur Bergan and Radu Damian

The book that you are about to read draws on several sources: contributions to two Council of Europe higher education conferences as well as articles written especially for this publication. In spite of the diversity of sources as well as of the backgrounds and origins of the authors, there is, however, unity in purpose. This book set out to explore the roles and purposes of higher education in modern, complex societies and how these relate to the competences that higher education provides to students.

Public debate, at least in Europe, could easily leave the casual observer with the impression that higher education serves one purpose and one purpose only: preparation for employment. This is of course an important function of higher education and our public debate is not wrong in emphasising this purpose. It is wrong, however, in emphasising only this purpose. As man does not live by bread alone, human existence is about more than work.

In a previous project on the public responsibility for higher education and research (Weber & Bergan 2005; Council of Europe 2007), the Council of Europe identified four major purposes of higher education:

– preparation for sustainable employment;
– preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies;
– personal development;
– the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad and advanced knowledge base.

Some debaters and authors might have preferred to phrase the four purposes somewhat differently, but there is little disagreement that the purposes stated broadly cover the main roles of higher education. This is reflected in the Bologna Process, through the 2007 London Communiqué (Bologna Process 2007: 1.4). Yet, these statements have so far not significantly modified the public debate in Europe, which continues to give the impression that preparation for employment is the only major reason we have higher education. In this, Europe differs from North America, where not least the higher education community itself is very keenly aware of its key role in transmitting the values of democratic citizenship (AAC&U 2007) and where the concept of liberal education emphasises the personal development of students as a major – perhaps even *the* major – goal of higher education. Therefore, the fact that several prominent US authors contribute to this book is significant.

In both the European and North American contexts, it is important to underline that the discussion is not about which of these different purposes is the "real" one. They are all important and they coexist. Many of the characteristics that will make higher education graduates fit for employment will also make them fit for active

citizenship and contribute to their personal development, as well as enable them to contribute to improving our knowledge base. The ambivalence about the different purposes that one can discern in European public debate nevertheless led the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) to refer to "higher education between humanism and the market".

The Council of Europe is dedicated to democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It is also concerned with developing the ability of European societies to conduct intercultural dialogue. Education, at all levels, plays a crucial role in furthering the overall purposes of the Council of Europe and this book demonstrates why. It is not a coincidence that one of the sections in this book focuses on higher education for democracy and dialogue, and that this is the section that links a consociation of the roles and purposes of higher education in and for modern society to a consideration of competences.

Seeing higher education exclusively as a process leading to a set of competences is overly reductionist, but developing learners' competence is an important part of the mission of higher education. Competences are, however, not a neutral issue. The kind of competences that higher education should develop depends on what we see as the purposes of higher education.

As with the purposes of higher education, it is important to refer to competences in the plural. This is not only because higher education graduates need to acquire a broad set of competences within their chosen field of study, but also because they need to acquire two complementary kinds of competences: subject-specific and generic. A chemistry graduate needs not only to have advanced competences in chemistry (and, most likely, to specialise within a sub-field of chemistry), but also to acquire a set of competences which any higher education graduate should have, such as analytical ability, communication skills and the ability to work alone as well as in a team. The concepts of subject-specific and generic competences were made explicit within the Tuning project (González & Wagenaar 2005) and are essential to understanding the concept of qualifications (Bergan 2007).

An important point made in the present book is that while subject-specific and generic competences are important concepts, they do not live separate lives. They converge, in the sense that an individual learner needs both kinds of competences. Learners need to apply both subject-specific and generic competences in everyday life and, as societies, we need to draw on a very broad range of advanced competences of both kinds in order to solve the most difficult challenges that we are faced with, from the consequences of climate change through intercultural dialogue and democratic culture to unemployment and sustainable technological innovation.

Therefore, the third part of the book refers not only to "competences" but also to "converging competences". This important point links up with one of the starting points for the reflections that led to this volume, namely the need not only to train individuals for specific tasks but to educate the whole person. Education is about acquiring skills but also about acquiring values and attitudes. As education policies

move from an emphasis on process to a stronger emphasis on the results of the educational processes, learning outcomes have come to be seen as an essential feature of higher education policies in Europe as well as in North America.

The current language of higher education reform is very much that of learning outcomes, and rightly so. The classical definition of learning outcomes is that they describe what a learner knows, understands and is able to do. This is an important development from an earlier age that emphasised rote learning of "facts", and also from what we suspect is still a fairly commonly held view of education that focuses on knowledge alone. Knowledge is crucial but it only works if it is accompanied by understanding and an ability to act. Think of learning a foreign language. Learning the declensions of nouns, adjectives and verbs of a new language is a difficult challenge for most learners, but apart from the intrinsic interest of grammatical systems, this knowledge is of little use unless it is matched by an understanding of how the declension systems work and the ability to put the knowledge and understanding to use by learning to speak and write the new language. As any language learner understands, "knowing the grammar" is only the first part of learning a foreign language.

However, the example of language learning also offers a fourth element of learning: the motivation to learn and the attitudes that are developed as part of the learning process. Learning a new language requires considerable investment of time and energy, which is likely to be made less prohibiting if the learner is curious about foreign languages and cultures and has an open attitude towards them. This may of course focus on a specific language and culture but a frame of mind that is generally receptive towards a variety of cultural impulses will probably help find the motivation required. At the same time, one would hope that the process of learning a new language will open up new horizons and further stimulate the learner's intellectual curiosity. We would therefore suggest that even though knowledge, understanding and capability are important, the definition of learning outcomes should be completed by the inclusion of a reference to attitudes.

The first part of this book considers the roles of higher education in and for modern society. Derek Bok, former President of Harvard University and one of the foremost writers on higher education in the United States over the past generation, shares his vision of what higher education should be. Bok addresses three important issues: the role of higher education in offering opportunities to all members of society in accordance with their real abilities, most notably by opening up access; the extent to which universities actually fulfil their obligation to provide future leaders of society, in the broad sense of the term, with an adequate education; and the extent to which higher education institutions are equipped to fulfil their responsibilities. Derek Bok strongly underlines that in an ethnically and economically diverse society, it is essential to have a diverse student body, not only for reasons of equal justice but also for reasons of legitimacy. If students are admitted on the basis solely of academic merit, which measures past achievement rather than future potential, talented individuals from underprivileged groups may easily be left out because they have not been given the opportunity to demonstrate their full potential. However,

access is only a beginning. It also matters a great deal what courses students take once they have been admitted. Derek Bok expresses grave concern that as many as one half of all US college students do not take courses that will help prepare them for citizenship, even if he considers that the increase in community service by college students shows some promise. Solving the fundamental issues concerning the role of higher education in preparing for citizenship in diverse societies will require rethinking our approach to education.

Peter Scott explores the challenges European higher education faces in a world of increased global interaction, the proverbial, if oxymoronic, "globalised world". In this, European universities face the same challenges as universities all over the world, but Peter Scott suggests European higher education also faces some additional challenges because of its reluctance to recognise them. Globalisation is, however, a more complex phenomenon than the most commonly used clichés will allow, and Peter Scott explores what he refers to as two modes of globalisation. "Mode 1 globalisation" emphasises the economy, and higher education institutions rise to these challenges essentially by producing high class research, as well as by developing into entrepreneurial institutions. What Peter Scott refers to as "Mode 2 globalisation" is more preoccupied with culture and cultural differences, concerns that are more closely related to the traditional agenda of classical universities. Universities must play a key role in developing intercultural sensitivity in graduates, as well as in the broader society, but equally in developing an ability to look at one's own society and culture with some critical distance. This is perhaps a steeper challenge than facing Mode 1 globalisation but, on the other hand, it may well be one for which European higher education is better equipped.

In the third article in this volume, based on her role as Rapporteur General of a Council of Europe conference on "New challenges to higher education – managing the complexities of a globalised society", Kathia Serrano-Velarde reviews the role of higher education in meeting the challenges of globalised society. Again, the plural is important and we need to take a differentiated approach to the perception of global trends and to include stakeholders and civil society in identifying solutions, which must strike a balance between short-term decisions and necessary long-term reflections. Kathia Serrano-Velarde considers humanist and market interpretations of higher education and provides a brief "history of ideas" concerning its missions. She offers ten conclusions and recommendations, grouped around three main aspects of the debate:

– dealing with complexity: key concepts for the realisation of an inclusive debate;
– dealing with cultural diversity: fostering intercultural dialogue;
– taking action in a complex and globalised world: civic engagement and social responsibility.

In his contribution, Andrei Marga examines multilingualism, multiculturalism and autonomy. Multilingualism is very much a reality in Europe, but it is also a choice, exemplified by the fact that the European Union has included all national languages

of its member states as official languages. Multiculturalism is a somewhat more problematic phenomenon but, whatever the definition, it is a reality that in many European countries, different cultures have a long history of coexistence. Marga sees an important difference between the two in that multilingualism gives rise to educational policies concerning professional training, certification and recognition, whereas multiculturalism may impact on the organisation of the state and has a strong legal impact. The author's own university, Babeş-Bolyai in Cluj, offers an interesting example of how an autonomous university has sought to rise to the challenges of multilingualism and multiculturalism, and Andrei Marga analyses this example in the last part of his article.

Internationalisation of higher education is a highly topical policy area, linked to the trends described in the first part of this book, and in particular those described by Peter Scott. While internationalisation is often justified and strategies developed with a view to economic competitiveness – what Peter Scott refers to as "Mode 1 globalisation" – Sjur Bergan in his article argues that internationalisation must take account of the full range of purposes of higher education ("Mode 2 globalisation"). While internationalisation policies should not neglect the economic aspects of higher education, they should also take account of the need to provide graduates with the ability to conduct intercultural dialogue, to consider an issue from various points of view and to develop a democratic culture. Higher education graduates must be provided with linguistic skills and other competences for dialogue, without which internationalisation policies aimed at improving economic performance in a narrow sense cannot be successful.

The second part of the book addresses higher education for democracy and dialogue. In the first article in this section, Slobodanka Koprivica offers insight into how these issues have been addressed in a country with a small higher education system which recently acceded to independence: Montenegro. Montenegro ties its higher education reforms very firmly to the broader European agenda, both when it comes to overall political objectives and specifically for higher education policies. It is an active participant in European Union programmes as well as in the Bologna Process. While several aspects of this strategy clearly link to overall issues of globalisation and internationalisation, Montenegro's policies also aim to address issues of democratisation and social cohesion. Montenegro has developed an Inclusive Educational Strategy aiming to provide education to young people with special educational requirements according to their interests, abilities and needs, as well as a strategy for civic education. While the latter is aimed primarily at primary and secondary schools, it is also important for teacher training, as higher education plays an important role in democratisation.

In the second article in this section, Caryn McTighe Musil looks at the role of higher education in promoting universal values in the face of societal change, and she does so on the basis of the US concept of liberal education. While to many, liberal education has mainly implied a broad curriculum focused on arts and sciences, the Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U) prefers to think of

liberal education as an approach to learning which applies to all knowledge across all fields. The importance of this approach is shown by a quotation from Terry Tempest Williams: "When minds close, democracy begins to close" (Williams 2004). The shift of emphasis from teaching to learning is also essential in this context, as is the strong increase in student numbers, moving from elite to mass higher education. Caryn McTighe Musil describes US lessons on learning and diversity, drawing in particular on experience from the AAC&U's own projects.

In the third article in this section, Nancy Cantor explores co-operation between universities and their local communities. She underlines that the model of an engaged university goes against the main tendency of the history of universities, which have tended to see themselves as somewhat distant from the societies that surround them. As Derek Bok also points out in his contribution, universities have not been characterised by their efforts in preparing for democratic citizenship, even if, we might add, US universities seem to play a considerably stronger role in this respect than their European counterparts. Nevertheless, a good number of US universities are now strongly engaged with their local communities, and Nancy Cantor's own Syracuse University is a good example. Under the label "Scholarship in Action", Syracuse University plays an important role in revitalising an industrial city focusing on areas such as environmental sustainability and justice; inclusive urban education; art, technology and design; and neighbourhood and cultural entrepreneurship. The university also works with the Haudenosaunee community to draw on its experience as well as to improve higher education opportunities for Native Americans. Nancy Cantor is careful to underline that the university seeks to work *with* rather than just *for* the community.

Gabriele Mazza and Sjur Bergan draw on the experience of the Council of Europe in discussing the role of higher education in promoting dialogue. The Council of Europe adopted its White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue in 2008, and the authors see education as an essential component of this dialogue, which should address the substance of higher education and not be limited to a "dialogue about dialogue". Education at all levels must play a key role in developing the competences that are essential for dialogue, competences that will allow us to transcend the categories of "us" and "them". Dialogue requires openness of mind but it also requires reflection on one's own values. Understanding the views of others does not mean one has to accept them as valid regardless of the values they espouse, and there are views that are unacceptable in modern democratic societies, notably those that deny the human dignity of others. To be consistent with its own values and heritage, higher education must commit to human rights, democracy and the rule of law.

The third section of the book, on converging competences, is introduced by Stephen Adam's article on competences, learning outcomes and convergence. These are fundamental ingredients of ongoing higher education reforms, notably in the Bologna Process. This is, however, not just a technical discussion, even if it has its share of technical issues. The discussion should link to a consideration of what we view as the purposes of higher education. Competences must be defined in relation to the

labour market, but equally in relation to the other purposes of higher education, not least those required to develop active citizenship. Stephen Adam explores the concepts of learning outcomes and competences and puts them into the context of the Bologna Process in Europe, as well as relating them to the broader issue of the roles of higher education. He warns that learning outcomes are means towards an end rather than ends in themselves. The potential for misuse is real but so are the promise and potential opportunities. He offers a typology of learning outcomes and raises questions about the relationship between education, civic virtues and democracy.

Áine Hyland explores competences, learning outcomes and convergence on the basis of a case study of her own University College Cork, one of seven universities in the Republic of Ireland. These are placed within the context of European higher education reforms, to which Ireland is an active contributor, not least in the area of qualifications. The University College Cork identified teaching and learning development as an important area in its strategic plan adopted in 2000. Rather than seeing teaching and research as two clearly distinct sets of activities, Áine Hyland argues, using the words of Ernest Boyer, that education should be seen as a "seamless web". This also means that teaching must be rewarded and recognised, and Hyland outlines a number of initiatives taken to this effect. The University College Cork is now broadly recognised as a university that values and recognises research-led teaching, a position that could not have been achieved without the work of those Áine Hyland refers to as "change agents".

From her perspective as a student leader, Ligia Deca explores the impact of "converging competences" on the reality of teaching, learning, research and institutional life. She points to the positive role higher education and, in particular, students have played in "new democracies" in central and eastern Europe as an example of responsible higher education communities. Equally important, however, are political debates in higher education institutions and lecturers who are active in public debates and democratic participation within the governance of higher education institutions themselves. Ligia Deca underscores the importance of education preparing for life and not only for work – in her words "higher education institutions as both melting pots and shaping vessels of individual characteristics and personalities" – as well as a means of furthering opportunities for socially disadvantaged groups. Student participation in higher education governance as well as, more broadly, in the life of higher education institutions, serves a double purpose: it improves higher education and helps prepare students for life as active citizens. "Converging competences" are essential in this respect.

In the final article of the book, Manja Klemenčič considers converging competences from the point of view of diversity, higher education and sustainable democracy. Like several other authors in this volume, she underlines the importance of considering the full range of purposes of higher education, but her article in particular focuses on the role of higher education institutions in developing student competences for democracy and diversity. She suggests that these competences must relate knowledge and understanding of the social and political concepts and structures (knowing

what); skills to effectively participate in the social and political systems (knowing how to act); and the values associated with and commitment to active citizenship in diverse, democratic societies (knowing how to be). She discusses competences for active and responsible citizenship and relates these to the concepts of subject-specific and generic competences as developed in the Tuning project (González & Wagenaar 2005). Manja Klemenčič also discusses the non-cognitive development of students, referring to development of (or changes to) beliefs, attitudes and values, and identity in general, and she seeks to discern some common principle for the teaching and learning of competences for democratic citizenship and diversity. From the perspective of someone who is professionally active in Europe as well as in the United States, she explores differences between Europe and the US in conceptions of and practices towards student development of competences for democracy and diversity. Parts of this relate to the fact that US higher education leaders are more conscious of their role in promoting citizenship, whereas European higher education leaders seem entirely focused on promoting the employability of their graduates. In her article, Manja Klemenčič recognises that the demands on higher education may seem to be higher than institutions, teachers and students can reasonably meet, but she also argues that *expanding* the goals of higher education should really mean *integrating* goals. The higher education leadership needs to find ways to employ and reemploy existing resources to meet these multiple goals.

As editors, we are convinced that this book raises issues that are essential to the future of higher education. We do not pretend that the answers to the questions raised can all be found within the confines of a single volume, and it is very likely that they are not even to be found by sifting through all the arguments made in today's higher education debate on either side of the Atlantic or, for that matter, elsewhere in the world. We do, however, hope that this book will help raise consciousness of the need to address education as a holistic phenomenon that aims to educate the whole person and that it will provide inspiration for a broader public debate on higher education policies than we tend to see in Europe. In broadening the policy debate, we will also have a better chance to find at least some of the essential answers. We are writing these words as the world celebrates the 20th anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. It would be a cruel irony if, two decades after this monumental event that symbolises profound changes in half of Europe's countries, higher education were to focus all its attention on the labour market without looking towards the broader issues of how education can help make our societies the kind of societies in which we would like to be not only employees but also fully fledged citizens.

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I. Higher education in and for modern society

Converging for diversity and democracy: a higher education

Derek Bok

It is a great pleasure to join in a discussion of the role of higher education in providing competences for diversity and democracy. I would like to begin my remarks by calling attention to what I consider an unprecedented position our universities occupy within today's society.

We often do not stop to think what an exceptional position universities have come to occupy. Our institutions are now the leading sources of all three of the most important ingredients for progress and prosperity in modern societies: new discoveries, expert knowledge and highly trained people.

The discoveries that universities make not only account for most of the basic advances in knowledge but lead to new products and new processes as well as to progress in health care, in government and much else. In addition, universities not only produce most of the technical knowledge that society needs, they are also the principal agency for independent analysis and critique of government, social institutions and the professions.

Finally of course, universities are the essential institutions for preparing leaders throughout society. Every politician, every civil servant, every judge, doctor, priest and virtually every top business executive will attend our universities. Although this often goes unnoticed, more and more of these leaders are also returning to universities in mid-career for further education. In my own institution we talk about having 18 000 students and indeed we do have 18 000 traditional students who spend several years with us and eventually graduate. But we also have between 60 000 and 70 000 other people, most of them professionals in mid-career, who are coming for a few days, a few weeks, a semester or a year for additional education they need because they have reached some critical stage in their career that requires knowledge they do not have.

These are enviable responsibilities, but they bring new obligations which I want to discuss in the remainder of my article. Specifically, I would like to take up three of these new responsibilities and phrase them as questions.

First of all, if we are the essential gateway to virtually all important careers and leadership positions in society, whom should we admit and recruit to be our students? Second, if we are the training ground for tomorrow's leaders, what more should we be doing to prepare students for their important tasks? And finally, if we are to discharge the educational responsibilities that our current position requires, how well prepared are we to carry out those responsibilities?

I am going to address each of these questions and, obviously, I will refer mostly to the universities that I understand best – the American universities. I will speak very candidly about them. Now that I do not have to raise large amounts of money every year, I can afford to be frank about the institutions that I love and in which I have spent my entire professional life.

First of all, whom should we be admitting? In Europe as in the United States, I think that higher education has now completed a transition from elite to mass higher education. In my own country the big challenge in recent decades has been to respond to the increasing racial diversity in our population. Now, a further challenge is emerging that has been there all along but is becoming more important and more widely discussed, and that is how to offer greater opportunities for children of poor and working class families. I suspect that these same issues exist in Europe and I would make two categorical statements about them.

First of all, in an ethnically and economically diverse society, it is essential to have a diverse student body. It is not simply a matter of justice, nor is it simply a matter of equality; the reasons are very practical. No society and its government can solve their problems effectively if one race or one economic class controls the lion's share of leadership positions. If they do, the authorities and institutions will not command the respect and legitimacy they require. Leaders will not attach sufficient importance to the problems of those outside the ruling group, nor will they even understand them fully.

The second categorical statement is that universities that have more applicants than they can admit – universities like Oxford or Cambridge or the *Grandes Ecoles* in France – are unlikely to have a sufficiently diverse student body if their admissions are strictly on academic merit. Even non-selective institutions may have to actively recruit students from minority groups and working class communities if they wish to acquire the necessary diversity, because students from under-represented groups may not come forward and apply without active encouragement by the universities. Many immigrants and many members of working class families are going to suffer from inferior schools, from low expectations, from far less access to tutors, advisers and other enriching opportunities that children in well-to-do families enjoy as a matter of course. If they are immigrants' children, they will also suffer from language handicaps and all too often from actual or subtle forms of discrimination. Therefore, to expect these students to compete for admission on an equal basis is probably unrealistic. At least it is in my country. They have to be given some form of preferential treatment in order to be admitted.

Once they are admitted, however, their grades and their academic standards must be based strictly on merit. You cannot provide preferential grades or apply special standards to special groups without destroying the integrity of your system of evaluation. Preferential grades will not succeed because employers will simply stop paying attention to them, and even the most academically gifted minorities and children from poor families will not get jobs because no one will believe that

the qualifications they have achieved were honestly earned. Rather, they will think these students received some special dispensation because of their ethnic or economic group and will give their grades little weight.

These realities present a daunting educational challenge. We have to take students who are less prepared initially but help them to compete effectively in the very few years that they are with us. It requires a very careful admissions policy and an active process of recruitment so that we can admit students who may lack all of the qualifications to begin with, but whom we believe have the special qualities required to persevere and to master what they need to master in order to graduate in a meritocratic environment. It may also require some special help along the way to keep these students from failing courses or having to leave the university before they graduate, thus destroying the whole value of the enterprise.

To show you how complicated this can be, in the United States we have encountered the problem of what we call underperformance. Minority students in the United States, and by that I mean students who are Hispanic Americans or students who are African Americans, do not simply enter with lower grades and lower test scores. Most of them perform below what those grades and test scores would predict. We do not really understand why, and we are only now recognising the problem and trying to find ways to understand it and eventually to deal with it. Unless we solve it we will not fully achieve the goals we set out to achieve by creating a diverse student body.

The further challenge, of course, is to help all students learn to live in a diverse student body and to benefit from it. Diversity can certainly enrich education. It can teach students to be more tolerant, it can teach them to appreciate differences in culture and customs and outlook on life and it can teach them ultimately to adapt more easily to a globalised, cosmopolitan world. All this does not come automatically, however. There is nothing that will prevent students, once admitted, from following a natural human tendency to congregate with students like themselves and to live rather separate lives in which they do not learn to appreciate the value of the rich diversity around them.

At my own university, we try to solve this problem by insisting that diversity permeate the entire undergraduate experience. The students live together in our residence halls, they participate in all extracurricular activities on a diverse basis and their social life is organised in diverse ways. Of course, that is easy to do in the residential universities like mine because such universities do not merely organise the academic life but the social life and the extracurricular life as well. In that environment, one can make sure that diversity is part of the everyday life of every student. It is much more difficult where students do not live on campus but come to take classes and then depart. Under these conditions, you may have to rely more on courses that try to take the values of diversity and teach them in some way that will register with students. Some colleges are now requiring courses on diversity and there are evaluations that suggest they are effective if they are properly done

and do not degenerate into some kind of ideological rant but really try to explore diversity along with its problems in a thoughtful way. That is not easy to do but, if done well, it does have a real effect in building tolerance and understanding. Even so, I suspect that you cannot teach students to appreciate other races and classes by books alone. Somehow, you have to find ways to complement whatever you do in class by having students work and study together as well.

The task of building diversity and making the most of it through the entire experience at the university is a very difficult problem. You have to model diversity for your students by building it into your staff and into your faculty. If you do not do that, it will not be credible; if institutions do not even bother to have a diverse staff they cannot expect their students to really believe in diversity. You need to be sensitive to the special needs of different groups but not compromise proper standards out of some misguided desire to be nice or to be understanding; otherwise you lose the respect of all students.

There are many obstacles along the way to greater tolerance and understanding. In my case, I started on this enterprise over 40 years ago as a very young law professor. We recognised then, at a time when law had become a vital part of the struggle by African Americans to overcome a legacy of slavery, that although law was essential to that struggle, there were practically no African-American students in the leading law schools of the country. We started to do something about it. Since that time, I have been picketed, I have been burned in effigy, I have had my offices occupied by angry students and had my name vilified – sometimes with good cause, sometimes not – in student newspapers, but I have also watched my law school change from having practically no minority students at all to seeing African-American graduates heading major corporations in society, sitting as judges in the courts throughout the land and becoming senators and members of Congress in our national legislature. Barack Obama and his wife Michelle are both graduates of that law school and Barack Obama, of course, has become the first African-American President of the United States. So, with all of our problems along the way and all the difficulties that I have seen, no experience that I have had in 50 years in higher education has brought me greater satisfaction than the ongoing struggle to create real diversity and make of it not a problem but an opportunity for the enrichment of the educational process.

Let me move to my second question. If universities are the gateway to leadership in our society and in our professions, it is important to educate our students to be responsible civic leaders and not merely competent professionals. What does that entail? Certainly, it means more than just the skills and the knowledge to be successful in the professions. As educators, we have to help students recognise larger responsibilities to the community, and that is a problem that is harder than it used to be. Society is more fragmented, and diversity, for all its benefits, weakens the common bonds that build solidarity. Moreover, students today are more preoccupied with making money, more suspicious of authority and more cynical towards our government than they used to be. In spite of all that, we have to prepare them to be ethically sensitive, civically engaged graduates.

Part of the task is to help students understand the problems of society and recognise the ethical issues they will face. But knowledge is not enough by itself. We have to encourage a quality of empathy for the problems of society and those who suffer from them. We have to develop a commitment to live by ethical and civic principles and to engage actively in civic life. How well are universities in my country succeeding in preparing this kind of leadership? Not well enough. Instead, faculty in the United States often assume that a good liberal education is enough by itself to prepare students for citizenship and for civic and ethical responsibility. Alas, that is clearly not the case.

Over half of American college students do not take the courses that are essential to their future role as citizens. Does not every informed citizen need instruction in economics, political science and political philosophy? Fewer than half of our undergraduates take such courses. Fewer still study ethics and moral reasoning, particularly as they apply to the kinds of problems they will encounter as professionals and as citizens. In fact, there is recent research in the United States that shows that some popular courses of study – in which I would include business, engineering, and science – actually weaken civic responsibility. The more courses students take in these subjects, the less likely they are to vote and the less likely they are to participate actively in civic life. I suspect that this research is virtually unknown to professors in American universities.

There is one bright spot in what has been going on and that is the recent growth of community service. We now have students working in homeless shelters and old age homes or tutoring poor children. Through this engagement students encounter many of the more urgent problems of society. Most high schools also provide such opportunities and many of them actually require some community service before students can graduate. In many colleges, including my own, two thirds or more of the students, by the time they graduate, will have participated in some serious work of community service. In most of the professional schools as well, there are opportunities for law students to represent poor clients in various kinds of legal proceedings, for medical students to spend time in impoverished communities, for education students to teach in inner-city schools. This is a great step forward. It not only helps to bring talented young people to address neglected problems of society, it also exposes them to problems and awakens their empathy and concern as no lecturers or textbooks could possibly do. But one must build on these experiences and help students understand the larger weaknesses of public policy and the shortcomings of the professions that help to create and perpetuate the problems that they are encountering in their service activities. They have to recognise what is wrong with a health care system that is the most expensive in the world but leaves 47 million Americans without health insurance, a legal system that is again the most expensive in the world but often leaves poor and middle-class families without adequate legal representation that they can afford, or a business sector that pays its chief executives enormous sums even when companies fail in international competition or engage in reckless or irresponsible ventures.

One reason for those problems is that professional schools in the past have not prepared their students to deal with them or even to recognise and think about them constructively. Accepting that kind of responsibility requires knowledge acquired through study. You cannot do it through community service alone. It is wonderful to have students working in homeless shelters, but they must also understand why homelessness exists in the wealthiest country in the world. Of course, this does not just happen in the United States. Every time someone comes up and begs for money, there is a social problem lurking that requires creative solutions. Our students will either participate in finding a solution or ignore the problem, as the case may be. If we are honest, we should acknowledge that we have a great deal to do if we mean to prepare our students to make the right choices to give effective leadership in society and the professions.

The problems I have mentioned – and I now get to my third question – represent new challenges. My thesis is that it will not be enough to meet these challenges simply by adding new courses, which is the way our universities typically adjust to new problems and new topics. We have to change our attitude towards education and even change the ways in which we teach. Teaching a diverse student body requires more than simply giving lectures, however polished those lectures may be. We need to discover how to help students from poor families surmount their initial handicaps and how to help minorities perform up to their capabilities. That demands more than just conveying information. Teaching ethical awareness and moral reasoning or developing intercultural understanding and building civic responsibility are not only important; they are much harder than the tasks that we have traditionally set out to achieve in higher education.

If we are going to meet those demands, we have to begin by acknowledging some hard truths about the way in which we currently function. Let me try to illustrate that by looking again at universities in the United States. Compared with other successful organisations, American universities are very conservative in the way in which they educate students. What do I mean by that? To begin with, professors are not trained as educators. Their graduate training does not tell them anything about how students learn, about how advances in cognitive science have changed the way people think about how students learn and why they do not learn, about the relative effectiveness of different methods of instruction, or about the history and the development of the curriculum in the United States. Rather, the preparation of graduate students focuses on research. The prevailing assumption is that if doctoral students acquire sufficient knowledge about their subject, they can learn to teach by themselves.

This assumption, of course, has consequences. Lacking real preparation as educators, young professors do what any of us would do; they emulate whoever they remember as the best teachers they had themselves. That is a very sensible strategy under the circumstances, but what it means is that teaching today is very much like it was 50 years ago when I went to college. There are a few technological flourishes – material is put online and there are PowerPoint presentations – but 75% of undergraduate teaching is still done by the lecture method very much as it was

when I went to college. And it is no wonder that we see no problem in that, because we have not made a practice of evaluating how much our students are learning.

If you do not know how much your students are learning, if you do not know how well your methods of instruction are succeeding, you do not see any reason to change your teaching. Since neither the professors nor the universities have spent a great deal of time experimenting with new methods of teaching, they are largely unaware that new methods might be needed. Yet, unless we begin to take teaching and learning more seriously, unless we look more carefully at what our students are actually learning, we have very little chance, I think, of meeting the new challenges that I have discussed in this article: helping students become more understanding of social and cultural differences, more civically minded and more ethically aware.

How can we help our faculties to do better? What is our responsibility as leaders? In my view, it is to try to prepare our faculty to adapt creatively to the new problems that their position in society has thrust upon them. Our professors are not going to change their attitudes towards teaching and learning by themselves. It is not that they do not care. They *do* care. Most of the professors I have met in my life, and they are my closest friends, sincerely want the best for their students, but they do not, however, recognise the problem they are facing. In the United States, and I suspect the same is true in Europe, we have discovered that well over 90% of American college professors believe that they are above-average teachers. There is nothing that compels them to think otherwise and to recognise that they might need some improvement, some creative experimentation, some new methods. If they see any problem in teaching, it is simply that professors tend to spend a bit too much time with their research and not enough in organising and preparing their classes. That is *not* the most important problem, however. What we need is not more time spent polishing lectures and improving the way they are organised and presented. We need new and better ways of teaching that will help meet a more difficult set of educational responsibilities.

More than anything else, we need to develop a culture in universities of continuously evaluating how much our students are learning, discovering where they need to do better and then experimenting with new methods that will meet the weaknesses that we have identified. In that way we can gradually improve in the only way human beings ever improve – through a process of conscious and enlightened trial and error.

Academic leaders have a critical role to play in helping to achieve that goal. Rectors and presidents cannot command professors to teach differently, and they cannot teach the courses themselves. What they *can* do is to try to help their faculty understand what the real problems are. That is the classic responsibility of leaders in any organisation. Professors are certainly conscientious enough and concerned enough about their students to respond when they are convinced that genuine problems exist. But they are not going to be convinced without good evidence, and they should not be. To persuade them, we must first ascertain how much our students are learning and how much they are progressing towards goals that we want them to reach.

It is not possible to do this perfectly, of course. Some forms of learning cannot be measured, but a lot of important goals in education *can* be measured so that we can find out where our weaknesses lie. We can measure how much progress has been made in learning mathematics or statistics or other forms of quantitative reasoning. We can provide pretty good evaluations of how much students are improving in critical thinking, which 95% of American college professors say is the most important objective in undergraduate education. We can certainly measure progress in foreign languages or in writing ability. We can test pretty well whether one method of teaching works better than others, and we can certainly know very clearly whether particular groups of students are performing below their potential.

Once you try to find out these things through careful methods of evaluation, the next and more difficult step, of course, is to convey the results to the faculty and let them see where the weaknesses exist. That has to be done with great diplomatic skill. Professors like what they are doing; they are very pleased with the lives they are leading and they will not want to change those lives and to take the trouble to experiment with new methods unless they are presented with good reasons for doing so. As a leader, you will encounter plenty of scepticism from colleagues who will claim that it is impossible to measure the intangibles of what we are teaching to students. Many faculty members will argue that methods of evaluation you are using are defective. Still, I am convinced from personal experience that they will respond when they see the problems carefully explored and documented. Faculty care about their students, they respect good evidence and they respond to good evidence in all of the research they do. Once they are persuaded that many students are not learning as much as they thought they were or not performing up to their abilities, faculty will want to do something about it and to improve matters. With encouragement and modest funding from a generous administration, they will begin to experiment with ways of doing better and there will be a period of creativity and change to overcome the weaknesses identified.

In this way, we can gradually begin to build the culture of continuous self-examination and improvement that every well-run organisation ought to achieve. In saying this, I do not mean to underestimate the difficulty of the task. The problems I have outlined are very difficult, and yet in the end, although I am critical about current practices, I am very optimistic about the future. It is exciting that our institutions have assumed such an important role, a more important role than ever before. It is exciting to know that what we do, and how well we do it, really matter to the success of our country. And if it is true that the challenges are very difficult, it is also true that they are certainly not impossible. If we meet them successfully, I am convinced that the next 20 years will be one of the great creative periods in the history of higher education. Just to share in such an accomplishment in our own institutions, at such a critical time, will certainly be no ordinary triumph and bring no ordinary satisfaction. In short, this is a great undertaking that we are embarked upon. I have pretty well done what I can do along these lines, but I am delighted to see new leaders and new generations take up the torch. I wish them every success in

that endeavour and in the ultimate success of these glorious universities, which represent the finest ornaments of our civilisation and can become the finest exemplars of progress in the future.

Can European higher education meet global challenges?

Peter Scott

Introduction

This is a contribution to an important project which addresses perhaps the most significant issue/challenge/dilemma facing universities in the 21st century – "the university between humanism and the market" – or, to paraphrase the title of the Council of Europe project, "in a global knowledge-based society have universities become so important for the generation of wealth, through the skills of their graduates and the value of their research that they must abandon – or place very much less emphasis on – their critical and cultural roles?". If the answer to this question is yes, Europe appears to face a further challenge because we assume (and fear) that our universities are not as well prepared for this new role, are less willing to subordinate those critical/cultural/historical roles to these new, more economic and more instrumental functions, than – to make the inevitable comparison – universities in the United States (and, increasingly, universities in China, India and other rapidly developing global powers). So, it seems, Europe faces a double challenge:

– first, the challenge faced by all universities, to transform themselves into "knowledge businesses" that can compete successfully in the global marketplace of the 21st century;
– secondly, to overcome the greater difficulties (or inhibitions) that European universities may face in meeting this global challenge compared to universities in other regions.

It is, however, possible to question whether both, or either, of these is true. Is it a straight choice between, in the title of the project, "humanism", on the one hand, and the "market" on the other? And is it true that European universities are particularly ill-equipped to meet these global challenges?

First, it is possible to argue that there is – and always has been – a lot of the "market" in our conception of "humanism" (and, conversely, a lot of "humanism" in the operation of the "market"). Following on from that, there is not just one "standard" form of globalisation – the neo-liberal, mid-Atlantic variety – but many forms of globalisation, although, for the purposes of illustration, two major forms can be contrasted: Mode 1, the neo-liberal variety, and Mode 2, a more complex and even conflicting variety. If this argument is accepted, it means not only that the dichotomy between "humanism" and the "market", if not false, is certainly exaggerated, but also that the global challenges universities face are much more complex than imagined. See, for example, in World Bank analyses of how higher education systems must adapt to the needs of the global knowledge-based economy.

Secondly, it is also possible to argue that European universities are not so badly equipped to meet global challenges, if these challenges are defined in broader terms (Mode 2 globalisation, in the terms I will attempt to describe in a moment). Indeed some of the imagined deficits of European universities – their overwhelmingly "public" character, the persistence of distinctions between traditional universities and other forms of more vocational higher education, and their need to come to terms with linguistic (and, therefore, cultural?) diversity – may, in fact, be substantial assets.

"Humanism" and the "market"

The first stage in this argument is to challenge (or, at any rate, to problematise) the assumed dichotomy between "humanism" and the "market". There is a lot of the "market" in our conception of "humanism" in Europe and, conversely, a lot of "humanism" in the operation of the "market". What does this mean? One approach is historical. I will take just two examples.

First, many scholars have commented on the links between Protestantism and capitalism. Of course, this hypothesis can, and has been, exaggerated. It is also clearly anachronistic in a 21st-century Europe which is both overwhelmingly secular and multicultural. This hypothesis also implies that in Catholic Europe, in the south, capitalism and "markets" were viewed with less favour than in the Protestant north, which is difficult to reconcile with the economic dynamism of Flanders in the 15th and 16th centuries or of Catalonia or northern Italy in the late 19th century. But maybe there is a germ of a connection there, not so much between the Reformation and capitalism but between the "humanism" of the Renaissance, those first stirrings of modernity, and the development of the "market".

The second historical example comes from the 18th and 19th centuries. Although it has become necessary to invent a new language of neo-liberalism to describe free-market ideology, it should not be forgotten that in its original formulation "liberalism" was both a political project and an economic project. Political reform, based on ideas of individualism and human rights, went hand-in-hand with economic reform, policies that today would be described under the heading of economic liberalisation. So the values of the Enlightenment (of revolution and reform) were closely matched to the development of an industrial, secular and "market" society. Only in the 20th century, with the development of the welfare state, did these two conceptions of "liberalism" diverge. Nowadays to be a liberal in social and political terms is often to be suspicious of, even opposed to, the "market", especially in its less constrained global forms, and of economic liberalisation – causes that are now espoused by social and political conservatives.

Despite this 20th-century shift, however, it is probably wrong to conclude that "humanism" and the "market" are fundamentally opposed. Rather they can be seen as two strands linked to the creation of modern society, the one – usually labelled "modernity" – stressing the rights (and worth) of the individual, values of political

freedom and social justice, and the other – often under the label "modernisation" – emphasising science, technology, the development of the economy and (inevitably) the need for free and open "markets". For example, the American scholar Richard Florida (2005), writing on what he has called "clever cities", has argued that even (or especially) today the most dynamic entrepreneurs, especially in cutting-edge industrial sectors like design and IT, flourish in creative milieus. So lifestyle factors such as museums, theatres, restaurants and other contemporary manifestations of "humanism", along with flourishing civil-society institutions (and, some would argue, progressive state institutions as well) create an environment that is particularly well adapted to stimulating economic enterprise – the "market" – much like, it should be noted, the cities of the Renaissance.

There is, of course, a lively (and still unresolved) debate about whether you can have the latter – "modernisation" – without the former – "modernity". China is the best example of such an experiment, but even in China clear tensions are emerging between efforts to build an "open" economic system while maintaining a more "closed" political system. Leaving this debate to one side, however, it does mean that, if "humanism" and the "market" in the historical context of Europe (or "modernity" and "modernisation" in the new global context) are seen as strands within a much wider social/economic/political/cultural project (sometimes in tension, at other times in harmony), universities must engage with both, with the entire project, rather than having to choose between them (and switch from one, "humanism"/"modernity", to the other, the "market"/"modernisation").

Two "modes" of globalisation

The second stage of the argument is to discuss the nature of the global challenges which are facing European (and all other) universities. Here we are faced with a "standard" – but perhaps a now rather out-dated – account of globalisation. This account concentrates on the economic aspects of globalisation – worldwide divisions of labour which allow companies in rich countries to outsource their manufacturing or services to countries with lower wage costs (and less costly social infrastructures) and round-the-clock, round-the-globe financial markets. To the extent that more cultural factors are taken into account it is usually to emphasise the dominance of global brands, with sometimes disturbing implications for the preservation of local values and customs. This account of globalisation emphasises the need to shrink the (allegedly) overblown welfare states that developed during the last century, because national governments can no longer resist the economic interdependences of free-market globalisation (even if they want to). It also emphasises the need for trade liberalisation, economic de-regulation at home and also the marketisation (and, potentially, privatisation) of public services. It highlights the power of global institutions, but not institutions like the United Nations created in the last century with collective security and development in mind (or even institutions such as the World Bank or the World Trade Organization designed to promote economic growth and stability), but global multinational corporations that no longer have a "national" home. This is what I like to call "Mode 1 globalisation".

How are universities expected to respond to the challenges of "Mode 1 globalisation"? Essentially they do this by emphasising their role in producing world-class research (which is why so much emphasis is now placed on world league tables of universities, however flawed their methodologies), because the best way for the older developed countries with (inevitably) higher cost bases and more elaborate social infrastructure is to concentrate on the highest value-added stages in the economic process. What is higher value-added than basic science which, we assume – maybe too easily – is absolutely fundamental to the generation of economic wealth in a knowledge-based society?

At the same time, however, universities are also expected to pay more attention to translational research, to the application of basic science and to technology transfer, with the result that universities in 2007 were expected to operate much further down the innovation chain than they were in, say, 1967.

Finally, there is a tendency to see higher education itself, the university curriculum and student learning more and more in terms of the development of the knowledge society's future workforce, which means that industry and employers should be given more influence over shaping that curriculum and influencing not only what but how students should learn.

There is another twist to the argument. Universities must transform themselves into entrepreneurial institutions, not simply because that is their major function in a knowledge society and under conditions of Mode 1 globalisation, because their values, organisation and structures must increasingly mirror those that prevail in the "market" sector, but also because it is the only way to survive. They can no longer look to the state for their sustenance and their salvation. That state is being "hollowed out" and its capacity to fund public services in the traditional way is being curtailed. Governments will probably choose to concentrate their shrinking resources on basic education and skills, health care or social security rather than on universities. So universities need to diversify their funding and increase their non-state income, as well as replace "collegial" and/or administrative structures with a much more pronounced "managerial" ethos. So the impact of Mode 1 globalisation comes from both directions. It represents a major opportunity for universities because they have a particularly relevant contribution to make to wealth generation within a knowledge-based society, but it also represents a major threat to the way that universities have traditionally been organised, funded and governed.

That is only half the story, however. Mode 1 globalisation is not the only variant. There are other accounts of the global challenges we face.

In the 1990s, it may have been justifiable, following the collapse of communism (at any rate, in central and eastern Europe) and against the background of triumphalist rhetoric about the "end of history", to believe there was no alternative to free-market capitalism and liberal democracy (with, unfortunately, rather more emphasis on the former than the latter). So, naturally, it was assumed that we were all destined to follow the "American" road, without recognising that the United States is a more

complex society than is often imagined – deeply religious, for example, in a way that no European society is today, and also less market-obsessed. If we wanted to beat the Americans we had first to join them. To concentrate on globalisation, therefore, as an economic phenomenon, although with strong social and political overtones, seemed very natural.

However, in the 2000s it has become less possible to see globalisation only in this light. First we have become much more aware of the ideological dimensions of Mode 1 globalisation. Rightly, perhaps, what was once regarded as a form of natural (and neutral?) progress has begun to be regarded instead as a hegemonic project. Secondly, as part of that more self-critical response, much more attention is now focused on "resistance" to Mode 1 globalisation – for example, the rising tide of concern about global warming and other environmental threats. The transformation of Al Gore into a global environmental super-hero is surely evidence of a radical shift in political sensibility in developed countries: environmental politics have to a large extent replaced the old class-based politics of left and right. Thirdly, we have been brutally reminded of other global projects, notably, of course, global terrorism and fundamentalism, which we tend to associate with the Muslim world but, if we are honest, can also be found in our own societies (think of the persistent controversies about abortion or stem cell research).

Out of these other (alternative) accounts of global challenges it is thus possible to construct what I like to call "Mode 2 globalisation". Much more prominent in Mode 2 globalisation is a preoccupation with culture, in particular with cultural "difference", and this can be reconciled with the imperatives of global integration, in other words, the classic humanistic project. Globalisation today feels, and is, quite different than it felt, and was, in 1997. The world changed at a stroke on 11 September 2001 (9/11) or, rather, that terrible event exposed aspects of our world which had always been there but had been forgotten in the naive optimism of the 1990s. Perhaps in retrospect that decade will be remembered as an exceptional time, after the social conflicts, as well as the old class-based politics – the "left" versus the "right" – which had dominated Europe since the French Revolution and before, had abated. It was also the end of the Cold War and the division of Europe but before new global conflicts, fuelled by belief, religion and inequality (and now frighteningly familiar), had become apparent.

So we live in a very different world than a decade ago, with its science, technology and consumer capitalism apparently more successful and dominant than ever, but now more deeply scarred by war, conflict, intolerance and fear. The apparently benign "identity politics" of the 1990s, preoccupied with playful experimentation in different lifestyles, have now been replaced by a much harsher version, which has become a matter of fundamental belief and even life and death (for instance in the Balkans or Chechnya in the 1990s and today in Iraq). Some have termed this a "clash of civilisations". For me this is much too simple because the clash is within societies, and even within the minds of individuals, rather than between societies. The "other" is within. Our Muslim fellow-citizens are too often the unfair focus

of this, but we should also consider Christian fundamentalists, predominantly in the United States, as well as populist responses to the challenges of immigration here in Europe. It is wrong, however, to focus exclusively on the dark side of 21st-century globalisation. Within these conflicts, the denial (or suppression) of which was a dishonest travesty, there is great potential for growth, for emancipation and enlightenment in terms which are entirely consistent with a humanistic project. There are more hopeful examples of societies which have confronted and managed (often with considerable success) fundamental transitions in which individual and group identities have been radically transformed. South Africa still comes to mind.

So what kind of characteristics should universities have to engage with Mode 2 globalisation or, rather, with alternative accounts of the global challenges we face today?

One has just been mentioned – a sensitivity to the "other" – and, therefore, a capacity to handle "difference", whether that is social, political, cultural, religious or, indeed, ideological "difference". If this becomes a more prominent requirement, while there is still a need for world-class universities, the nature of the research and scholarship they produce is subtly changed (or extended). Although the natural sciences, engineering and technology remain important, equally important are the social sciences and the humanities. Moreover the idea of what counts as "world class" may also change. For example, university business schools may need to pay as much attention to social enterprises as to global corporations. Thus, it is not simply the scope of "world-class" research that changes but also the criteria for deciding which research is indeed "world class".

A second characteristic, which is closely linked to the first, is a capacity to produce graduates able to develop a critical perspective on their own societies and who are well attuned to cultural "differences". The former (producing critical minds) has always been one of the traditional goals of a university education but, to some extent, it has been marginalised by the desire to see universities as commanding institutions in the "knowledge society" servicing its needs for a highly skilled workforce and research that can be put to direct economic use. The latter – the capacity to understand and respect other cultures – is perhaps less familiar. Both the universal claims of modern science and the equally universal claims of the Enlightenment, and now the assertions that we have reached the "end of history" and that there are no alternatives to western-style democracy and global capitalism, have made it difficult to generate such understanding and respect. Nevertheless, the multi-ethnic and multi-faith characteristics of most European societies – and, indeed, all western societies – have made this more urgent, more conflicted but also more possible than ever before.

The role of European universities

The third part of this argument is that European universities are not as badly equipped to meet these global challenges as is commonly supposed – certainly not

the challenges posed by Mode 2 globalisation which have just been described, but even the challenges of Mode 1 globalisation as well. American and British (and Irish) universities are over-represented in lists of the world's "top universities" and other European universities are under-represented, not because their courses and their research are inferior but because of the well-known "Anglophone" bias that can be observed in all these league tables. A telling piece of evidence is that Europe contains some of the most dynamic and innovative knowledge-based societies – Finland is an obvious example. If universities are key organisations in such societies, logic suggests that Europe must contain more leading universities than these crude league tables suggest. The alternative, of course, is to conclude that universities are less important than we suppose – a conclusion which it is difficult to accept.

However, it is necessary to concentrate not on European universities' capacity to meet the challenges of Mode 1 globalisation (although this capacity has been underestimated) but on their capacity to meet the challenges of Mode 2 globalisation. Perhaps more accurately, the focus should be on their capacity to meet the challenges of all aspects of globalisation, but especially those challenges that bridge the gap between these two main types. There are two main characteristics of European universities that distinguish them from universities in other regions.

The first is their "public" character. This may take the form of universities being state institutions as they are in most of Europe, although often in increasingly qualified ways that have distanced them in the actual state bureaucracies. Alternatively universities may be seen as public institutions in the sense that most of their funding comes from the state and they have a "public" character and espouse public-service values, as has always been the case in Britain and Ireland.

The second characteristic, of course, is linguistic diversity. Despite the trend in many non-Anglophone countries towards offering more courses taught in English (even in France there are more than 500) and despite the fact that the majority of scientific research is now published in English, European universities continue to provide most of their teaching in their own languages. The bulk of the research they produce, certainly in the humanities and social sciences, is also published in these languages. That will never change. By the time English ever becomes genuinely established as the lingua franca of globalisation, it may have to cede its place to Chinese – or some other world language.

Traditionally both these characteristics have been regarded as serious disadvantages. At a general level the predominantly "public" character of European higher education has been seen by many people as at odds with the spirit of the age, which gives pride of place to the "market" (and has consigned the welfare state to the dustbin of history, although, in practice, most European countries operate far more elaborate and expensive welfare states than they did in the 1960s or 1970s). More specifically, the fact that European universities, if not embraced within state bureaucracies, are nevertheless subject to a high degree of public regulation is seen as inhibiting their capacity to operate in a more flexible and entrepreneurial way. This has been

the justification for many of the reforms in the governance and administration of European universities, in effect to loosen the links between universities and the state, to "set them free" to respond to the "market". The second characteristic – linguistic diversity – is also often labelled as a deficit. It leads to increased transaction costs; it makes it more difficult to recruit international students; and it means that European university researchers have a lower profile (and, therefore, reputation?) than the quality of their work deserves.

Both these arguments can, however, be turned round and deficits redefined as assets. First, as regards the "public" character of European universities, two points must be emphasised.

The first point is that most higher education systems are "public" in character. Even in the United States 80% of students are in public institutions and it can be argued that the academic powerhouse of American higher education is not the "Ivy League" universities but the great land-grant universities like Michigan, Wisconsin and California, which, of course, are public institutions. The transatlantic view of American higher education also tends to exaggerate the national – if not the federal government – level which obscures the fact that the system is really made up of 52 state systems, often as highly regulated and bureaucratic as anything to be found in Europe. There is no example of a higher education system in a developed country where the core is not made up of public universities and countries with a significant number of private institutions are as likely to be European (especially central or eastern European since 1990). Europe is not an (anachronistic?) exception but very much the rule. Private institutions also fall into two very different types: well-established universities that are charities or not-for-profit foundations and are inherently no more entrepreneurial than public universities; and new institutions which are much more market-oriented but which operate on the fringes of higher education systems.

The second point is that a very important (and defining?) characteristic of the wider European project is its emphasis on the "social dimension". Admittedly what is meant by the "social dimension" is not always clear, but it seems to imply two things: first, the maintenance of a strong and healthy public sector; and, second, significant constraints on the behaviour of the private sector through effective forms of public regulation (in order to secure public goods, even in the context of the free market). The "social dimension" also applies to universities. Successive rounds of the Bologna Process have continued to emphasise this quality. Of course, the public sector is being reformed in many European countries and public institutions, including universities, are being encouraged to behave in more entrepreneurial ways (and occasionally bullied into it!). Public regulation is also often employed not to protect state monopolies but to ensure that markets operate freely and in a wider public interest. The "social dimension", however, which is characteristic of the evolution of most European institutions and is a historical tradition in the case of European universities, is very significant and also potentially highly attractive, especially in the context of Mode 2 globalisation.

The second defining characteristic of European universities is linguistic diversity, which is often seen as a handicap. Once again this can be seen in a much more positive light for two reasons.

The first is purely practical. The world is not about to adopt a lingua franca, whether English or any other language, in the future. We should not confuse the dominance of English in global financial markets, in the natural sciences or in some forms of popular culture with its de facto establishment as a lingua franca. English is not, and never will be, like Latin in the Roman Empire or the medieval church, the language of an elite that consigns all other languages to the status of local dialects. This is fortunate, even for Anglophones, because English is diminished not enhanced as a cultural instrument by its global reach and also because England is no longer really an Anglophone environment. Children in London schools speak more than 50 languages and this is also true in many other European cities. Finally it is important not to underestimate what has been called "Creolisation". This refers not just to the development of hybrid languages but also to the way the meanings of words change, often radically, in different linguistic milieus. All this complexity is difficult to capture from a monolingual perspective, which makes linguistic diversity a formidable asset.

The second reason why the linguistic diversity of European universities is potentially an asset is less direct, because it sees language as a proxy for cultural difference. It has already been argued that sensitivity to, and respect for, cultural differences are very important within the context of Mode 2 globalisation. It has always been recognised that learning another language is not a mechanical process, merely transposing one word with another; it is also an intellectual and cultural challenge that requires the learner to understand different patterns of thought, distinctive cultural references, all the nuances of humanity's most basic (but also most sophisticated) means of expression and communication. If these linguistic ideas are applied to the global environment and they are transferred to the plane of social, political, cultural and religious ideology, it is possible to construct a convincing argument that the historical traditions of European universities, especially their linguistic diversity, equip them better to engage with this complex, and conflicted, global environment.

Conclusion

Of course, it is wrong to be complacent. There are many things wrong with European universities, although, with hindsight, the Bologna Process is likely to be seen as a powerful process of reform and modernisation in European higher education. Nevertheless deficits remain. Often there continues to be an over-rigid distinction between traditional universities and other, usually more vocational, forms of higher education. This is perhaps an attempt to institutionalise the difference between, in the title of the Council of Europe project, "humanism" and the "market". If it is, it is a poor attempt because, as has been argued, there is (and always has been) a lot of "humanism" in the "market" and a lot of the "market" in "humanism". Twenty-first-century universities must be multitasking institutions, as committed

to engaging with urgent social agendas and meeting economic, and employment, needs as they have always been to the formation of elites and experts, the advance of science and the pursuit of scholarship.

However, if we see global challenges not simply in terms of neo-liberal economic policies, neo-imperialistic global brands or the triumph of science-driven technology (Mode 1 globalisation) but also in terms of other trends such as global resistances (peaceful or violent) to these trends or crises of individual and cultural identity (Mode 2 globalisation), then European universities are as well equipped as many, and better equipped than most, to meet these global challenges. And they can do so in ways that illuminate very well the tensions, but also the synergies, between the twin themes of "humanism" and the "market".

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New challenges to higher education: managing the complexities of a globalised society

Kathia Serrano-Velarde

Introduction

This article builds on my report as General Rapporteur of the conference on "New challenges to European higher education – managing the complexities of a globalised society", held at the Council of Europe headquarters in Strasbourg on 20 and 21 November 2007. This constituted the launching event of the Council of Europe's new flagship project in higher education entitled The University Between Humanism and the Market – Redefining its Values and Functions for the 21st Century. However, the article is not an attempt to summarise the conference. Rather, my approach is analytical and, with the benefit of the input from the conference, I seek to address the same key questions as the Council of Europe project mentioned above:

– What are the main challenges facing higher education and, in a broader sense, modern societies?

– What kind of higher education is needed to respond to these challenges?

– How should higher education be organised?

This new project of the Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) represents a renewal in the art of Council of Europe policy making. Previous projects have been organised around major topics, thus leading to synergies. The title of this conference was deliberately chosen to be broad, in order to invite open and comprehensive discussion about the future of European universities and to generate new input of ideas.

Indeed, the aim of the CDESR project is to take account of and critically discuss the full range of roles and functions higher education performs in modern societies. While it fully recognises the importance of higher education to economic development, it seeks to look beyond current policy debates and their excessive emphasis on economic issues. Rather, the goal is to reflect upon the missions and values of European higher education that are frequently overlooked in the political discussions and on the reform agenda. The flagship project also mirrors the new priorities of the overall Council of Europe agenda, which, since the Warsaw Summit in 2005, confirmed the promotion of intercultural dialogue as one of its key political objectives (Council of Europe 2005a, 2005b).

Consequently, the new flagship project aims to develop a fresh and novel reflection on policy issues. Most importantly, it will outline an action plan that will shape the future outlook of the Council of Europe's political activities in the realm of higher

education. With regard to this challenging agenda, the CDESR addresses not only new policy topics, but also a new and broader audience. Furthermore, it faces the political pressure to demonstrate the interest of the academic and political community in substantial questions relating to education politics and policy.

Without a doubt, the vivacity and productivity of the debates showed that there is an interest in a broad questioning of higher education values and missions all over Europe. Indeed, the excellent quality of the organisation, contributions and discussions confirmed that the CDESR has the experience and the know-how to make such an ambitious political endeavour work. Nevertheless, the careful observer might want to ask if the overarching framework of the conference and its generic outline does not lack somewhat in precision with regard to previous CDESR work in higher education policies (that is, qualifications frameworks, quality assurance). As to this point, the conference demonstrated – and this was observed on several occasions – a further need for structure and coherence. This can certainly be attributed to the novelty of the topic. Even though this first conference could be considered an initial general brainstorming, enabling the programme co-ordinators to identify the key questions of the debate, the challenge remained to organise future discussions so as to ensure the outcome of solid policy results. The conclusions of this conference will, to this effect, serve as a working base to devise future CDESR activities within the framework of the flagship programme.

The key issues under discussion

The first objective was to identify challenges to which higher education institutions and actors are supposed to respond:

- What are the challenges to societal sustainability modern societies and individuals have to cope with?
- What is the contribution of higher education to societal sustainability and what should it look like?
- What kind of challenges does higher education face in modern societies? How does it cope with them?
- What kind of knowledge/values does it require to enable people to take action in modern societies, at individual level and at the level of societies?
- How should higher education institutions proceed in the transmission of these forms of knowledge? (CDESR 2007).

One of the main outcomes of the November 2007 conference was to draw attention to the way risks and challenges are perceived and subsequently acted upon by policy makers, higher education leaders, academics and students. In fact, the conference challenged the very understanding of globalisation as a solely economic phenomenon by underlining the multidimensionality, multiplicity and complexity of global trends that no humanist or market interpretation of university action can live up to.

The participants clearly agreed that there was a risk that a one-sided view of problems will lead to one-sided and short-sighted solutions. Accordingly, adopting a differentiated approach to the perception of global trends, but also aiming for a broad inclusion of stakeholders and civil society in the discussion, conceptualisation and application of solutions is essential. In addition, a balance between omnipresent short-term decisions and necessary long-term reflections needs to be struck.

The aim of this article is threefold. First of all, we shall proceed to a review and systematic analysis of the main lines of argument brought forward during the conference. Secondly, we will try to find a link between what was discussed during the conference and the overall intentions of the Council of Europe in this regard, that is, to redefine the values and functions of a university trapped between an original humanist interpretation of its missions and omnipresent market forces. Thirdly, we will introduce follow-up conclusions summarising the major points raised within the framework of the conference. The conclusions will subsequently serve as a working basis for the further conceptual elaboration and organisation of this complex issue.

Humanist and market responses to global challenges

Humanist and market interpretations of higher education reality

The juxtaposition of the terms "humanism" and "market" refers to the well-known paradigm of tradition vs. modernity, old vs. new, stagnation vs. progress. The European university finds itself confronted with the need and, most importantly, the demand for reorientation. This is not a new situation as universities have always reacted to environmental pressures for change, and successfully so, as they are among the oldest organisations in the world (Durkheim 1990). Thus we might want to ask on what grounds are we recommending, today, a reorientation of this prestigious and long-standing institution:

– What makes the specificity of this situation with regard to historical precedence?
– How far should change go?
– Are the core missions of higher education under discussion or are we rather talking about a reorganisation of the academic project so as to enable higher education institutions to better perform their core functions?

The observation that higher education institutions are trapped between a humanist and a market definition of their activities drags our attention to the normative side of higher education reforms and onto the slippery slope of wishful thinking. What kind of higher education do we wish for our society? What kind of society do we wish for in general?[1] This point was raised several times in the discussion and is most vital to our understanding of the strategic options that university leaders, policy

1. At the conference this point was raised by Sjur Bergan, who referred to the Chilean sociologist Eugenio Tironi's assertion that the answer to the question: "What kind of education do we need?" is to be found in the answer to another question: "What kind of society do we want?"

makers, academics and students are facing. What we wish for makes us hypersensitive to some phenomena and blind to others. It acts as a lens through which we see the world, in this context the challenges to higher education, and serves as a framework within which we select solutions. Hence, not only do our expectations have an impact on our understanding of the world (and the challenges linked to it) but our way of perceiving challenges has direct effects on the decisions we take.

The conference and the discussion described in this article can be considered as a stepping stone to a hopefully critical, constructive and inspiring discussion on the future of European higher education institutions, based on a comprehensive understanding of the global challenges they face.

The missions of higher education: a brief history of ideas

Historically, the prime functions of higher education institutions for society were:

– the transmission of knowledge to the younger generation;
– the advancement of fundamental knowledge; and
– the qualification as well as the socialisation of the political and economic elite of the nation state.

If these were the generic missions of the university, their execution was subject to great variation – a variation which can be traced back to contextual specificities in handling accountability and sharing responsibility between higher education institutions, stakeholders and the state (Neave 2000; Weber & Bergan 2005).

We are living at a time when assumptions about the scope, organisation and execution of these missions are being reconsidered in the light of global trends. The conference participants identified the following challenges as having direct and profound effects on the way higher education is being organised, and voiced the need for a critical analysis and discussion of them:

– international market trends;
– migration;
– technological change;
– environmental threats; and
– global threats to the security of societies (i.e. terrorism).

On the basis of this statement, we would therefore ask for the following questions to be considered in the conceptualisation and organisation of future conferences and discussion forums:

– What kinds of challenges need some reaction from the higher education institutions?
– What should an active response to these challenges look like?
– How can higher education become active (again) in the way the future of societies is being shaped?

With regard to these questions, let us go back to our image of a university torn between humanism and the market. We shall argue that both humanist and market philosophies can be understood as an interpretative foil against which global challenges are perceived, as well as a repertoire of ready-made solutions. A one-sided view of either challenges or solutions could lead to great shortcomings in the way the complexity and diversity of global phenomena are being handled.

Both "market" and "humanism" represent, as we have said, ways of interpreting reality. They project visions of how universities should perform their tasks. Both visions have their specific views of universities' responsibility to society and inspire the action of decision makers. On the one hand we have the vision of an egalitarian and free community of learners and researchers involved in a perpetual quest for the truth and engaged in never ending loops of self-questioning, introspection and critical discussions. Thus, the university becomes a place of absolute freedom, a vacuum of constraints in which students and scholars can proceed to the perfection of their individual talents and become the kind of people they are predestined to be, that is, the kind of political and economic elite the nation state is aiming for. Whatever the time it takes, whatever the costs, it is the moral duty of the state to cover the bill for the socialisation and qualification of its "finest" citizens (von Humboldt 1910; Rothblatt & Wittrock 1993). On the other hand, we are confronted with the urgent observation that knowledge is vital to the welfare of a country. This vision of what has been termed the "entrepreneurial university" (Clark 1998) or "academic capitalism" (Slaughter & Larry 1997) stipulates a surprisingly concrete project for the realisation of an efficient and performing knowledge enterprise generating increasing output with decreasing input. Within this university model, higher education institutions release massive numbers of qualified and flexible graduates on the supposedly dynamic labour market and act as a source of innovation for industrial production.

As the reader might have gathered from our slightly caricatured description, it is our very understanding that both visions have grave shortcomings that render their truthful application a nightmare to policy makers, university leaders, academics and students.

Reorganising the university business: economic responses to global challenges

The second type of vision has gained more and more supporters among the European political elite, not least because of the prominent knowledge policies of the European Union Lisbon agenda and its goal to make "Europe the most competitive and dynamic knowledge economy of the world" (Council of the European Union 2000). Indeed, the market interpretation of higher education business seems to provide a better potential for tackling challenges that cross national borders. According to this new paradigm, universities can no longer live under the protection and patronage of the nation state and must find within themselves the means of managing their tasks in a globalised society. As Radu Damian maintained in the discussions: "Higher

education institutions have stopped being part of the welfare system to become active in the welfare of society."

This evolution needs to be seen against the backdrop of economic stagnation, financial cuts in public funding and a critique of state governance. Within this interpretative framework, higher education is thought of as a market of competing organisations, academics are considered to be entrepreneurs, students to be both clients and products of a new service sector. What might sound like an ideological statement carries, however, interesting meanings with regards to issues of protection of public as well as private interests (in this vein, often referred to as consumer protection or quality assurance), employability (qualifications frameworks, learning outcomes) and student mobility (ECTS,[2] the Diploma Supplement). As Edmund Cane reminded us, based on his experience from Albania, the economic appreciation of higher education has undoubtedly led to political and academic efforts for the realisation of so-called "(market) transparency". The idea of evaluating the quality of a certain production process in order to assure transnational comparability has for instance been vital to the success of the Bologna agenda and definitely needs to be furthered.

We are thus witnessing a redefinition of the place of universities in society from being an instrument for political integration within the nation state to becoming part of the production process of a transnational region.

Again, universities are engaged in an overall modernisation process. And this time again, the path of modernisation is paved with specific risks. If the risk entailed in the humanist inspired modernisation process turned out to be the growing discrepancy between academic life and the necessities of economic and political governance (in other words, the so-called "ivory tower" phenomenon), the risks attached to the market interpretation of modernisation are the negation of the social and human factor entailed in higher education (that is, the intrinsic motivations of academics and students, the economic disinterestedness of basic research and the transmission of universal and democratic values). Is it realistic to consider higher education as a perfectly rational process with a straightforward input-output correlation? Is it possible to say that academics are abruptly turning into *homo economicus*, their students into utility maximisers? We dare say that the market interpretation of higher education, however pragmatic and straightforward it might appear, especially in the shape of an elegant reform agenda, could prove as far from the ways of the world as the humanistic one.

Finally, the participants challenged the idea that most change has to be real-time, dynamic and quick and that institutions of international calibre, such as higher education institutions, have to perform accordingly. Indeed, promoting long-term visions and critical introspections could prove highly constructive in an age where time horizons are shrinking and simple solutions have the advantage.

2. European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.

Conclusions

The main points of the contributions

The conference had the great merit of relativising the power of market forces and of showing that global challenges were not only economic by nature, but that the answers currently remained phrased in economic terms. Thus, Peter Scott (this volume) called for a differentiated response to a complex and diverse panorama of challenges. Higher education should not only embrace the economic credo of competitiveness and efficiency, but also address the public and collectivist values of global social movements, as well as react to the sensitive issues of cultural divisions and conflicts. This way, universities will become the subjects and not only the objects of global challenges.

Caryn McTighe Musil (this volume) talks about the necessity of carrying out a policy debate on the values of cultural difference, diversity and their contribution to personal, societal and democratic development. She gave an inspiring account of the dynamic effects that the critical discussion on the values of cultural diversity and inclusion had on policy making in the United States and explained that these topics lead to passionate debates on how to make traditional values, such as "intercultural dialogue", work for decision makers.

Radu Damian and Edmund Cane,[3] in their vital contributions on higher education reforms in transition countries, underlined the dramatic role that higher education institutions, academics and, most importantly, students played in the articulation and diffusion of democratic values.

Mario Calderini questioned the simplistic vision of integrating higher education institutions in a linear and homogeneous production cycle of innovation, drawing our attention to the possible monopolisation of innovation research in Europe by a small number of research institutions. He also stressed the need for a careful action plan for the organisation of innovation and technology research, especially with regard to funding issues and study curricula, in European technical universities.

Questioning the European Union policy paradigm consisting in enlisting higher education institutions to assist the economic production of member states was also one of the key issues in the panel discussion. The round table discussion involved Andris Barblan (Magna Charta Observatory), Stef Beek (European Student Union), Radu Damian (Chair of the CDESR) and Pavel Zgaga (University of Ljubljana). Under the chairmanship of Germain Dondelinger (member of the bureau of the CDESR), they not only discussed the interaction of higher education with the political and industrial world, but also engaged in a profound and differentiated reflection on the notion of personal development. This key concept of the so-called *"Bildungsideal"* (Andris Barblan) is experiencing, nowadays, a constant tension

3. Speaking on behalf of Genc Pollo, Minister of Education of Albania, who was prevented from speaking at the conference by urgent legislative matters.

between universal and humanistic values on the one hand, and the reform driven necessity to formulate concrete learning outcomes on the other.

Explanatory comments on the conclusions

The conclusions of the conference take into account three major issues raised in the debates and the contributions.

First of all, the recommendations should take note of the complexity of global challenges and their economic, social and cultural dimensions.

Secondly, these recommendations should not only address policy makers and university leaders, but also academics and students as the ones who shape and enact academic life. Their political participation and cohesiveness is vital to the success of higher education institutions and their core missions in a global and complex environment. It is in this context that we would appeal for the participation, open dialogue and civic engagement that have been formulated throughout the conference (Kohler & Huber 2006).

Thirdly, the recommendations should support higher education institutions in their efforts to be responsive to external demands while giving them the means of mastering their fate and accomplishing their core functions, as well as enabling them to remain sheltered from too great an influence from external interests. Indeed they should be provided with sufficient means to enable them to develop their own vision and values as to what their roles and functions are and how they respond to global challenges, regardless of market expectations.

Conclusions as General Rapporteur

My 10 conclusions as General Rapporteur for the conference are organised in three subsets, each of them responding to one particular aspect of the conference:

– dealing with complexity – key concepts to the realisation of an inclusive debate;
– dealing with cultural diversity – fostering intercultural dialogue;
– taking action in a complex and globalised world – civic engagement and social responsibility.

They are neither comprehensive, nor do they mirror the richness and complexity of the discussions held within the framework of this conference or, of course, of the even greater richness of this set of issues. Rather, they should be seen as a discussion and working base for the structure of future debates and policy development.

1. Dealing with complexity

The key concepts for an inclusive debate involve:

– encouraging decision makers and stakeholders to take due account of the complexity of global challenges to higher education and their economic, political, social and cultural dimensions;

– engaging decision makers, stakeholders and civic society in an open debate on the nature of global challenges and the response required on behalf of higher education;
– furthering open, critical and differentiated discussions of higher education in the media;
– addressing the question as to how to design higher education budgets in order to deal with the complexity of a global environment (diversification, etc.).

2. Dealing with cultural diversity

Fostering intercultural dialogue can be carried out by:

– developing ways of coping with the diversification of the student body and the academic staff, the curriculum, the study content and steering devices (such as quality assurance);
– fostering intercultural dialogue within higher education and engaging in a common and dynamic effort to define a concrete and long-term action plan to this effect;
– working on the definition and application of intercultural and interdisciplinary competences and qualifications (especially with regard to language policies in academia).

3. Taking action in a complex and globalised world

Civic engagement and social responsibility can be facilitated by:

– considering higher education institutions as a platform and opportunity structure where ideas and opinions can and should be exchanged, attitudes be developed and action taken for the preservation of democracy;
– addressing the question as to how institutional autonomy can best be preserved in a society characterised by the increasing interdependence of actors from the public and the private sectors;
– supporting (interdisciplinary) research into the roles and the functions of higher education in modern societies and its contribution to social cohesion and intercultural dialogue.

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Multilingualism, multiculturalism and autonomy

Andrei Marga

Introduction

In Europe as a whole and in many countries of the continent, multilingualism represents the de facto situation. Especially after 1989, against the background of liberalisations and of the broadening of citizens' freedoms, minorities are searching for their cultural identity, so that multiculturalism has gained ground and requires new approaches. The various communities that have discovered or rediscovered their own identity are claiming autonomy. Different European countries and the European Union today seek a balanced solution that would allow for the unrestrained expression of their specific differences, at the same time avoiding fragmentation.

Allow me firstly to evoke the fundamental issues resulting from the multilingual situation and from multiculturalism and the pursuit of autonomy, and the approach that I find appropriate. It is understood that my observations emerge from the organisation of a multicultural university (Babeş-Bolyai University of Cluj) and from experiencing transition within a multilingual and multicultural region (Transylvania) in Romania. After I have briefly characterised multilingualism and noted the problems that derive from it, I will emphasise the challenges of multiculturalism and clarify the connotation of autonomy.

Multilingualism and its challenges

Europe is characterised by multilingualism not only in the sense that it is linguistically diversified. Throughout our continent, over 50 official or semi-official languages are spoken, and many more dialects have been used as well. Multilingualism is a characteristic of many European countries, where natural languages resulting from a complex history are diversified.

Certainly, Europe and most European countries are not only multilingual. On the grounds of multilingualism people find common languages, so that linguistic unity is constantly preserved not only by the relatedness of different languages, as branches of a common linguistic family (which is the case for most but not all languages spoken in Europe), but also by the factual reality of inter-lingual understanding. This understanding is made possible due to the common educational tradition in different European countries, based on acquiring practical skills, cognitive competencies and civic virtues.

It must be noted that multilingualism is, in present-day Europe, not only a reality with historical origins, but also a choice in the making of the European Union. It preserves its multilingual character, even if there is a lingua franca, for the main

reason to ensure the conditions for self-expression for each and every citizen of the continent, but also to satisfy the need to adjust to the conditions of activity in the different regions of Europe. From the latter point of view, that of adaptability to these conditions, "multilingualism concerns every citizen", not only those with an education in language teaching.

I believe that, in the last decade, the European institutions and the professional associations of those involved in language teaching have drawn up a coherent position on multilingualism and on the practical activities necessary for its promotion. I emphasise that I share the deep concern of the Council of Europe with "developing the individual's capacity for participation in the democratic process" as part of "education for democratic citizenship" (Little 1999). The Lisbon Strategy (2000) follows the same lines when it speaks of adapting "education and training to the demands of knowledge society" and the focus on new basic skills, which include IT skills, foreign languages, technological culture, entrepreneurship and societal skills. The concept of the "multilingual economy" signals a new link between languages and the economy. It is a realistic aspect of the Bologna Declaration (1999) that higher education should be oriented towards training graduates for the European labour market. It is important that the European associations of language teachers carry out strategies to promote multilingualism: the early teaching of foreign languages, the acquisition of partial competences, exchanges and mobility, and innovative methods (for example, interactive learning, computer assisted language learning, new educational environments, multilingual education (Bestoud 2003)). As a result of these choices and approaches, multilingualism has become an effective and specific policy for many European universities and schools, a policy whose results are significant.

The challenges of multiculturalism

Sometimes, multilingualism broadens to multiculturalism, at other times linguistic differences occur within the same culture. If by "culture" we understand historical affiliations, general perspectives on the world, religious traditions or language that sets an ethnic community apart, and if by "ethnic community" we designate a community built up over a succession of generations, in a certain territory, with its own history and language, then we encounter multiculturalism – in a strong sense – when, on the same territory, different ethnic communities with a historically acknowledged culture can be found. This conception of multiculturalism is different in major aspects from the situation arising from the claim to collective cultural recognition of the groups of immigrants from different countries (Salat 2001: 86-100). When we talk of multiculturalism in Europe we use the term in this sense, understood as a plurality of historical cultures, linked to "ethno-cultural" profiles, coexisting on the same territory.

It also must be added that, regardless of the ways in which the borders of some regions of Europe are drawn, the resulting entities are without exception multicultural, as in these regions different cultures cohabit in the same territory. For this

reason, the issue in question is the adequate shaping of cultural cohabitation and interaction. Consequently, whereas multilingualism mostly entails measures regarding the professional training and its certification and recognition, multiculturalism brings about beliefs influencing the organisation of the modern state and has a pre-eminent legal facet. Let us tackle the issue of multiculturalism from its roots, in the European environment following 1989.

The politics of equal dignity (Taylor 1994: 107; Marga 1997) assumed as a basis for the modern state the universalisation of equality among people as citizens. But in recent decades it is in the name of the equal dignity of citizens that ethnic communities are claiming the right to assert their cultural specificity and, consequently, the right to cultural differentiation. The historical situation, at least in some eastern European countries, points to the following state of affairs: the advocates of the traditional nation state who adhere to the politics of equal dignity in terms of the equality of citizens and the avoidance of particularised enclaves are at odds with those who promote the assertion of the specific cultural character of ethnic communities and who defend the politics of difference, even if the latter might mean a change, and possibly a collapse, of existing state organisation.

Certain approaches to this problem are designed to avoid such a conflict. The first of these, one that is organised around a renaissance of the nation state, concedes that civic nationalism, stimulating a commitment to exemplary liberties and performances, can continue as a real alternative to the kind of nationalism which is being manipulated by demagogues (Boudin 1992). However linked it may be to the nation state that tends to neglect cultural differences, it can hardly be generalised and implemented. Moreover, it cannot cope with the globalising tendencies that already characterise the economy, communications and scientific research of our time.

The approach of the new pluralism endorses cultural pluralism, but outstrips the passivity that characterises laissez-faire attitudes by laying emphasis on the unlimited autonomy of ethnic communities and on the improvement through democratic procedure of their representation in the state (Phillips 1993: 156). The new pluralism brings to the fore the recognition of cultural diversity by steering it towards the implementation of the solution shared by society and it is meant to protect the culturally specific character of ethnic communities. The practical problem that this kind of pluralism has to cope with does not characterise pluralism, but remains open, that is, the generation of cultural diversity not as diversity in itself but as a diversity which is recognised by the communities that interact.

Federalism represents an approach that has resources which enable a true cultural and recognisable diversity without jeopardising the political equality that the modern state guarantees (Kosselek 1994: 76). It is unlikely, however, that federalism will succeed in areas that have not been historically prepared for it and that do not have the cultural premises to support it.

For the time being, and as a reaction to the forced homogenisation undertaken by the nation state, minority ethnic communities are promoting the politics of difference

and cultivating tolerance. By tolerance in this context we do not mean the structural tolerance of the modern state with regard to individualism, but rather tolerance in regard to different cultures. Thus, on the very territory of the modern state, the post-modern principle of the pre-eminence of difference is promoted through the approach to the relationship between the modern state and the multiculturalism with which it is confronted (Walzer 1994: 17). It is likely that this difference will remain frail as long as it does not embody the guarantees of the modern state based on the politics of equal dignity.

"Substantive liberalism" tackles the problem from the deeper stratum of the conditions provided by the modern state for the assumption of liberties. While "procedural liberalism" treats the "other" fairly, substantive liberalism prevents the current tendency for liberalism to equalise and homogenise, while giving up neutrality and becoming a fighting creed. It does not denounce the principle of equal respect and equal rights but concedes the legitimacy of certain goals such as the assertion of a culturally specific character (Taylor 1994). Substantive liberalism, driven to its ultimate consequences, is going through a radicalised enlightenment, one that is the most directly committed means for it to find a way out of the challenge of the modern state through the politics of difference that it legitimises.

According to this approach, the politics of difference can be assumed to stem from the politics of equal dignity. They start from the idea that the modern state encompasses, in its historical evolution, not only the positive law that provides individual liberties but also the possibility to assume these liberties so as to make cultural differences possible (Habermas 1994). We agree that intercultural understanding is rife with difficulties. However, to abandon or to restrict individual rights as they are designated by the modern state is not a solution. The legality and, more precisely, the generality of the law remain the indispensable foundation for problem solving, but the legal approach must obviously be endorsed by awareness of its assumptions. In this respect, collective rights ought to be recognised without any curtailing of the individualistic structure of legislation. Legislation itself should be conceived not only as a package of positive laws, but as an expression of certain political (in the classical sense) and cultural objectives. Moreover, according to the conditions of cohabitation, each of the cultures that make up a multicultural society must be open to examination for, ultimately, a culture is strong provided it is periodically revised (Habermas 1994).

Autonomy

Autonomy is the current aim of cultural communities and of professional groups. In the life of universities, autonomy represents a condition for efficiency, together with taking responsibility for performance. Etymologically, autonomy means to make your own "law" (*nomos*) for your own actions. How is it possible for autonomy to work in a multicultural environment, considering the circumstances that, on the one hand, for multiculturalism to be present, the various coexisting cultures must freely express themselves and, on the other hand, that multiculturalism disappears

when the diversity of cultures vanishes into self-isolation of the respective cultures? Multiculturalism takes its full sense as interculturalism. In fact, multiculturalism is as far from hegemony as it is from fragmentation. How is a functional multicultural organisation put into practice?

The example of Babeş-Bolyai University

Allow me to express some thoughts on the basis of the multilingual and multicultural organisation of Babeş-Bolyai University, a particularly comprehensive university, having over 45 000 students, situated in the multilingual and multicultural context of Transylvania. This area has been subject to successive international evaluations (starting with the evaluation of the High Commissioner on National Minorities of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe – OSCE). The multicultural organisation was set up in 1995 with the new charter of the university, which drew on the entire history of the region and showed that, in Cluj, no form of university organisation conceived on the basis of one culture/language rather than another proved to be long lasting. The charter proclaimed the trilingual organisation (in Romanian, Hungarian and German) of the most representative university of Transylvania, as well as taking into account the entire academic history in Cluj. The 1995 charter set Babeş-Bolyai University on the track of trilingual and multicultural development.

The synthesis of the results achieved through multicultural development is that, from then on, no complaint regarding any limitation of rights on cultural or ethnic grounds was presented. There were several proposals for the development of the multicultural organisation, but not complaints regarding limitations as to access. On the contrary, never before have so many Romanians studied at the main university of Transylvania; never before have so many Hungarians studied there; never before have there been more opportunities for studying in German; never before has the history and the culture of the Jewish people been so broadly studied and the opportunities for studying Hebrew been greater. Never before has there been such a diversified range of specialisations ensuring complete programmes in Romanian, in Hungarian and in German.

This encouraging result was possible by making use of the framework created by university autonomy in order to develop new agreements regarding the expression of autonomy of the Romanian, Hungarian and German lines of study, and of the faculties and chairs, according to the legal provisions in force, the latter being themselves in constant motion. The Act of Education (1995) in Romania and the subsequent legal provisions in the field decide on such issues as the name of a university (as concerns state universities), the official language for certificates of study (which is, increasingly, English), the mechanisms of financing (in principle, per capita) and the amount of budgetary allocation. Babeş-Bolyai University enjoys autonomy concerning the establishment of its own organisation and functioning, freedom of research and of transfer of knowledge, the freedom to set up scientific research programmes, the choice of criteria for granting academic titles, the freedom

to publish, the freedom to carry out international co-operation programmes, and the independent management of resources, endowment and heritage (Carta Universității Babeş-Bolyai 2003: Article I). Within Babeş-Bolyai University, the lines of study (Romanian, Hungarian and German) – whose leaders function at chair, faculty and university level, and are elected by the teaching staff and the students of the respective line of study – have effective autonomy. The autonomy of the lines of study consists of the right to choose their own representatives at any level of the organisation; the right to establish their own curricula according to European criteria; the right to hire their own teaching and research staff; the right to decide on the admission of students to their line of study; the right to decide on their scientific research programmes; the right to initiate and carry out international co-operation; the right to initiate publications and to publish; the right to have inscriptions in the respective language, according to the legal provisions in force; and the right to participate in any decision taken at Babeş-Bolyai University. These rights are reinforced by the 2003 charter of Babeş-Bolyai University (Carta Universității Babeş-Bolyai 2003: Section III.I.4), which defends a rational, modern link between the unity of the higher education institution and its internal differentiation.

Babeş-Bolyai University has 21 faculties, over 120 specialisations, 110 departments and variable numbers of students enrolling, in a demographic context where the proportion represented by ethnic communities varies as well. The representation of the teaching staff and of students in the committees formed at faculty level, in the University Senate and in the Rector's Office, in the Academic Council and in the Board of Administration combines the proportional reflection of the different lines of study with institutional measures (such as paritary committees) so that viable projects, even if they are initiated by a proportionally smaller line of study (according to the number of students and the size of teaching staff), can be promoted. There has never been a situation where a project is rejected for the reason that the line of study promoting it does not hold the numerical majority.

The fourteen-year experience of multicultural organisation at Babeş-Bolyai University permits the reaffirmation of certain conclusions (Marga 1998) reached through local experience and through international experience as well.

– Multicultural organisation in universities depends on state policies and on the capacity of politicians to elaborate a conception focused on multiculturalism.

– Multiculturalism is a fact that must be admitted and assumed, and the problem of joining together the politics of equal dignity and the politics of difference is of paramount importance for multicultural societies.

– The politics of difference are realistic only as a consequence of the politics of equal dignity that derive from the sense of positive law.

– Multiculturalism conceived in this way prevents the dangers inherent to ethnic nationalism and the fragmentations that eventually destroy the politics of equal dignity.

– A solution based on the use of force (physical or public) is counterproductive to the same extent as it is counterproductive to constrain the universality of liberties through attempts at enclaving.
– No lasting solutions can be found for the institutionalisation of multiculturalism without the step-by-step negotiation of specific arrangements.
– It is a true cultural challenge of our times to diffuse an approach to social reality in which cultural differences do not imply the limitation of personal identity but an impetus for performance and, in fact, a source of wealth, and to switch from "ethnic nationalism" to "civic nationalism" and, broadly speaking, from "historical patriotism" to "constitutional patriotism", from a "national paradigm" to a "European paradigm".

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Internationalisation of higher education: a perspective beyond economics

Sjur Bergan

Even if globalisation and internationalisation, along with a strong demand for competences in foreign languages and cultures, have increased strongly over the past decade or two, the fact that internationalisation of higher education has become a burning issue of policy and practice in the first decade of the 21st century may seem like something of a paradox. After all, the international nature of higher education is nothing new. Rather, it has been an integral part of the European concept and tradition of higher education since the setting up of the first universities in the 11th and 12th centuries, to such an extent that the international nature of universities was taken for granted (Sanz & Bergan 2006).

Nevertheless, the renewed focus on internationalisation is real, and the publication of a handbook on internationalisation by a prominent European educational publisher in co-operation with two leading non-governmental organisations (NGOs) in the area (Gaebel et al. 2008) is an example of this trend. Further examples are provided by the activities of the Academic Cooperation Association (ACA) and the fact that the European Association for International Education (EAIE),[4] in addition to the obvious focus of its general activities as indicated by its name, has special groups for international relations managers and on "internationalisation at home". The adoption, in 2007, of a strategy for the European Higher Education Area in a global setting (Bologna Process (2007)) by the ministers responsible for the Bologna Process is yet another example.

What is, then, the rush to internationalise, some eight or nine centuries after the setting up of the first universities, an institution that from the outset was international by definition? To start answering this question, it may be useful to observe that the question is not about higher education being international per se, but rather about its internationalisation. This indicates not a natural state of affairs but rather a process or a policy. Thus, internationalisation is an issue of institutional policy as well as of public policy for the higher education sector as a whole. The actors in this policy process – or maybe we should stick to the plural and refer to policy processes – are legion and span from departments within higher education institutions through faculties and institutions to public authorities and even to actors at European and international level. Internationalisation is not only for the larger classical universities: smaller and highly specialised higher education institutions also have internationalisation policies.

4. For further information see http://www.eaie.org/.

The context of internationalisation of higher education in Europe

This internationalisation takes place in a specific context, which is of course very different from that of the earliest universities, when higher education was for an elite and all-male at that, when it prepared students for a narrow range of employment (hence the fact that most early universities focused on the regulated professions of theology, medicine and the law in addition to philosophy and other *artes liberales*, which were generally seen as preparing for professional studies).

Today's internationalisation takes place in a context of mass higher education, with most European countries now even beyond the stage of mass higher education, defined as one in which the gross enrolment rate is between 16% and 50%. With the exception of some 9 or 10 countries, all European countries now have "universal" higher education, defined as a gross enrolment rate of more than 50% (Usher 2009: 76-79).

Higher education is "mass" also in the sense that it no longer prepares for just a few professions, mainly in public or Church service. Higher education is essential to all sectors of the economy, in preparing for employment, in developing and updating the competence of those already employed and also, through research and development, in developing new knowledge and understanding that drives economic development. While much research is conducted outside of universities, whether in specialised research institutes or in commercial companies, what has come to be termed the knowledge economy could not have been developed without the key contribution of higher education.

The economic role of higher education is further underlined by the European Union's Lisbon strategy, which calls on the European Union to become "the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, capable of sustained economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" (Lisbon European Council 2000). Even if many considered this an overly ambitious goal, and even if the sceptics are likely to be proven right since we are now almost at the end of the decade for which the goals were set, it is clear that European economies cannot be competitive without being both knowledge based and international. It may be another characteristic of our modern European societies that while legislation is mostly national, with the exception of EU legislation and certain international treaties, and political space is largely but not exclusively national, the economic space is, like research, overwhelmingly international. Higher education, therefore, cannot fulfil its economic role unless it internationalises. This corresponds to what Peter Scott calls "Mode 1 globalisation" (Scott 2010).

At the same time, there is discussion of whether the world is really "flat" (Friedman 2006) or whether the particularities, including different political and legal contexts as well as cultural traditions, constitute mountains, valleys and other possible barriers that may be more or less difficult to bypass. There is, however, little doubt that the world has rapidly become "smaller" and that for all except the most isolated communities in geographically inaccessible regions, interaction with the rest of the

world is not optional but already a reality. Globalisation is not necessarily a new phenomenon (Robertson 2003), but it is much more pervasive than ever before.

Modern communication puts most of the world within easy reach for most inhabitants, whether through travel, the exchange of goods or the dissemination of information. This has negative aspects, such as the rapid dissemination of epidemic disease, as well as positive aspects, such as the possibility to experience other cultures and the relative inability of totalitarian regimes to entirely block the flow of information between their own citizens and the rest of the world. Some aspects of globalisation can be positive and negative at the same time. The loss of traditions and languages is a loss to the diversity of humankind, but at the same time breaking out of the isolation of small communities and receiving impulses from the broader world is of benefit to many individuals. The ideal would be to break out of isolation without losing one's original language and consciousness of one's ancestral traditions[5] but in practice this is often difficult.

A number of "big issues", such as climate change, can only be addressed through international co-operation. The issue is not whether globalisation is positive or negative, but how its negative aspects can be reduced and its positive aspects enhanced. A debate on "stopping globalisation" is, in this author's view, both misguided and naïve, and it overlooks the positive potentials of increased global interaction at the expense of only drawing attention to the negative. On the other hand, all-out globalists who downplay the real reasons for concern are hardly doing globalisation a service.

It is also worth emphasising that while the strong economic role of higher education is not disputed, some, including the present author (Bergan 2005, 2006), question the almost exclusive emphasis on the economic function in the public discourse on higher education, at least in Europe, to the detriment of a consideration also of the other missions of higher education. While detailed definitions may differ, there seems to be broad agreement that the main missions of higher education include, in addition to preparing for employment, preparing for life as active citizens in democratic societies, personal development and the development and maintenance of a broad, advanced knowledge base (Bergan 2005; Council of Europe 2007).

The question is not whether higher education has an important role to play in the economy, but to what extent public policies and public discourse should also emphasise its other missions. The idea of "converging competences" is precisely this: a set of competences serve several purposes, and the full range of purposes must be taken into account when defining the competences with which higher education should provide learners. In the same vein, internationalisation policies for higher education must aim to further the full range of purposes and provide learners with opportunities to develop varied – in effect, converging – competences.

5. The term "consciousness of one's ancestral traditions" is used deliberately, as not all traditions are actually worth conserving. Think, for example, of the strongly patriarchal structure and customs of many traditional societies or rites of passage inflicting corporal harm on participants.

Internationalising higher education

This, then, is the context of internationalisation of higher education. There is broad agreement on the key role of higher education in furthering economic development even if there may be considerable disagreement as to how well higher education performs in this regard today and what needs to be done to improve its performance. There is also broad agreement that economic development requires engagement in the international arena, and that higher education cannot fulfil its role unless it also internationalises. There is also tacit agreement that higher education fulfils missions beyond those of economic development, and this has been explicitly accepted in the two latest communiqués of the ministerial meetings of the Bologna Process (London 2007 and Leuven/Louvain-la-Neuve 2009). At the same time, European public discourse on higher education strongly emphasises its economic function and is economical in its reference to the other missions.

That internationalisation is a question of policies and measures is demonstrated by both institutional, national and European policies and programmes. The best known are the large scale mobility programmes, which have helped develop the profile of the "typical" international student from a free mover taking all or at least a substantial part of his or her education in a foreign country to a student studying at a foreign institution for a part of his or her degree programme (often a semester or a year) under a programme established by national authorities or international bodies. Free movers[6] of the classical type are by no means an endangered species, but the proportion of free movers diminishes as the overall number of international students increases. No other programmes have reached the size of the Erasmus programme of the European Union, which is now being supplemented by an Erasmus-Mundus programme aimed at improving mobility between the European Union and other parts of the world. The EU programmes have been supplemented by regional schemes, such as Nordplus established by the Nordic Council of Ministers for the five Nordic countries and later extended to encompass also the Baltic countries, and the Ceepus programme for Austria and a number of countries in South-Eastern Europe. The EU Commission has also put in place co-operation programmes with specific parts of the world, such as the Alfa programme for higher education co-operation with Latin America.

National governments have also established internationalisation programmes for higher education, as exemplified by schemes like the United Kingdom's "Prime Minister's Initiative", Germany's "Study in Germany" or France's "CampusFrance", as well as organisations like Germany's DAAD, Austria's ÖAAD, Denmark's Cirius, Finland's CIMO or Nuffic in the Netherlands (Bologna Process 2009). National policies have also been expressed in government papers, such as the Norwegian White Paper on the internationalisation of education (Kunnskapsdepartementet 2009).

6. A free mover is a student moving on his or her own accord, without the benefit of organised mobility programmes.

Internationalisation beyond economics

All of the policies and initiatives outlined emphasise the importance of internationalisation in an economic context but also underline the benefit of internationalisation in allowing participants to broaden their horizons, as well as to learn foreign languages. Even if economic considerations dominate the public debate, this should not be understood to imply that other considerations are entirely absent, and the Norwegian White Paper makes explicit reference to the importance of intercultural dialogue. Nevertheless, given the tenor of the discussion, this article will explore other aspects of and reasons for internationalisation. This is very much in line with the Council of Europe's overall political priorities: democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It should, however, not be taken to imply that economic considerations are not important. Rather, the present article is an attempt to complement the frequently discussed economic importance of higher education and its internationalisation by a consideration of other aspects. In Peter Scott's terminology, the present article will address internationalisation as an aspect of "Mode 2 globalisation".

Intercultural dialogue

In addition to the three traditional "pillars" of the Council of Europe's *raison d'être* – democracy, human rights and the rule of law – the past few years has seen increasing emphasis on a fourth element: intercultural dialogue. This led to the adoption of a White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue by the Committee of Ministers in 2008 (Council of Europe 2008). It is significant that the sub-title of the White Paper is "Living together as equals in dignity". This emphasis is a fitting starting point for a fuller consideration of the internationalisation of higher education.

A world in which international contacts, exchanges, co-operation and competition are a part of everyday life cannot thrive without being able to conduct intercultural dialogue, which the Council of Europe White Paper describes as follows:

> For the purpose of this White Paper, intercultural dialogue is understood as a process that comprises an open and respectful exchange of views between individuals and groups with different ethnic, cultural, religious and linguistic backgrounds and heritage, on the basis of mutual understanding and respect. It requires the freedom and ability to express oneself, as well as the willingness and capacity to listen to the views of others. Intercultural dialogue contributes to political, social, cultural and economic integration and the cohesion of culturally diverse societies. It fosters equality, human dignity and a sense of common purpose. It aims to develop a deeper understanding of diverse world views and practices, to increase co-operation and participation (or the freedom to make choices), to allow personal growth and transformation, and to promote tolerance and respect for the other (Council of Europe 2008, Section 3.1).

In a world in which international contacts, co-operation and competition are the norm rather than the exception, an understanding of other cultures and sensitivity to their concerns and values are essential. Our societies cannot survive if they are unaware of other cultures and constantly surprised by the reactions of others to positions and values that we take as self evident in the light of our own cultural

background. The famous controversy over the "Danish cartoons" illustrated that the strength of feeling the cartoons gave rise to in the Muslim world came as a surprise. The "cartoons crisis" also illustrated, however, that sensitivity to perceptions is not a one-sided issue: those who professed the strongest outrage at the cartoons showed a similar lack of understanding of the strength of feelings about the liberty of expression in European societies. The point, therefore, is not that intercultural dialogue should require any society to give up its cherished values but rather that these should, as far as possible, be asserted in ways that take account of other cultures.

The internationalisation of higher education should help raise awareness among graduates of the main issues at stake and not least raise awareness of the need to assess possible reactions. In some cases, one may consider that a point is worth making also in the face of strong reactions, but there is a world of difference in making the decision to go ahead in spite of anticipated reactions and not giving thought to possible reactions in the first place. Higher education should help train its graduates to see the difference. In criticising the practices of other cultures, one should stop to ask: "How would I feel if someone criticised my culture in those same terms? Is there a different way of making my point?"

Multiperspectivity

Regardless of whether the world is "flat" or not, contact with other countries and cultures is not optional. Even those who live in peripheral localities and whose work and frames of reference are mainly linked to their native culture will at some point in their lives interact with people from different cultural backgrounds, as will the communities and countries of which they are a part. Intercultural dialogue and democratic citizenship are not one and the same, but they have many elements in common. They both require a set of competences that include the ability to communicate with others, to listen as well as to speak, to accept that other points of view may be as valid as one's own and that conflicts should be resolved through peaceful and democratic means. They also require the ability to analyse issues from different points of view, which the Council of Europe in its work on history teaching has described as "multiperspectivity" (Council of Europe 2001; Stradling 2001).

In history teaching, the point that no country has developed in isolation from its neighbours and that others – neighbours and those further away – may legitimately hold dissenting views of the history of one's own country has been accepted in principle, even if accepting this in practice has sometimes proven difficult when the principle is applied to the more painful part of history of which no country is entirely devoid. It is much easier to flag one's heroes than one's villains. To take an example from Norway, my own country of origin, it is much easier to refer to Fridtjof Nansen, who was not only a natural scientist, Arctic explorer and something of a sports hero but also a diplomat and prominent in the efforts by the League of Nations to help refugees in the aftermath of the First World War, than to Vidkun Quisling, who was one of Nansen's assistants in the League of Nations efforts but who then went on to become the archetypical traitor during the Second World War

by collaborating with the Nazi occupation, to the extent that his name has become a common noun for traitor in several languages.[7] That Norwegians are after all relatively open in discussing Quisling is possibly due to the fact that he is seen as a representative of an alien regime rather than as a home grown phenomenon and that the number of those who sided openly with the Nazi occupation through membership of Quisling's party was sufficiently small to define them as falling outside of the group of "good Norwegians". Had Quisling been a civil war leader in a divided nation, open discussion would have been much more painful.

What is true for history is equally true for other areas of education and research. Literature, arts, social conditions and habits, values and religious views have benefited from external influences over centuries, and it is difficult to think of a single thriving culture that has not received strong impulses from outside.

Democratic culture

In addition to preparation for the labour market, which is in itself difficult to conceive of without exposure to international perspectives, preparation for active citizenship is a key function of higher education. There are strong historical precedents for exchange of democratic ideas across borders. The American Revolution, which is the slightly misleading but commonly used name for the movement leading to the Declaration of Independence and the US Constitution,[8] was strongly influenced by European ideas, and in its turn the US Constitution exercised profound influence on many European and other constitutions. The Latin American independence movement also drew strong inspiration from both the United States and Europe. No modern democracy can thrive on inbreeding, and education plays a key role in developing democratic culture.

The concept of democratic culture is relatively new: to this author's knowledge it was used in an authoritative text for the first time in the Action Plan adopted by the Council of Europe's Third Summit of Heads of State and Government in Warsaw (Council of Europe 2005). We have been used to thinking of democracy in terms of institutions and legislation, an extreme version of which is to consider that as long as elections are held, citizen engagement between elections is a lesser concern. The concept of democracy as an electoral exercise and little more was not uncommon until at least a generation ago.

The concept of democratic culture takes a different approach. It underlines that democratic institutions and democratic legislation can only function if they are rooted in a democratic culture which accepts the right of others to express their views, which accepts that views at variance with one's own may be equally valid

7. One resistance joke during the Second World War had Quisling arriving to visit Hitler and announcing himself to the guards by saying "I am Quisling", to which the guard replied: "Yes, I know, but what is your name?"
8. The question of whether the American Revolution was indeed a revolution requires more nuanced consideration than can be provided in a one liner (Ellis 2008).

and sometimes superior, which accepts that conflicts and disputes should be resolved peacefully through democratic means and which accepts that debates should be resolved by the strength and validity of one's arguments. This view of democracy emphasises participation and deliberation (Gutmann & Thompson 2004). In modern societies, democratic debate cannot stop at national borders, nor can the validity of an argument be based on its origin. An education aiming to develop democratic culture must perforce take an international perspective. Incidentally, high participation and open debate are not automatically linked. Mid-19th century United States was a society in which political debate was highly valued and sophisticated, with a frame of reference that went well beyond the United States, but participation in both debate and elections was limited, even if it was possibly broader than in most European societies of the same age (Kearns Goodwin 2006). Classical Athenian democracy was also based on active participation by a relatively limited group of male citizens, but its historical importance was nevertheless profound.

At the same time, it is important to underscore that the respect for the views of others that comes with an international perspective is not a prescription for moral relativism. Saying that others may be right is not the same as saying all views are equally valid. There are such things as good and evil, and examples of both can be found in most countries. An international orientation requires that one have a reflected view of one's own values, in the same way that it is easier to master a foreign language well if one has good mastery of one's native language(s).

Some values are absolute, and the Council of Europe points in particular to those enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights. Internationalisation of higher education with a view to developing citizenship competences must therefore also include a thorough consideration of values. In this context, it may be useful to point out that while the forms and manifestations of democracy evolve the basic value of democracy remains. As underlined by the Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR 2006):

> Intercultural dialogue must be founded on a firm and well reflected set of values as well as on a willingness to consider the values of others and to reassess one's own convictions in the light of new and convincing evidence. Dialogue presupposes openness of mind in all partners, including the capacity to look at their own values and frame of reference with critical distance. These are also essential values and characteristics of higher education.
>
> European higher education is based on the conviction that each human being has intrinsic value as an individual, and also that each human being is inherently responsible for the development and well-being of other human beings, of human society as a whole and of the environment on which we depend for our survival.
>
> The CDESR is committed to the Council of Europe's key values – human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In this context, the CDESR sees the main contribution of higher education – as well as the main contribution of other areas of education – as helping develop, maintain and transmit to new generations the democratic culture which is indispensable to making democratic institutions and democratic laws work and to make democratic societies sustainable.

Language

Multiperspectivity is helped by knowledge of languages and here, higher education is faced with a fundamentally difficult issue. Saying that we cannot all learn all languages is stating the obvious and English now has a position as an international lingua franca that is unrivalled in history.[9] Offering higher education courses only in English has a number of practical advantages, including the fact that it is the language of instruction most likely to be understood by local and foreign students alike, and there is an increasing trend towards the use of English at the expense of almost all other foreign languages, as well as sometimes at the expense of local languages.

The development towards broad use of English as not only *a* but *the* lingua franca does, however, also raise some problematic issues. They may perhaps best be described by the saying that whoever knows only his mother's tongue is limited to his mother's world. Without in any way wanting to diminish the importance of translations, knowing a number of foreign languages opens multiple perspectives that no translation can do. One of the thrills of learning a foreign language is to discover that the same concept can be expressed in different ways, and also to discover that certain concepts cannot be easily translated. Germanic languages use varieties of "I am right" or "I have right", whereas Romance languages prefer to say that "I have reason". Norwegian had a particular term for a bishop's wife (*bispinne*), which has now gone out of use, but which is of course inconceivable in a Catholic or Orthodox context where bishops – in the Catholic Church, other clergy too – are celibate. Several Slavic languages have masculine and feminine forms not only of common nouns but also of proper names, including family names, and Lithuanian – a Baltic rather than a Slavic language – even distinguishes between separate forms denoting married or unmarried women.[10] These forms arise from an age when divorce was unthinkable and linguistic convention is challenged by modern society, also by making the distinction between unmarried and married for feminine forms only. The importance of distinguishing gender in Indo-European languages contrasts with Turkic languages, where grammatical gender is unknown for nouns and adjectives and even for personal pronouns. For example, *o* in Turkish and *ol* in Kazakh can mean "he", "she" or "it" as the case may be.[11]

Closing one's mind to the variety of linguistic expression would be a highly unfortunate consequence of the internationalisation of a lingua franca, and certainly one that would be at variance with the role of education in broadening the minds of learners. An internationalisation policy for higher education should therefore include a policy for a measure of linguistic diversity. The debate is not about whether to use

9. Putting the position of Latin in medieval Europe on a par with the position of English today misses the points that the influence of Latin extended over a much smaller part of the world and that a working knowledge of Latin was, for the most part, confined to social and intellectual elites. English, even if it is far from universal, today has a much broader geographic as well as social scope.
10. Respectively, *-ienė* and *–itė*, with certain varieties for both forms.
11. In some cases, also the plural forms, even if separate plural forms do exist.

English as a lingua franca but to what extent it should be used, what the place of local and national languages should be as languages of instruction and what place there should be for foreign languages other than English (Bergan 2002). Should there be a foreign language requirement for higher education and, if yes, for English only or also for a second or third foreign language? The case for monolingualism is a difficult one to make in the modern world, but it is nevertheless a choice made consciously or unconsciously by many learners, either by choosing not to learn foreign languages or by choosing not to learn the foreign languages they take up to a level where they can effectively be used for effective communication.

Competences for dialogue

Linguistic skills are of course essential for international dialogue but they are not sufficient. It may be worth underlining one further point connected to linguistic skills, however: intercultural dialogue and international co-operation more broadly require the ability to explain one's own views but also to listen to the views of others. Speaking and listening are both essential generic competences. It is significant that the Common European Language Portfolio,[12] developed by the Council of Europe as an instrument to allow learners to describe their linguistic skills, includes description for listening as well as speaking skills.[13]

Both subject-specific and generic competences are needed for intercultural dialogue, and higher education must provide both at an advanced level. Subject-specific competences will of course vary substantially from one discipline to another but it is important that the sum of higher education graduates between them possess a very broad range of subject-specific competences, and also that they be able to move beyond the borders of their own discipline.

Higher education graduates will require what the Council of Europe, in co-operation with the US Steering Committee of the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy, has termed "converging competences". Our societies need people with advanced subject-specific competences but they need to be able to put these competences and their own discipline in their proper context. Whether to build a bridge or a pipeline is not only a technical issue but one of economics and the environment, of political and social impact. It requires analytical ability as well as the ability to communicate the main issues in terms that non-specialists can understand.

Not least, higher education graduates of tomorrow and even today should develop an ability that our societies as a whole seem to be losing: the ability to weigh long-term and short-term consequences and to see beyond the immediate deadline and horizon. What is beneficial in the short term may have unacceptable long-term consequences, and what seems like a bad solution in the short term may be preferable

12. For further information, see http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/portfolio/default.asp?l=e&m=/main_pages/welcome.html.
13. The full range of skills is: listening, reading, spoken interaction, spoken production and writing.

in a longer time perspective. If higher education does not convey the competences needed to extend one's horizons in time and space, who will?

Internationalisation of higher education: developing understanding, dialogue and competences

The US journalist and author Sandra Mackey, who is intimately familiar with the Arab world, claims:

> "Understanding" is perhaps the most used and abused word in the realm of human relationships. Nevertheless, comprehending the experiences, values, psychological anchors, broken moorings, soaring pride, and debilitating fears of the "other" is where accommodation begins (Mackey 2008: 255).

The task of higher education in our modern societies is formidable, and no other actor can entirely take its place. For higher education to fulfil its role, it must internationalise, and it must do so with due regard to all the major purposes of higher education. The internationalisation of higher education must aim to develop the competences that will help make Earth the kind of place in which we would like our children and grandchildren to live, and not only in our own country. Neither our curiosity nor our responsibility stops at our national borders, and even if we were tempted to withdraw and leave "the rest of the world" to others, we would not live long in the illusion that what happens elsewhere is not important to us.

Higher education must provide us neither with graduates who have only subject-specific competences, for whom the best term seems to come from Germanic languages – the German *Fachidiot*[14] means "subject idiot", in other words, someone whose horizon is limited by his or her academic discipline – nor ones who have only generic competences, for which English may have the most frequently used term – management consultant. Higher education must develop knowledge, understanding, the ability to act and attitudes, all at the same time. Higher education must educate the whole person, and in our age and time, this cannot be done without opening the horizon of each individual to the world that lies beyond our immediate neighbourhood. Higher education cannot fulfil its role unless it internationalises.

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14. Other Germanic languages – including this author's native language – have similar terms.

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II. Higher education for democracy and dialogue

Higher education and sustainable democracy: policies and practice in Montenegro

Slobodanka Koprivica

Introduction

My contribution to this book will necessarily be painted with local colours, but I believe that it can also show some wider European thoughts on the future of the overall European objective, which is the modernisation agenda for universities.[15] The European Commission, the Council of Europe and UNESCO have supported Bologna countries which are not European Union member states by co-ordinating open dialogue among clusters of policy makers and experts about the higher education reform process. They supported special initiatives and networking through the various aid instruments or programmes, such as Tempus and Erasmus Mundus, as well as through initiatives recently opened to the Western Balkans, for example the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window.

The initiative for the Erasmus Mundus External Cooperation Window project BASILEUS,[16] which is the only project selected for the Western Balkans region, came from Montenegro at the final conference of one Tempus project on regional co-operation. BASILEUS involves universities from all countries in the Western Balkans and universities from eight EU countries.

All these activities should help our higher education to better implement the three main goals of the European agenda:

– curricular reform in line with Bologna principles: the three cycle system, competence-based learning, recognition, mobility;

– governance reform: university autonomy, quality assurance, strategic partnerships including partnerships with enterprises;

– funding reform: promoting equity, access and efficiency, including the role of tuition fees, grants and loans, better links to performance, diversified sources of university income.

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15. O. Quintin, Director-General for Education and Culture (Joint Tempus Meeting of Ministerial Representatives, Brussels, 17 September 2008): EU member states support the reforms identified by the Commission in the May 2006 Communication "Delivering on the modernisation agenda for universities: education, research and innovation". The agenda was confirmed most recently in the "Council Resolution of 23 November 2007 on modernising universities for Europe's competitiveness in a global knowledge economy" (COM(2008) 680 final).

16. Balkans Academic Scheme for the Internationalisation of Learning in cooperation with EU universities, see http://www.basileus.ugent.be/index.asp?p=93&a=93.

Some analysts say that our society is in the phase of exiting transition, which is confirmed by Montenegro's entering more deeply into the European integration process. The Stabilisation and Association Agreement with Montenegro was signed in 2007, and we are expecting to apply for candidate status by the end of this year. Transition being, primarily, a complete turnabout of all values, we are now in the phase of establishing a new, European value system in all segments of society, if we wish to be a member of the club. Universities are also, I believe, coming out of transition through the Bologna Process. We have been talking about how to reach a sustainable society and a sustainable university as well.

In the CDESR project "The University between Humanism and Market",[17] the sustainability of societies has been considered and also the main challenges facing the higher education sector in this regard. I would like to quote from the project document something that I am sure could be very instructive for the political elite, in the case of my country, but I believe for other societies as well.

> Sustainability does not only have an environmental aspect, however. Societies must also be sustainable economically, socially, politically and culturally, and they must be all of these at the same time. A society sustainable environmentally and in terms of overall economic indicators, but not in terms of social cohesion because of gross inequalities in the distribution of opportunities and wealth would not be sustainable in the long term (CDESR 2007: 4).

This has been summed up by Sjur Bergan:

> A society that is sustainable in environmental and economic terms, but not socially, is still at risk. It is also about acting on the basis of this understanding (Bergan 2007).

With this digression about the education system and the social values of a society where I grew up and was educated – the unfortunately fragmented society of former Yugoslavia – I would like to shed light on some elements of social sustainability and make a connection with the issue of converging competences that is the main focus of this book.

The countries of former Yugoslavia went through a difficult period of interethnic, inter-religious and civil conflict which, as we know, resulted in the total breakdown of the social system. Our transition from a socialist system to modern democratic societies with market economies and citizenship values was not a peaceful one. The system has changed, with the collapse of many civil goods and values and, unfortunately, with many human victims.

It should be said that, oddly, this process witnessed the support of national academies of sciences and arts and a large part of the intellectual elite linked to the national leaders. Honour should be given to the exceptional individuals who raised their voices against the turning wheel of nationalism, even though they were not able to change the course of events. It is fair to say that universities in the region have always tried to calm antagonisms and have sought to demonstrate their consequences

17. CDESR: http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/restricted/.

to the development and education of young people and the societies themselves in the long run.

The question of the nature of our education system has been weighing upon us all these years, since the education system was not able to mobilise the critical mass of intellectual awareness for a civilised disintegration of the former Yugoslavia, a country culturally and geographically belonging to Europe.

With respect to non-discrimination of all forms and accessibility of education, that system was very modern, and in line with all the conventions on human rights, as well as those relating more to children's rights. It also offered solid professional training. Young people had developed the spirit of solidarity and exchange. We had surely been "active citizens". I should remind readers of the "solidarity actions" where many capital infrastructures were built and where many generations of young people participated. What we today in Europe call "mobility" had also been one of the pillars of the common Yugoslav identity.

Nonetheless, our system lacked basic democratic organisation; the institutions worked on the basis of strong centralisation and a single ideological matrix. Plurality of opinion, tolerance and objective valorisation of achievements were not recognised societal values. The frustration of people who had not been granted freedom of expression accumulated. Accompanied by a weak economic basis, growing foreign debts and deepening social gaps between the governing and working classes, it all came to a head. I do not want to enter more into the story of the inception of the conflict. For our topic it is important to note the value of what we today call "converging competences" for societal sustainability, especially for the sustainability of European multinational, multicultural societies and societies with constant demographic changes. These are surely the competences that we want to develop through the educational system, but they imply societal values that we want to strengthen and promote within our societies.

The Western Balkan countries that are entering the integrative processes, where the higher education institutions have been transformed structurally according to the Bologna objectives, need to define the mechanisms of formal and non-formal education for competences in democratic citizenship, human rights, intercultural dialogue and tolerance. Here we have many initiatives and some formal and established practices. On the other hand, it is necessary that the educational system be more strongly integrated and interconnected with the society, so that the knowledge can, through interaction, flow towards the wider community and respond to its needs. In this way another objective, that of achieving accountability for investing in education and research, would more easily be reached.

For us in the Western Balkans, countries of the EU often set the standard we want to reach, but in our examples it is sometimes possible to see more clearly the effectiveness of common European policies. I am sure that we can also be proud of some good practices of our own.

Policies and practice in Montenegro

As regards the situation in Montenegro, the national documents that set out priorities for education development are:

– the Constitution of Montenegro, 2007
– the Strategic Plan of Education Reform, 2005-09
– the EU Stabilisation and Association Agreement, 2007
– the Strategy for Poverty and Social Exclusion Reduction, 2003; updated July 2007
– the National Action Plan for Children (NAPC), 2004
– the Book of Changes, 2001.

Education system reform in Montenegro began by determining some basic principles and measures, defined in "The Book of Changes". These are the introduction of European standards, equal opportunities, choice according to the individual's abilities, a quality assurance system, lifelong learning and interculturalisation in education.

We continued the education and research system reforms by adopting the following:

– the Law on General Education, 2002
– the Law on Secondary Vocational Education, 2002
– the Law on Adult Education, 2002
– the Vocational Education and Training Centre, established in 2003
– the adoption of strategies for undergraduate education reform, 2002-09
– the Strategy for Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools, 2007-10
– the Inclusive Education Strategy, 2008
– the Law on Higher Education in line with Bologna principles, 2003
– the Law on Scientific-Research Activities, 2005
– the Law on Recognition and Validation of Educational Certificates, 2007
– the Strategy for Scientific Research Activities, 2008-16
– the Strategy for the Establishment of a National Qualifications Framework (NQF) 2008-10, accepting the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning as the main reference document.

Apart from the structural reforms that derived from the new legislation, we have seen different activities from the educational actors, including public education agencies and the university in co-operation with international organisations and civil society organisations, on fostering the implementation of various segments of educational reforms. Here I can mention UNICEF and Save the Children – especially in the field of education for minorities and inclusive education, the Open Society Foundation

for citizenship education, GTZ[18] in the field of vocational education, the Tempus Programme and the World University Service (WUS) Austria in higher education. Projects with international partners have greatly helped practitioners at all levels to become more involved with community problems and to bridge the gap between the education institution and the community.

These organisations, together with some of the donors, have also shown the path of action to domestic civil society organisations that have become partners of the governmental institutions and educational actors in raising awareness and offering non-formal education courses in various fields. These have included courses on culture of dialogue, human rights, citizenship education, EU integration, joint university programmes in leadership for youth workers, active citizenship courses and internships. The whole process has contributed to the growth of the civil society sector – this important lever of democratic development – and to partnerships between the governmental sector and the NGO sector. It is not always an easy process; many obstacles to this co-operation needed to be overcome and prejudices and adversities abandoned. I can say, nonetheless, that the educational sector is the one where this partnership has become stable.

It is important to elaborate more on two strategic documents which have given structure to formal education so that each new generation entering the Montenegrin education system is provided with an opportunity not only to learn the "lessons" of democratic citizenship, but also to practice democratic principles and values in an enabling environment.

The general goal of the Inclusive Educational Strategy[19] is to provide education to young people with special educational needs according to their interests, abilities and needs. The existing education system for students with development disabilities or with special needs is organised into institutions for students with development disabilities, special classes in regular schools and regular school classes.

There are currently around 40 students with disabilities at the University of Montenegro. The university has adapted its facilities by installing a stair lift and constructing ramps at the entrances and by equipping one computer classroom with special training (learning) software for blind students. The Teacher Training Faculty, the Faculty of Natural Science and Mathematics and the academies for Fine Arts and Music (units of the University of Montenegro), are the faculties where most pre-service teachers are educated.

The subject "Inclusive Education" is taught in the second year of initial studies at the Department for Pre-school Education and in the third year at the Teacher Training Faculty. Montenegro, however, lacks faculties or departments within existing higher education institutions for the education of human resources specialists

18. Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit – the German Society for Technical Cooperation: http://www.gtz.de/en/index.htm.
19. See www.mpin.gov.me.

which might provide early and continuous rehabilitation for children with development disabilities.[20]

The Strategy for Civic Education in Primary and Secondary Schools until 2010 was adopted by the Government of Montenegro in March 2008.[21] This document was developed by the Task Force for Civic Education of the Bureau for Educational Service in co-operation with Open Society Foundation Institute-Representative Office Montenegro, the OSCE Mission to Montenegro, UNICEF and the NGO Centre for Civic Education. This document answers the question "Why do we need a strategy for civic education?" and recognises key areas in providing a comprehensive and well-planned approach for addressing the challenges ahead. The Action Plan that is a part of the strategy defines the content of activities, the time frame, indicators and responsibilities of all the actors involved in the process.

The content of the document is closely linked to ongoing changes and challenges within society and it is supposed to provide a meaningful response to them. It is not realistic to expect that the complex goals of this strategy may be achieved without the involvement and support not only of schools, but also of parents, local communities, the Ministry of Education and Science, the universities and the non-governmental sector, as well as others. The document is focused on the following areas:

– the status of civic education and education for democratic citizenship: through applying democratic citizenship principles to overall school life, incorporating democratic citizenship values in teaching other subjects, extending the supply of elective subjects with education for democratic citizenship content, defining teacher competencies (knowledge, skills and attitudes) and setting the certification procedure for acquired competencies;
– teaching, curricula and methodologies: to achieve better linking of democratic citizenship content and principles with teaching in other subject areas;
– teacher training: to ensure the development and enhancement of ongoing training systems with new content and goals, and the inclusion of democratic citizenship principles and practices in university curricula;
– quality monitoring, assurance and improvement: to monitor, assure and improve the quality of the civic education teaching and learning context;
– the use of additional resources: strengthening co-operation with local, regional and international programmes and organisations, as well as the role and capacities of the Association of Civic Education Teachers.

The higher education reform process in Montenegro in line with Bologna principles has also been a re-thinking process for us. Montenegro has participated in the Bologna Process since 2003 and was accepted as a member from May 2007 again, following the independence of Montenegro in June 2006. For a country like mine, it

20. Human resources specialists were educated until now at the Faculties of Defectology outside of Montenegro.
21. See www.mpin.gov.me and www.zavsko.org.

is of great importance to be a member of the Bologna family. Working together we learn from each other. In the many conferences, seminars and workshops organised about the development of certain Bologna objectives we have had the opportunity to exchange experiences and good practices and to face the weaknesses or strengths of the reform process in our country. The reconstruction of higher education and research systems is not an easy task for any government, especially for the governments of developing countries in transition.

However, we should be aware that public responsibility for the creation of a knowledge-based society does not end with the adoption of EU compatible legislation, strategic documents or the establishment of appropriate bodies or agencies. In my opinion, the public sector is, primarily, responsible for the successful implementation of adopted legislation and for raising awareness that the process is not of a formal nature, but it should also be the driving force, tracing the future development of the country, based on the principle of competitiveness in the wider European area.

Community programmes open to our country have been a valuable support for the reform processes. I can say that with project activities, we have all learned how to be proactive about the problems we face in our work, how to deal with EU grant opportunities and how to co-operate with EU partners. We are also trying to increase our participation in the Framework Programme for research, which we joined this year.

The Assembly of Montenegro adopted the new Law on Higher Education in 2003,[22] and this was created in accordance with the objectives of the Bologna Declaration. The overall goal of the law is to enable higher education institutions in Montenegro to exercise maximum autonomy in their activities, particularly in academic fields, with minimal mediation by the state, except when it is requested for the purpose of protecting the public interest. Also, the aim is to enable higher education institutions to fulfil their mission of educating young people to be qualified citizens in a democratic society and qualified participants in the European labour market, and to make sure that this is done in compliance with new European standards.

Public and private higher education institutions are covered by the same Law on Higher Education. Higher education is accessible to all persons under the conditions prescribed by the law and statute of an institution. The law prescribes: "In exercising the right to higher education, no discrimination is allowed on any grounds such as sex, race, marital status, colour of skin, language, religion, political or other beliefs, national, ethnic or other origin, belonging to a national community, material status, disability, birth, or on similar grounds, position or circumstances".

The statutes of universities or other higher education institutions, on the other hand, need to clarify and specify more thoroughly their organisation, for example the structure of the Governing Board and Academic Senate. Higher education may

22. See www.mpin.gov.me for further information.

be provided by universities and higher education institutions, which need to be licensed (by the Ministry of Education and Science) and accredited (by the Council for Higher Education) in accordance with the law.

There have been some key changes in the higher education system in Montenegro. These include:

– the "integrated university": the university, rather than faculties, has status as a legal entity;
– the introduction of quality assurance;
– internal and external evaluation;
– the introduction of a three-cycle (3+2+3) degree system;
– the introduction of ECTS[23] and the Diploma Supplement.

Access to higher education depends exclusively on the results obtained during secondary school.

According to the law, the Council for Higher Education functions, among other things, as an accreditation body. Members of the council are nominated by the government, but the weak point of the regulation is that it does not ensure the participation of the student community. We will seek to amend this in the planned process of changes to the Law on Higher Education. The issue of student participation is extremely important because the council also discusses and gives opinions to the government on other questions important for the life and studies of the student population. This includes issues such as the status quo and achievements in higher education, proposals for improvement, regulations for higher education financing and preparing the ground for the development of a national higher education strategy.

The Council for Higher Education is responsible for issuing certificates on accreditation based on the report of the external evaluation commission. The higher education institution is subject to an accreditation procedure at a maximum of five-year intervals. Accreditation, self-evaluation and quality assessment are defined by the Law on Higher Education. The council adopted the standards and guidelines for external and self-evaluation in line with ENQA[24] documents. The procedure for external evaluation of higher education institutions or study programmes is carried out by independent committees for evaluation. The law prescribes that the members of the committees for external evaluation could be foreign experts. In 2007, the external institutional evaluation of the University of Montenegro was carried out by five members of the external evaluation committee, of whom three were European University Association (EUA) experts.

Quality assurance was envisaged as obligatory for all higher education institutions and that is a prerequisite for accreditation. The law stipulates that quality assurance

23. European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.
24. European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education; see http://www.enqa.net/.

will become a permanent exercise to be conducted through self-evaluation, student evaluation and external evaluation.

A higher education institution performs the self-evaluation procedure, that is, evaluation and assessment of the quality of its courses of study and work conditions. Self-evaluation is performed continuously, in accordance with the institutional statute. Self-evaluation methods are determined depending on curricula, teaching equipment, the qualifications of academic staff, teaching method, the percentage of students who pass exams, the percentage of graduates and other necessary indicators of the successful work of the institution. Presently, we have two projects in their early stages that will respond to the initial phase of quality assurance system implementation and improve some weaknesses that have been registered at our higher education institutions. These projects are supported by the WUS Austria and IPA[25] funds. They will provide for the establishment of quality assurance offices at the higher education institutions in Montenegro and a staff training and awareness raising campaign for academic staff concerning the importance of a quality assurance system for the accountability of the institution towards founders and the wider public, as well as for opening up opportunities for international recognition, mobility and international exchange.

Recognition of diplomas and foreign qualifications is a very important issue in the overall process of higher education. Serbia and Montenegro ratified the Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Recognition Convention[26] in March 2004 (and again in 2006, following Montenegrin independence), which obliges Montenegro to start the real implementation of the convention, since the recognition of foreign diplomas and qualifications was also set as a priority at the ministerial meeting in Berlin in 2003. The Montenegrin Assembly adopted the Law on Recognition and Evaluation of Foreign Qualifications in 2007, based on the Lisbon Recognition Convention. This law is in force since January 2008.

The ENIC centre (European Network of National Information Centres for the recognition of qualifications) was established in the Ministry of Education and Science. It keeps constant contact with all the other ENIC/NARIC centres throughout Europe and exchanges information on various education systems as well as different problems in the process of recognition.

The Tempus programme and the European Training Foundation supported the creation of a national qualifications framework in Montenegro using the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning as the main reference point. Our co-operation with partners from Germany, Latvia and Denmark who have been involved in the process of creating their own national qualifications frameworks,

25. Instrument for Pre-Accession Assistance, an EU programme, see http://europa.eu/legislation_summaries/enlargement/ongoing_enlargement/e50020_en.htm.
26. Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region, see http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/Recognition/LRC_en.asp.

has given us guidance for carrying out the processes of quality assurance, validation of informal and non-formal learning, opening the path to lifelong learning and facilitation of recognition and employability processes. The national qualifications framework will include overall learning outcomes, student competences and skills, and the formal aspects of a given degree. As a result of the national qualifications framework in Montenegro, we will increase the clarity and transparency of degrees, and the provision of information for students and employers, and develop an instrument for curriculum design and quality assurance, as well as more transparency for lifelong learning. The results of these activities have been incorporated into the Strategy for the Establishment of a National Qualifications Framework in Montenegro, adopted by the government in September 2008. The strategy defines the activities and processes to be undertaken until 2010, with regard to levels, sublevels, general and sectoral descriptors and the work on the Law on Professional Qualifications for targeting regulated professions.

Regarding the issue of financing of higher education in Montenegro, the existing model does not include a social dimension, and this is, in my opinion, a weak side of the model. Actually, there is so-called "dual track financing" in Montenegro. Out of the total number of students in the first cycle some 40% do not pay tuition fees at the state university, while others pay between €250 and €500 per term, depending on the study profile. The status of budget financed students depends exclusively on their results from secondary school, while the family social status is not taken into account. In addition, the self-financed students cannot be granted lodging in the student residences or get student loans. This situation is very harmful for students from poorer backgrounds. Current discussions are oriented towards the inclusion of a social dimension with regard to tuition fees, and Montenegro will try to establish mechanisms through which grants and loans could be substantially increased for students coming from families with lower incomes.

Master's and doctoral studies are self-financing as well. The ministry offers financial aid for tuition fees at master's and doctoral level to around 100 students per year, but this aid is also based on their success during prior studies. The ministry has a programme for employment of young researchers, that is, doctoral candidates, on research projects at research institutions. With respect to the accessibility of higher education, it is obvious that our system has certain disadvantages, so that creating a new model of financing of higher education is the priority of the Ministry of Education and Science in the upcoming period.

The University of Montenegro is the only public university in Montenegro. It was officially founded in 1974 to become an umbrella organisation for today's 19 faculties, 3 scientific research institutes, the university library and the Rectorate. Today, the University of Montenegro has 20 000 students, 787 teaching staff and 448 administrative staff. There are undergraduate, postgraduate and doctoral studies. Currently, there is one private university – "Mediteran" – and there are nine individual private faculties.

The number of students enrolled has increased considerably over the past three years compared to the number of students enrolled in the past. In 2008, 4 250 new students enrolled, while in the past 10 to 15 years the number did not exceed 2 000. Of these, 58% enrolled in social sciences and humanities, 40% in engineering studies, natural sciences and medicine and 2% in arts.

Our students are very motivated to use mobility schemes and scholarships to continue study abroad, especially in developed western countries. The government offers a limited number of grants for this purpose. Fortunately, a Tempus office and a Ceepus office have been opened in the ministry, so that Tempus individual mobility grants are being used to increase the mobility of teaching staff and students, and the mobility of students is also being promoted through Ceepus grants. There is also a WUS office at the University of Montenegro for increasing student mobility. Our students can apply for Erasmus Mundus master's scholarships as well. These opportunities have just started to be used by our students. Foreign governments also offer a certain number of scholarships for Montenegrin students. All the information above is available to the public through the website of the Ministry of Education and Science.

Concluding remarks

There are many positive practices and policies that are driving forces of change and for the further democratisation of our society. However, the processes I outlined above are still not very widespread and, in my opinion, do not involve enough of our population to constitute the critical mass that would be needed for a stable democratic path. We need to mobilise all segments of society in an active process of change – change of traditional mindsets and of small-place thinking, active citizenship involvement and entrepreneurial spirit. What are the reasons for these limitations?

I will try to look at the problem by analysing the role of higher education institutions in the process of democratisation.

We could agree that the universities in our region offered, and still offer, good education that enables young people to get well-paid jobs afterwards. But how are, in reality, these young people contributing to society, other than offering well-designed (or over-designed) products to consumers? Sometimes, it can look like a very conformist screenplay. What about their personal development – their dreams when they were students? Where do we stand with student start-ups that would let them continue their professional interests, keeping them innovative, creative and engaged?

The question of employability, that is at the centre of the design not only of bachelor's degrees, but also at the centre of design of the curricula of the other two cycles as well, can also narrow the higher education system to those fields of the economy that prepare for the most immediate employment in a certain time and geographical frame. European funding, however, the lifelong learning programme and the research Framework Programmes are offering more than what is now understood

in my country. This can also mean that people continue their personal development, receive grants for it but also involve their research with the economy and create added value. They should be the ones who will create new areas of economic activity in the country, rather than just trying to fit into the existing ones.

I believe we need to work much more on the entrepreneurial skills of our students. The professors too would need to set an example, such as through establishing spin-offs or developing relations with small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs). For this kind of changed attitude, we need converging competences, we need intense mobility and we need new role models.

What is the role of the university in that process? A certain line of division can be observed. Technical faculties that have not suffered from the ideological changes happening in our societies in the past two decades have focused more on education for the labour market. Some have been affected more than others by the collapse of the economy and have been trying to re-establish the connection with new industries, mainly SMEs, to develop new competences and human capital for new needs.

On the other side, we have the social sciences and humanities that have always been more specifically related to the ideological matrix. With the demands of the European integration process, they have changed, with many curricula changes in the faculties of Economics, Law, Political Sciences and History, for example. From this formative side we can say that now we are educating people for integration, human rights, democracy and other fields important for European society.

But, as we know, the formal reconstruction of the education system is not sufficient for the formation of a young woman/man. We need different values, different models, students and academics who will be involved in these changes in an atmosphere of dialogue and tolerance. First of all, we need open universities and universities that will have a high flux of students and professors, which will help break the traditional mind sets and share the common European culture of democracy and broadening horizons.

When we talk about converging competences and higher education in the next decade, we need to think about the human capital that will take on the process. The issue is especially critical in transition countries. There is no tracking system between higher education institutions and other public or private institutions to follow the career of students, in particular of doctoral graduates. The student does not have his/her personal development plan, and is breaking his/her way through on his/her own. We need much stronger career planning for our future leaders.

I want to introduce another issue now, a kind of horizontal issue, especially important for those of us who are defining policies. I am now writing for a Council of Europe publication. In July 2008 Montenegro hosted a large UNESCO forum and we are discussing many important issues for the future of higher education in Europe. The European Commission is listening, gathering conclusions and moving on to developing new programmes. It is a system that, albeit bureaucratic, is very

efficient. We have the feeling that the message is reaching the policy makers and things are developing.

The question is – do we have appropriate dialogue platforms at regional, national and local levels, that could lead to programmes and projects of local concern that would bring about better and more efficient acceptance of European policies and that would give the feeling of ownership to practitioners? I think we need to do much better in this area. European programmes in education and research are fully recognising this need but we need to change inside first. We need to overcome small-place thinking, divisions and self-centredness.

Better governance of higher education institutions and public responsibility for the complete process are still crucial topics for the future success of the reform.

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Promoting universal values in the face of societal change

Caryn McTighe Musil

In an age defined by dynamic changes, intermingled cultures and shifting categories, one might wonder if there is anything to offer college students that might act as a stable and unifying thread amidst the flux. There is, however, at least one example of a universal value that has proven its resilience in large part because it lends itself to redefinition by context and history. That universal value is embodied in the concept of liberal education.

Introduced first in classical times as "*artes liberales*", it referred then to the *trivium* of grammar, logic and rhetoric and to the *quadrivium* of geometry, arithmetic, astronomy and music. Tied as it was to political power, *artes liberales* was viewed as appropriate for the free man at that time as opposed to the slave. Over the centuries, what is meant by liberal arts has shifted to commonly refer to a set of more expansive courses in the arts and sciences or to liberal arts residential colleges like those in the United States that focus primarily on a broad undergraduate curriculum. While to some degree it continues to have whiffs of class and privilege attached to it, a liberal education is still linked in the 21st century to the health of contemporary democracies.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U)[27] has adopted the term liberal education in yet another way. We use it to signify not a subject matter but rather an approach to learning applying to all knowledge across all fields, even professional ones. From the AAC&U's inception in 1915 in the United States, the association has advanced liberal education as a benchmark for "the kind of learning needed to sustain a free society and to enable the full development of human talents". (AAC&U 2007: 11). The AAC&U's Statement on Liberal Learning explains liberal education as: "A philosophy of education that empowers the individual, liberates the mind, cultivates intellectual judgments, and fosters ethical and social responsibility. ... By its nature, liberal learning is global and pluralistic. It embraces the diversity of ideas and experiences that characterise the social, natural, and intellectual world" (AAC&U 1998).

Liberal education, then, seems an especially valuable framework for higher education to turn to in our global century. It offers evidence that there are ways to resolve some of the tensions between continuity and change. Doing so, however, requires inventiveness, elasticity and contextual adaptations.

27. See http://www.aacu.org/.

At the cusp of a millennium characterised by global interdependence, technological revolutions, dangerous inequalities and an information explosion, higher education can no longer do business as usual. On both sides of the Atlantic – and beyond – students are looking to colleges and universities to prepare them to live and work in a world where uncertainty is the norm, complexity routine and diversity a given. While not abandoning its traditional commitment to advancing knowledge, cultivating critical thinking and developing the individual, the academy is in the midst of a far-reaching transformation. The question remains: in the face of colliding forces of societal change in a globalised context, are there essential values – universal values if you will – that can function like the North Star to help colleges and universities navigate this unfamiliar terrain?

I will argue that the answer is yes. Getting to yes, however, will require creativity and courage, as we wean ourselves from habitual practices, unexamined intellectual frameworks and institutional structures that impede the academy's ability to educate students to live wisely and justly in their fractured, dynamic, fragile world.

With the assurance of a world seen in black and white, Sir Winston Churchill once pronounced: "The first duty of a university is to teach wisdom, not a trade, character, not technicalities" (Churchill 1954: 36-37). Higher education today can draw on its rich traditions and commitments even as it also recalibrates its purposes and practices to prepare graduates who are informed, empowered and socially responsible. As they have always done, democratic societies rely on higher education to prepare not just an educated labour force but also an informed citizenry. In her book, *The Open Spaces of Democracy,* naturalist and writer Terry Tempest Williams emphasises the link between education and democracy: "When minds close, democracy begins to close. ... Democracy invites us to take risks. It asks that we vacate the comfortable seat of certitude, remain pliable, and act, ultimately, in behalf of the common good" (Williams 2004). Embedded in Williams' comments we can see new hallmarks distinguishing the 21st century university. The academy will need to be: provisional and exploratory about its knowledge base; inventive and receptive to doing things in new ways; and more keenly aware of its public mission.

The challenge is whether higher education on either side of the pond can recast itself to become more adept, agile and engaged as it crafts the kind of learning environment that will equip students with what they need today to shape tomorrow's world. I can speak only for the United States at this point and it would be interesting to compare whether similar things are happening in universities in Europe.

But there is promise that such a transformation is underway in the United States. The academy is increasingly organised around learning and not simply around teaching and therefore is seeking to describe what students have learned and not simply how many credits they have accumulated. Significantly, it has also begun to deploy diversity as an intellectual and educational force and not simply as a problem to be managed. Doing so has spurred re-examinations of disciplinary knowledge bases and expanded their frontiers exponentially. Having greater diversity among

students, faculty, staff and academic administrators has unleashed the potential for multiple perspectives and experiences to seep into the daily interchanges within and beyond the classroom as well. Increasing numbers of faculty are also adopting powerful new engaged, student-centred pedagogies that have been proven to accelerate learning. Additionally, more institutions are providing new forms of evidence to a sceptical public that students are achieving higher levels of learning that will serve them and their society better.

In Europe, the swirl of societal changes has spawned among other things the ambitious Bologna Process through which nations have co-operated in historic ways to design a European higher education system that addresses mobility, agrees about standards for degrees and seeks to assess quality. In the United States, these same forces have produced yet another focus. Educators, policy makers and citizens have begun to examine the fundamental aims and purposes of higher education for a new global century. That examination has been deeply influenced by a new set of factors that are the result of the democratisation of US higher education in the 20th century. The academy in the US has begun to move – sometimes too slowly for some people – from its common practice and accepted norms of exclusion – principally in terms of gender, race, religion and class. In turning away from those deeply embedded habits and structures, the academy has, for the last three decades in particular, begun to embrace the challenge of trying to create more inclusive institutions where everyone can thrive, learning is enhanced and graduates are more prepared to live and work productively and responsibly in a diverse US democracy whose fate is so intertwined with the rest of the world.

The process has been both contentious and enriching – and we have a long way to go. When my father was born in 1902, however, only 4% of Americans went on to college. When his granddaughters went to college in the 1990s, 75% of those who graduated from high school went to college for some period of time. What, then, is the vision of learning when a nation goes to college – a nation whose student body with its female majority is much more racially, ethnically, religiously and economically diverse than ever before in its history? Can universal values even be talked about in the face of such diversity?

The United Nations Development Programme *Human Development Report* of 1994 cast the challenge of the moment this way: "Our world cannot survive one-fourth rich and three-fourths poor, half democratic and half authoritarian with oases of human development surrounded by deserts of human deprivation" (UNDP 1994: 6). A prominent African-American sociologist and public intellectual, W.E.B. Du Bois reminds us of how deeply education is tied to functional democracies when he says: "Of all the civil rights for which the world has struggled and fought for 5 000 years, the right to learn is undoubtedly the most fundamental" (Du Bois 1970: 230-231). Higher education has no alternative but to address these twin challenges. Our fates are inextricably linked in the world whether we are in the desert of despair or watering comfortably at the oasis. Inequality and suffering are not only morally

troubling to those who take democracy's aspirations seriously, they are dangerous to its viability and vitality.

I know that social cohesion remains a priority in the new Europe, in which democracy is expanding, and that like the United States, Europe is experiencing shifts in population through waves of immigration both between European countries and beyond their borders. A recent *Washington Post* article reports that even in Ireland, the country of some of my forebears, one out of seven people were born outside of the country (Sullivan 2007). Mediating structures like the Council of Europe, the European Union and the Bologna Process are creating shared values that provide an over-riding set of common commitments, even if those commitments are refined and renegotiated in the light of the multiplicity of national identities and ethnic cultures. Of course, all these larger social dynamics are played out on our campuses, surface in the dynamics of the classroom, alter the questions examined in scholarship and in courses, and profoundly influence what students are learning.

The United States lessons about diversity and learning

Despite the irrefutable evidence that modern democracies and businesses are characterised by their dramatically diverse populations, workforces and clients, higher education has placed a lower emphasis on the importance of educating students who are well prepared to live, work and shape their pluralist environments. As US researcher Sylvia Hurtado says in her article, "Diversity and learning for pluralist democracy": "Higher education plays a key role in training leaders who are responsible for enacting a vision of a multi-racial democracy that is equitable, inclusive, and thrives as a healthy exchange of perspectives" (Hurtado 2006: 249; see also Hurtado 2001, 2007).

AAC&U polls have found that faculty, students and employers believe that such knowledge is an important part of college, but it ranks at or near the bottom of many other priorities for higher education. The same seems to be the case in Europe. A questionnaire by the Tuning Project (González & Wagenaar 2008) sought to understand more about the discrepancies that had initially surfaced in polls between support for the three kinds of agreed upon university competences: instrumental, interpersonal and systemic. Although the number of different competences within interpersonal was the largest of the three, with 41%, these competences were not well delineated. Moreover, interpersonal competences were frequently mentioned only 22% of the time, which was less than half of the competences mentioned for instrumental.

In its follow-up questionnaire to employers and graduates to illuminate how to explain such dramatic differences, a new Tuning Project questionnaire asked recipients to rank 30 different competences that represented an equal balance across the three types. The findings echo the AAC&U's poll in haunting ways. The three competences ranked at the very bottom of the list of 30 were:

– ability to work in international context;

– appreciation of diversity and multiculturality; and
– understanding of cultures and customs of other countries.

For those who believe such competences must be more highly valued and practised in college, we have our work cut out for us on both sides of the Atlantic. The Council of Europe has taken leadership in making such capabilities more valued as it continues to implement its White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue, adopted in May 2008. This initiative offers one vehicle for raising awareness about the importance of forging ways to live with one another in a newly constituted European community and global context. Perhaps the insights gleaned in the United States over the years from our own struggle to understand the educational and civic implications of diversity within our colleges and universities might contribute to new mutual strategies for European and US educators alike. They might draw from these experiences at this juncture, when global, diversity and civic competences have never been more important to our shared futures, yet fail to be perceived as priorities in the academy.

In the early 1990s, the US was dominated by a false dichotomy as it sought to come to terms with diversity's impact on higher education. The dichotomy went like this: you can either have excellence *or* diversity. Only decades later has the framing shifted. Colleges and universities now commonly argue that you cannot have excellence *without* diversity. Institutions have a clearer understanding that fully engaging with diversity intellectually, socially and throughout policies, practices and pedagogies is a means of achieving the academy's complex educational and societal mission in this global century.

In the engagement with diversity in all its multiplicities within and beyond groups, a series of questions help capture key insights.

What is really universal?

Before diversity was an acknowledged part of the equation, when "universal" values, "universal" findings or "universal" perspectives were referred to, they were not typically universal at all but generalities based on a very small slice of the human population. The old way of using universal is best captured in the phrase used in English common law – "*feme covert*" – through which a married woman's legal rights evaporated under the cover of her husband who became the single identity recognised by law. A 21st century example just came to my attention recently when a colleague required a knee replacement, but her surgeon told her to wait another year because they were just now perfecting a new knee cap to use in surgeries that would work better for women. Astoundingly, surgeons had been using the "universal model" of a man's knee cap for women's knee cap surgeries. Only after years of data revealed that women did not have the same high recovery as men did, had it occurred to them to examine what might be particular and not universal about women's anatomy.

This is not to suggest that there is nothing that can be universally shared across different groups but rather that the universal needs to be derived from a genuinely

representative broad base of knowledge and always interrogated to see just how applicable it might be across multiple groups.

Whose scholarship? Whose history?

Despite the flailing by some critics, it turns out that diversity – whether about gender, race, class, sexual orientation, religion or ethnicity – actually enriches the scholarship, reinvigorates intellectual enquiries and corrects inaccurate and incomplete explanations of human history, literature, science, art and human agency. In terms of advancing knowledge, which is the very foundation of higher education, the scholarship of diversity deepens understanding and enlarges what is known. When I first began to look at the world with a new analysis of gender and read the early feminist scholarship, I could fit it all on two bookshelves. Now there are corridors and corridors of new scholarship across every discipline using the lens of gender, race, class and other interpretive frames that is expanding all we know and refining all we have known.

Whose campus? Whose democracy?

As Renate Rosaldo, a distinguished anthropologist, explained: "Conflicts over diversity and multiculturalism in higher education are localised symptoms of a broader renegotiation of citizenship in the United States" (Rosaldo 1993, in AAC&U 1995: 5). As formerly excluded students were admitted to universities in increasing numbers, many were not content with being guests at someone else's table. They wanted to help decide the meal that would be served. Students demanded and needed not simply access to higher education, but access to a learning environment that would provide the knowledge and experiences to ensure their success. Institutions moved along a continuum from opening up access to improving the campus climate in order to reach all the students. Then the curriculum, scholarship and pedagogy began to be transformed to be more inclusive until finally the institution itself began to have a new understanding of the necessity of altering habits, policies and invisible structures that were remnants of an earlier period when exclusion was the norm. If colleges and universities resist such transformations, scholar Daryl G. Smith warns that they will risk their long-term viability as institutions economically, intellectually and socially (Smith 2009; see also Clayton-Pedersen et al. 2007; Smith et al. 1997).

Intellectual and moral development

Finally, another major insight for which there is accumulated evidence is that diversity is a powerful educational asset for learning. An institution has, however, to deploy diversity strategically to achieve its educational aims. Think of the analogy with a library. It is not enough to simply have books on the shelves. You have to devise ways that make it impossible for students to graduate without actually going to the libraries (or to their computers) and reading those books. Similarly, a diverse student body, we are learning, is not just a matter of assuring variety exists

in a classroom or dorm or department. It's a matter of engaging that diversity in constructive ways.

Sylvia Hurtado, director of the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California, Los Angeles, has amassed with others compelling evidence about the way diversity can contribute to cognitive development. Cognitive and moral development theories have established that discrepant experiences, which are experiences that disrupt the previously unexamined ways of understanding the world, actually accelerate knowledge. The disequilibrium that is the result of multiple perspectives can move someone from being, as Patricia Gurin describes it, an effortless learner to an effortful one, from an automatic thinker to a mindful one (Gurin et al. 2004).

Research also shows the democracy outcomes of having a diverse student body or what the Council of Europe has focused on – social cohesion. Students with constructive exposure to diversity are more likely to live in diverse neighbourhoods, to see inequality when it exists and to act to remedy it. Such engagement also increases people's capacities to work across differences, and for all students, it increases their satisfaction with college and increases retention.

Diversity, then, turns out to be good for individual development, good for scholarship, good for institutions and good for society, especially diverse democracies like in the United States. As the AAC&U's monograph, *The Drama of Diversity and Democracy: Higher Education and American Commitments,* puts it:

> Diversity challenges educators to examine our most fundamental assumptions about significant knowledge, cultural identity and privilege, connections across differences ... and democratic principles. Above all, diversity asks us to address the links between diversity and a developed sense of responsibility (Schneider 1996: 1).

Shifting paradigms and essential learning goals

In addition to moving from a more monocultural model of higher education to a multicultural one, in the US there are a series of other shifting paradigms that promise to serve higher education and society better in a global century. A few key ones are that we can see a shift:

- from higher education as a privilege for the fortunate to higher education also as a necessity for all;
- from a Churchillian non-vocational stance to also conceiving how liberal education can provide practical knowledge;
- from objective analysis as the exclusive mode to also relying on experiential and applied learning;
- from Western cultures, perspectives and issues to also exploring global connections, differences and dynamic pluralism within and beyond the West;
- from a disparate, scattered set of courses to frameworks and pedagogies that challenge students to integrate and synthesise what they are learning;

– from college learning in isolation from primary and secondary sectors to also perceiving college as part of a continuum and proactively seeking more intentional partnerships across sectors.

In the United States there has been a national dialogue over the last decade about how to reconfigure the academy to meet the challenges of the new global century. What has emerged is a new consensus in the US about what the essential learning capacities are that students will need to meet the demands of the 21st century. In the face of societal changes, there are, in fact, universals that can give coherence to the future development of higher education. For example, the consensus in the United States about essential learning outcomes every college student should acquire regardless of his or her area of specialisation echoes similar determinations in Europe. The AAC&U's collectively accumulated list is very similar to the list of generic competences for instrumental, interpersonal, and systemic student capabilities generated through the Tuning Project, which in turn drew upon other reform sources such as the Joint Quality Initiative. Happily, according to a recent AAC&U poll, what US business leaders want more of from higher education maps perfectly onto the essential learning outcomes listed below. Market forces are not distorting the academy's core mission, but – for the moment – reaffirming it.

AAC&U's *College Learning for the New Global Century* (2007) summarised what colleges and universities reported widely to regional accrediting associations, in public forums and through many educational reform reports as their most important learning goals for students. The data revealed an emerging consensus across the country which AAC&U has grouped in the following table (Table 1) as the "essential learning goals".

Table 1: The essential learning goals

Learning goal	Method of learning	Learning outcome
Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world	Through study in the sciences and mathematics, social sciences, humanities, histories, languages and the arts	Focused by engagement with big questions both contemporary and enduring
Intellectual and practical skills	Through enquiry and analysis, critical and creative thinking, written and oral communication, quantitative literacy, information literacy, teamwork and problem solving	Practises extensively in the context of progressively more challenging problems, projects and standards for performance

Learning goal	Method of learning	Learning outcome
Personal and social responsibility	Through civic knowledge and engagement – local and global, intercultural knowledge and competence, ethical reasoning and action, and foundations and skills for lifelong learning	Anchored through active involvement with diverse communities and real-world challenges
Integrative and applied learning	Synthesis and advanced accomplishment across general and specialised education	Demonstrated through the application of knowledge, skills and responsibilities to new settings and complex problems

The first two goals have long been understood to be essential components in a strong college education. The third and the fourth, however, mark a significant shift for higher education's future and are particularly important if students are to be prepared for the globally dynamic, ever shifting, highly contested world of the 21st century.

The AAC&U has begun to dub the third goal of "personal and social responsibility" as the orphan outcome. Everyone endorses it, but no one will own it as their obligation to oversee. The AAC&U argues this goal is everyone's collective responsibility. To underscore its importance, the AAC&U has launched a signature long-term initiative – Core Commitments – calling on higher education to take seriously the challenge of educating students to make ethical choices in their personal and public lives and to invest in the well-being of a larger community and not simply in self-development and advancement.

We are also working with colleges and universities in a complementary initiative called Shared Futures: Global Learning and Social Responsibility. It seeks, especially in our more insular American context, to infuse global learning across the curriculum and to ask students to grapple with what it means to be an American and engage responsibly in the larger world. This initiative distinguishes itself from other efforts to prepare students for a global market. We think they should not just fit into what exists, but also should ask questions about the implications of their choices for the rest of the world and feel a responsibility to help solve the pressing problems that challenge the human community and the planet.

Business leaders describe education that employees need

Businesses have not always been the friend of higher education. Sometimes they simply ask for instrumental know-how from graduates, but given the global context and pace of change, businesses now rank creativity, diversity and problem-solving high on their list. In fact, in an AAC&U poll in 2006, employers emphatically endorse the concept of a liberal education as very important and desirable. This is

prompted in part by the fact that some 63% of business leaders believe that too many recent college graduates do not have the skills to be successful in today's global economy. As the poll below reveals (Table 2), currently there is a convergence in the goals of educators and of employers. David Kerans, former Chief Executive Officer of Xerox, has said: "the only education that prepares us for change is liberal education. In periods of change, narrow specialisation condemns us to inflexibility. We need the intellectual tools to be problem solvers. ... It is not simply what you know that counts, but the ability to use what you know" (AAC&U 2002: 28).

Table 2: Percentage of employers who want colleges to "place more emphasis" on essential learning outcomes

Learning outcomes	Issues	%
Knowledge of human cultures and the physical and natural world	Science and technology	82%
	Global issues	72%
	The role of the US in the world	60%
	Cultural values/traditions (US/global)	53%
Intellectual and practical skills	Critical thinking and analytic reasoning	73%
	Written and oral communication	73%
	Information literacy	70%
	Creativity and innovation	70%
	Complex problem solving	64%
Personal and social responsibility	Intercultural competence (teamwork in diverse groups)	76%
	Intercultural knowledge (global knowledge)	72%
	Ethics and values	56%
Integrative learning	Applied knowledge in real-world settings	73%

Effective educational practices

The last four decades in particular have unleashed unprecedented intellectual and pedagogical creativity in the United States as academic disciplines redefine their boundaries, interdisciplinary approaches deepen comprehension, colleges renegotiate their relationship with their local and global communities, and students practise applying knowledge to real-world issues. The form in which this creativity has expressed itself includes a wide range of locations in the curriculum and inventive approaches to teaching content. Below are some of what have come to be regarded as some of the most effective educational practices in US colleges and universities:

– first-year seminars and experiences
– common intellectual experiences
– learning communities

– writing-intensive courses
– collaborative assignments and projects
– undergraduate research
– diversity and global learning
– service learning, community-based learning
– internships
– culminating, synthesising projects in majors and programmes.

The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) has been gathering data on student learning and what kinds of college environment enhance their engagement. In their 2007 survey drawn from 313 000 students at 610 four-year colleges and universities, they paid particular attention to examining which kinds of activity boost students' performance. They identified several which they call "high-impact practices" that contribute to thinking critically, solving real-world problems and working effectively with others – all critical skills in a global century. NSSE singled out five in particular that demonstrated a strong influence on student learning: learning communities, undergraduate research, study abroad, internships and culminating or capstone projects within majors and specialised programme areas.

The disturbing news is that first generation college students and students of colour in the US are less likely to be able to take advantage of these high yield pedagogies even though evidence demonstrates their benefits. For countries who believe it is both the right thing to do and practical to invest in the intellectual and social capital of all students, these findings suggest some interventions need to be implemented to ensure that all students have opportunities to experience these kinds of effective educational practices and pedagogies. George D. Kuh, the former director of NSSE, summarised these implications in his 2008 study on high-impact educational practices (Kuh 2008).

Carlos Silveira, Professor of Art at California State University, Long Beach, is an educator who has sought to incorporate multiple elements among these practices. The result for students has been a life-changing, intellectually and civically horizon-expanding course that represents the kind of inventive possibilities available. Silveira had already incorporated social justice service-learning projects into his arts education courses in Long Beach, working with advocacy groups like women's shelters, agencies for runaway youth and organisations serving HIV-positive clients. He then developed what he describes as a global "cross-cultural curricular model designed to foster social advocacy and multicultural sensitivity in college students ... and provide individuals, particularly disenfranchised youth, with positive life alternatives and heightened self-esteem" (Silveira 2007: 8). First the students on the US side worked in pairs to design lesson plans for disadvantaged youth in Phnom Penh, including HIV-positive children, their teenage care-givers and young women rescued from sex trafficking. When US students arrived in Cambodia in January 2005 for three weeks, they were then paired with students from the

Paññāsāstra University of Cambodia (PUC) who worked in new teams to create another version of the plans, making sure they were appropriate for the designated populations and drawing on Cambodian arts. These cross-national student teams created projects involving community murals, social advocacy posters, shadow puppets, paintings and dance to create emotional self-portraits.

Silveira says he came to realise that students needed more preparation before the trip so students now take a required class, "Art and Social Action: A Global Perspective", before the three-week experiential trip. They then follow up on their return with a special topics class, as Silveira explains, to "help them to reflect on their experiences and translate their new concept of civic engagement into their daily lives" (Silveira 2007: 8). Developing a more complex understanding of inequality, American students examined how "the intersections of political systems, class structures, gender, race, and ethnicity perpetuate cycles of poverty among communities" (ibid.). One of the students on the trip describes its long-term impact on her life choices: "I returned from Cambodia wanting to do more, and I plan to make that my career, to help people through the power of creativity and self-actualisation. ... I know now that I can touch some of their lives in some way and give them the power to change their lives and others around them" (ibid.). She is now an artist-in-residence for Arts for Global Citizenship, a non-profit organisation Silveira founded.

Closing remark

I will end where I began, with Terry Tempest Williams' quotation. Her words challenge us as citizens and as educators. Williams couples democracy with thinking as I have earlier coupled democracy with liberal education. Each offers universal values in the face of tumult and change. "Democracy," Williams writes, "invites us to take risks. It asks that we vacate the comfortable seat of certitude, remain pliable, and act, ultimately, in behalf of the common good" (Williams 2004). There is a lot at stake in getting things right in higher education at this historic juncture, but it requires us to experiment, invent, create and then measure the impact. Evidence suggests that innovations in pedagogies, especially ones that remove students from their comfort zone and place them in a contact zone with unfamiliar people and situations, accelerate knowledge. Evidence is mounting as well that essential learning goals requiring students to apply their knowledge to real-world problems create better thinkers and more responsible citizens. The question remains, do we in the academy have the courage, vision and will, like Carlos Silveira, to try to do it?

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Universities and communities collaborating on democracy

Nancy Cantor

Higher education in a converging and diverging world

We live in a world in which our lives are converging at the speed of light. Such ancient connections as global trade now take place in nanoseconds, and international markets and currencies fall or rise by the hour. Disease vectors accelerate epidemics into pandemics, and pop culture spreads in all its variety in a matter of days or weeks in the limitless life of the Internet. In such a world, our institutions are changing more slowly, but the trend is also towards interconnection as we have seen in the establishment of international courts and international governmental institutions such as the European Union. Every day, space and time divide us less.

Despite these convergences – indeed, sometimes because of them – divisions persist and expand. Every day, we can see and measure the growth of economic and educational inequalities within and between countries. We witness and participate in cultural, ethnic and religious conflicts, and communities everywhere are experiencing clashes between growth and sustainability. Each of the following threatens our common gains:

– The distribution of wealth in democratic societies is much less like the familiar bell curve than a barbell. Furthermore, the poor are disproportionately women and members of ethnic minority groups.

– The demographics of many of our countries are changing dramatically – with growth in racial/ethnic minority groups and shifting patterns of immigration, and we are failing to educate and tap this talent.

– In many urban centres in democracies around the globe, the cradle-to-prison pipeline is overpowering the cradle-to-college pipeline.[28]

– Degradation of the environment is increasing exponentially and threatens the future prosperity of developed and developing economies, as well as our health and well-being.

– Interethnic and intercultural conflicts are escalating everywhere, even as the so-called "clash of civilisations" spreads fear and encourages insularity.

In such a landscape, democracy itself is at risk, for democratic citizenship entails more than voting and residence. As John Dewey wrote, democracy is "more than

28. Under its Cradle to Prison Pipeline Initiative®, the Children's Defense Fund has amassed extensive documentation of these phenomena in the US, available on their website: www.childrensdefensefund.org. For an overview of the initiative and the problems it seeks to address, see Edelman 2006:1, 16-17.

a form of government: it is primarily a mode of associated living, a conjoint communicated experience" (Dewey 1916: 87). Dewey emphasised both the essential stakeholder rights of a democracy and the essential flexibility of democratic institutions to encourage communal responsibility. Such a society "makes provision for participation in its good of all its members on equal terms" and "secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through the interaction of different forms of associated life" (Dewey 1916: 99). In other words, democracy requires mutual support to ensure a productive and peaceful society.

Higher education has a special role to play in navigating this world of simultaneous convergence and divergence. Not only do we produce and stimulate innovations, but we also educate citizens and serve as catalysts and sites for the practice of democratic living. In this, we are uniquely positioned to identify, study, teach and enact the competencies required to thrive in convergence while bridging the gaps that divide us. When we do this, we can model the democratic practices critical to the future of a productive society.

Facilitating convergence by engaging community

This vision of an engaged university goes against the grain of the histories of many American colleges and universities. In the 19th and 20th centuries, they modelled themselves largely on the great universities of Europe, taking a step back from the problems of the day and abstracting themselves from worldly affairs. With the exception of the great land grant universities founded to improve agriculture, many institutions of higher education became ivory towers, disengaged from and suspicious of the marketplace, at odds with industry and commerce, and interacting little with elementary and secondary education, except as consumers of the products of these schools. Too often, colleges and universities focused less on preparing students for their roles as citizens than for careers more narrowly conceived (Bok 2006). Too often, they settled for a vision of students as passive learners. We must reverse this orientation if we want to welcome a diverse populace into our ranks, bridge the divides that imperil our world, and fulfil our responsibilities as place-based institutions with much to contribute in a knowledge-based world.[29]

We cannot afford the notion of the university as a place apart. We must engage the most pressing problems of the day and bridge the divides (Cantor & Schomberg 2003). In practice, that means strategic engagement with the world. We must partner with industry, creating consortia to educate workers for the realities of the 21st-century economy. We must pool expertise with elementary and secondary schools to integrate curricula and build a pipeline of inclusive human capital from pre-kindergarten through college. We must find ways to connect the lessons of the classroom to the lessons of the world, immersing students in their local and global

29. Several recent, major studies underline such an understanding of American higher education institutions and advocate for supporting them in these roles. See, for example, Vey 2007; Cortright 2009; and Brophy & Godsil 2009.

communities where they can learn from communities of experts and take on the pressing, complex and integrated problems facing the world today. Crucial to our success will be cultivating faculty members who are prepared to embrace their role as scholars and teachers under this new paradigm of engagement, and rewarding their publicly engaged scholarship.[30]

Scholarship in action

Enthusiasm for publicly engaged scholarship and teaching has grown across the United States to the point at which it may justifiably be called a "movement".[31] It encompasses institutions of every type, public and private, crossing the spectrum from Grand Rapids Community College in Grand Rapids, Michigan to Bates College, a small liberal arts college in Lewiston, Maine, to the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia. Models for engagement are as varied as the institutions themselves.[32]

At Syracuse University, we have institutionalised an explicit commitment to connect the "work of the university" (discovery and education) with the pressing issues of the day in Syracuse, as this older (at least in the American context) industrial city remakes itself, issues in which the global is reflected in the local. This commitment, called "Scholarship in Action", also drives our many national and international programmes and collaborations. It is a vital, central agenda built on strategic, disciplined and reciprocal partnerships around pressing community needs – especially the need for social justice – as well as substantive areas of opportunity and strength for the university. These areas include environmental sustainability and justice; inclusive urban education; art, technology and design; and neighbourhood and cultural entrepreneurship.

Scholarship in Action grows authentically out of the interests of both faculty and community members, and our students are deeply involved. It draws not only upon our institutional strengths and the promise of our partnerships, but also on our history, which in Syracuse has included vigorous campaigns for social justice and peace. Syracuse was the capital of the six historic indigenous Haudenosaunee Nations that gave our nation's founders a model for our federal system of government. Our city was a hotbed for abolition, our region the cockpit of the struggle by

30. There is a growing literature on integrating public scholarship into the reward structure for tenure and promotion of university faculty. See, for example, Ellison & Eatman 2008.

31. At the forefront of this as an educational movement in the United States is the Association of American Colleges and Universities. See, for example, AAC&U 2002 and the association's Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) programme at www.aacu.org/leap/index.cfm. See also the work of The Netter Center for Community Partnerships at the University of Pennsylvania (www.upenn.edu/ccp/index.php), which has, for many years, taken a leadership role in demonstrating the effective integration of scholarship and education in community engagement.

32. For examples of public scholarship on varying scales at these institutions, see the efforts of Grand Rapids Community College faculty member Mursalata Muhammad at haikumiddlepassageexhibit.blogspot.com; the Harward Center for Community Partnerships at Bates College at www.bates.edu/harward-center.xml; and the local engagement efforts of the University of Pennsylvania under the aegis of "The Penn Compact" at www.upenn.edu/compact/locally.html.

women suffragists. Even the building of the Erie Canal has given us a template for collaboration and innovation, suggesting a current partnership in new technology that runs the length of the New York State Thruway.

We have powerful incentives to move forward as quickly as possible. As part of the deindustrialisation of our region, Syracuse has bled jobs and population for many years. This has led to huge problems and great chasms between the haves and the have-nots. These are critical societal issues, and the stakes are very high.

Scholarship in Action is a two-way street, attuned to the world where it is making a difference and to the academic disciplines, where it is making an impact. By its very nature, it raises questions about who we are, with whom we partner, whom we educate and in what we invest. It changes how we do our work, as the "work of the university" and "the work of the world" coincide.

We see this interweaving of the work of the campus and the work of the community in our major areas of investment:

– We are working together to reclaim Onondaga Lake, a sacred site for the Haudenosaunee, but subject to decades of industrial abuse that left it as one of the most polluted bodies of water in the United States. It is being cleaned up today by a consortium of scientists, Native American activists and the corporations who once polluted it. In the process, humanists and social scientists are joining local residents to give voice to, and address, the racial and gender disparities of environmental injustice. Syracuse's Center of Excellence in Environmental and Energy Systems is playing a pivotal role in this and related work in our region. This federation of 200 firms – including scientists, engineers, and industry professionals – engages in a broad range of projects focused on improving human health and performance in built environments, clean and renewable energy sources, and the complex dynamics of our water resources. The centre's new home is emblematic of its mission: a LEED-certified "platinum" headquarters that is rising on the site of a reclaimed brownfield site in downtown Syracuse.[33]
– With local, state and federal partners, we are building a signature cultural zone, the Connective Corridor, between the higher education institutions and hospitals – or, as we often refer to them, "EDs and MEDs" – on our hill and the city below. Syracuse has remarkable cultural institutions that have survived the decay of a post-industrial city, and many multicultural neighbourhoods are filled with tremendous talent too often ignored. The Connective Corridor, a collaboration with architects, artists, designers, engineers, entrepreneurs, politicians and more, will quite literally bring these cultural and human assets to light, through technology hot-spots, urban reforestation and public art, such as videos projected on the sides of buildings.

33. The US Green Building Council's LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) rating system certifies green building design, with platinum as the highest achievable rating. See www.usgbc.org for more information.

– We have joined local foundations, corporations and neighbourhood groups to form a non-profit organisation that is overseeing the multimillion-dollar revitalisation of a portion of one of the country's poorest zip codes, located on the Near West Side of Syracuse. Now dominated by dilapidated warehouses, but including single- and multi-family homes and apartments, this area is being rejuvenated around the SALT District – Syracuse Arts, Life, Technology – incorporating "green" building principles throughout. The new non-profit partnership has begun to transform the neighbourhood, leveraging funds from the partners, as well as government and foundation grants to renovate houses and warehouses. It has also begun to collaborate with the Syracuse City School District to reform neighbourhood schools and attract artists to live and create in new and renovated living and gallery spaces.

– Partnering with corporations and community members, we have created the Southside Innovation Center, a university-community collaborative for women- and minority-owned business incubation. It engages faculty and students from all over campus with neighbourhood entrepreneurs to work on these business start-ups through micro-credit loans, entrepreneurship workshops and technology training.

– We are engaged in comprehensive urban school reform, collaborating with the Say Yes to Education Foundation and the Syracuse City School District to provide "middle class" opportunities to poor, largely students of colour in the city schools and to reverse the cradle-to-prison pipeline to a cradle-to-college pipeline. It includes academic, socio-emotional and health support from kindergarten through high school, and financial support for college from a consortium of public and private colleges and universities that eliminates one of the greatest barriers standing between poor American children and a higher education.

Authenticity, diversity and excellence

At the heart of convergence and the bridging of divides is the need for Dewey's "mode of associative living" that engages and embraces a rich multicultural diversity of standpoints, perspectives, peoples and ideas. This happens most compellingly and authentically when we interweave the work of the campus and the work of the community in sustained projects with mutual benefits – work that requires both reflection and reciprocity.

While the pursuit of innovation draws upon our technical and professional skills, it also calls upon us to listen. In Syracuse, this means listening to our indigenous experts from the Onondaga Nation (one of the six Haudenosaunee Nations) as they describe their land claim to motivate clean-up of Onondaga Lake; to the women and minority entrepreneurs starting businesses through the Southside Innovation Center, in the heart of their neighbourhood; to local artists whose work survives even where buildings are boarded up and home is worlds away; and to children in

our community who may not graduate from high school, but already know much about the world.

As Roslyn Esperon, a Syracuse University Art History graduate who worked with high school students in a creative writing and digital photography programme in the Syracuse City School District, remarked:

> It's hard to teach these students because they're so creative that what you teach them is immediately outdated and irrelevant, and they're on to something else. We talk about things, just everyday conversations. One student started crying and hid in his coat. Then he pulled himself together and said he was worried about when his welfare and social security checks were coming in. I'm 20, and I don't have to deal with these things. He's 14, and he does. It makes you see the wider world, even if the wider world is in your back yard.

Our partnerships are neither internships nor "outreach". Nor do they fall within the ambit of "service learning". As Nancy L. Thomas has observed, problem solving *for* communities is "an outdated and elitist view" (Thomas 2000: 90). Rather, these are deep and reciprocal partnerships in which everyone has voice and expertise, where mutuality is critical. We are practising democracy and fine-tuning our relationships with – and understanding of – the world.

In many of these projects, faculty and students and community groups co-inhabit time and space in a very rich landscape of exploration, naturally engaging many dimensions of social and cultural and intellectual diversity, crossing boundaries of disability, sexuality, class, religion, nationality, ethnicity and race.

The multicultural life of an urban centre like Syracuse, both in terms of long-standing communities and recent immigrant communities, can quickly multiply the "presence" and "power" of diversity on our campus. This is not a one-sided benefit: the community members who engage in these collaborations feel, by their own testimony, tremendous empowerment in lead roles that, for once, command the attention of the "powers that be".

The tables often quickly turn in these collaborations as to who is the expert and who the novice, who is teaching and who is learning, and what is being discovered and by whom. As the tables turn, a lesson is learned about the relationship between diversity and excellence, as new ideas spring from new perspectives, the mixing of roles and embracing difference in ways that build new trust.

The dynamic of reciprocity that has developed between our campus and our community is opening up new avenues of mutual appreciation. For example, as we work on environmental justice issues in Syracuse, including the cleanup of Onondaga Lake, the long-standing expertise of the Onondaga people has as much credibility and place as that of our environmental scientists and social scientists. The mutual trust developed in this work has also helped us tremendously in recruiting Native American students and in ensuring that they in turn feel a sense of respect and place on campus. At Syracuse University, our Native American undergraduate student population has grown from 18 students three years ago to 118 this year. We have

a particularly close relationship with the Haudenosaunee, and we provide full financial support for any qualified student from the Six Nations to attend Syracuse University. Today we have 56 Haudenosaunee Promise scholars, whose education is fully funded, and many are first-generation college students.

Crossing boundaries, navigating dialogue

Navigating this "public space" of collaboration is neither easy nor conflict free, but it does call for honing skills critical to democratic living, whether as students, scholars or citizens**.** It is impossible to sustain large-scale collaborations without crossing boundaries of all sorts, practising the ability to talk, empathise and understand each other, as individuals and as members of groups, and to find ways to expand our capacities to do this.

In Syracuse, this means creating environments of intergroup and intercultural dialogue, "safe spaces" to air conflict, confront difficult conversations head-on, and gradually build empathy of mind that can sustain trust and collaboration. We work on this in many contexts.

Some, such as our growing curriculum structured around intergroup dialogues, are explicitly designed to air and address difficult dialogues. This educational model gives students in-depth opportunities to develop the skills to be engaged citizens and leaders of diverse groups in economic, social and political institutions, both nationally and internationally. It creates "dialogue circles" that bring together students from two or more social identity groups in small-group, co-operative-learning environments. These provide meaningful, sustained interactions across such divides as race, gender and sexuality. Programme components are implemented not only through residence hall activities – Conversations About Race and Ethnicity (CARE) – but also through courses open to all Syracuse University undergraduates. Syracuse University is also participating in the Multi-University Intergroup Dialogue Project headed by University of Michigan social psychologist Patricia Gurin. It brings together teachers and researchers from nine institutions of higher education to develop best practices in intergroup dialogue, including the development and implementation of a shared curriculum.[34]

The city of Syracuse and the surrounding region also have a long tradition of crossing boundaries to understand difference. Syracuse is home to Community Wide Dialogue (CWD) to End Racism, the longest-running dialogue programme on ending racism in the United States.[35] Using methods similar to the dialogue circles employed on campus, CWD creates a forum for action among people from Syracuse and the surrounding region who may not otherwise have the opportunity

34. Regarding this approach to intergroup engagement, see Pettigrew & Tropp (2006); and Gurin, Nagada & Lopez (2004). For a detailed description of the Multi-University Intergroup Dialogue Project, see Nagada, Gurin, Sorensen, & Zuniga (2009).
35. A complete description of the Community-Wide Dialogue to End Racism, may be found at http://www.interfaithworkscny.org/programs/cwd/.

to meet, work and learn from one another, forging racial and ethnic healing that leads to community action and understanding.

Religious difference is another dimension bridged by dialogue in our region, exemplified by Women Transcending Boundaries. This grassroots organisation that grew from a conversation over coffee between two women – one Christian and one Muslim – in the wake of 9/11 now connects more than 400 women. Through seminars, speakers, symposia, lectures, literature and social interactions, women from many religious and cultural traditions nurture mutual respect and understanding by sharing information about their diverse beliefs, customs and practices and by working together to address common concerns.[36]

While intergroup dialogues are explicitly structured to engage across divides, air conflicts safely, and build common cause through empathy, "natural experiments" occasionally enable similar convergences in other classroom and collaborative contexts. A recent incident from COLAB, our interdisciplinary design studio on the Near West Side of Syracuse, illustrates this point. It happened in a class where students were asked to create objects to interact with each other and to use technology to extend the reach of the human body. Two of the students, Lily Chong and Matt Kalish, were thinking about interactive toys, perhaps ones with eyes that lit up.

One day, during a critique of student projects, someone in the class brushed aside an idea by saying: "That's so gay". There was a brief debate afterwards about whether this was offensive, but Lily and Matt left the class feeling there must be some way to acknowledge distress within a group and immediately take on the "elephant in the room".

So they imagined toy elephants that could communicate with wireless chips. The eyes of the elephant would light up if someone squeezed it for three seconds, and then the eyes of all the other elephants in the room would light up too, without really revealing who started it (Zernike 2009).

Lily, a student leader in one of our residence halls, says she will try the elephants during dialogue circles with her peers. Most importantly, this illustrates the two-way street of Scholarship in Action, because as Lily brings her experiences from COLAB back up onto the university hill, they will greatly enrich our many on-campus efforts to pursue the difficult dialogues that must be a central part of any engaged university.

Amplifying local-global resonances

The more we embed our scholarship and education in partnerships with communities that have different histories, standpoints and skills, the better off we are. This kind of genuine interactivity enables us to see beyond the stereotypes that cloud understanding between people of different backgrounds, to avert the proverbial "clash of

36. A complete description of Women Transcending Boundaries may be found at http://www.wtb.org/.

civilisations". As the Aga Khan, the spiritual leader of Shia Ismaili Muslims, has said: "The clash, if there is such a broad civilisational collision, is not of cultures but of ignorance" (Aga Khan 2004).

President Obama recently reiterated this point in his far-reaching speech delivered in Egypt on Islam and the West:

> I am convinced that in order to move forward, we must say openly to each other the things we hold in our hearts and that too often are said only behind closed doors. There must be a sustained effort to listen to each other; to learn from each other; to respect one another; and to seek common ground … Around the world, we can turn dialogue into interfaith service, so bridges between peoples lead to action – whether it is combating malaria in Africa, or providing relief after a natural disaster (Obama 2009).

Bridges emerge when universities and communities collaborate on issues that resonate across cultures, groups and communities, whether they are in Syracuse or Cairo. No university and no community are immune from the divisiveness of fear and conflict, whether those emerge in a cultural, ethnic or religious context or pertain most directly to the repercussions of poverty and class. All of us can heal divisions by developing capacities for democratic practice, engaging in difficult dialogue and collaborating to ensure a healthy physical and social environment in which our children can learn, our students become citizens and our scholars work to make a difference through innovation and discovery.

Again as President Obama has suggested:

> There's so much fear, so much mistrust that has built up over the years. But if we choose to be bound by the past, we will never move forward. And I want to particularly say this to young people of every faith, in every country – you, more than anyone, have the ability to reimagine the world, to remake this world (Obama 2009).

It is our task to provide the next generation with the opportunity to steer this new course of peace and prosperity; a course of convergence built on democratic living.

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Higher education for dialogue

Gabriele Mazza and Sjur Bergan

Democracy, human rights and intercultural dialogue

In May 2008, the Council of Europe adopted and published a White Paper on Intercultural Dialogue (Council of Europe 2008). The White Paper, entitled "Living together as equals in dignity", spells out how the Council of Europe can promote intercultural dialogue and understanding across the full range of its activities, from human rights through social cohesion to education, culture and sports. It is an important policy statement by the leading intergovernmental organisation in the areas of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. The White Paper also testifies to how democracy, human rights and the rule of law cannot be reduced merely to legal provisions or institutional arrangements. To become and to remain a reality, democracy, human rights and the rule of law must be based on democratic culture, which is the set of attitudes, understanding, skills and behaviour that makes democracy work in practice. Today, when we live in what is far too often described by the cliché "a globalised world", democratic culture is unthinkable without citizens proficient in intercultural dialogue. In this article, we would like to offer some thoughts on the particular role of higher education in furthering intercultural dialogue, in keeping with the White Paper.

Our first point will be to underline the importance of conducting a dialogue on the substance of higher education policies and reforms. A part of the debate on intercultural dialogue focuses on the process of dialogue itself. This is an important discussion, but we believe the main contribution of higher education – other than the research that of course lies behind process oriented considerations on intercultural dialogue – lies in considering the challenges of adapting higher education policies to the circumstances of the world in which we live today. Perhaps even more importantly, the contribution of higher education to intercultural dialogue should lie in considering the broader purposes of higher education – our contribution to human society and not least to human dignity (Council of Europe 2007; Weber & Bergan 2005).

Higher education as a partner in dialogue

Higher education is a natural – even obvious – partner in intercultural dialogue, even if we must also admit that the world of higher education has not always been articulate about its responsibilities in this area. There are academic heroes who have dedicated their lives and careers to furthering democracy and intercultural understanding but there are also those who have done the exact opposite (Bergan 2004: 25-26). They range from those who devised the Holocaust through those who

today deny it to those on the opposite extreme of the political spectrum – which is perhaps not all that opposite after all. A more appropriate way of defining the political spectrum may be to distinguish those who do not believe in democracy and dialogue from those who do and who propagate these values with dignity and respect. Alas, academics may be found on both sides of this divide.

Historically, higher education is one of the most international endeavours the world has known (Sanz & Bergan 2006). That gives higher education great possibilities and great responsibilities. Higher education has been international in its culture and essence since the founding of the first universities in the 11th and 12th centuries. If we may be allowed a brief aside, we cannot resist the temptation of noting that the longest lived institutions in European societies – the church, parliament and the university – are all international in scope. It is very tempting to draw the conclusion that whoever wants to ensure long-time survival must be international. Being international in the sense of transborder is not enough, however. Open borders are to little avail if minds are closed.

Neither the borders of a country nor the borders of the mind are conducive to intellectual development. Rather, progress in research and teaching requires open minds, a spirit of enquiry, readiness to co-operate across borders and a willingness to learn by exploring the unknown. No areas of human endeavour can be foreign to higher education institutions or to those involved in higher education in various capacities as researchers, teachers, students, administrative and technical staff members and policy makers (CDESR 2006).

The key role of higher education is further underlined by its multiplier effects. There is a popular stereotype of universities as ivory towers, but like so many stereotypes, it is a false one. Had it been true, universities would not have survived for centuries. To paraphrase John Donne, no university is an island entire of itself.[37] What universities do today have a direct impact on our societies, both today and tomorrow. If not, universities could be accused of failing to do an important part of their job.

Competences for dialogue

In training future teachers and other professionals in a whole range of academic disciplines as well as in fulfilling the role of higher education institutions and their students and staff in forming public opinion, the attitudes and values conveyed through higher education will be transmitted in very varied contexts and in all walks of life. Through their research, universities open minds and identify possible solutions to the challenges we face as societies. Who, today, can seriously maintain that learning how to live together as equals in dignity in a culturally diverse world is not one of the main challenges we face?

37. John Donne (1624): *Meditation XVII*: "No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main".

The role of higher education in promoting intercultural dialogue therefore extends well beyond the number of staff and students engaged in higher education at any one time. It extends to all those who graduate from universities to work in the broader society of which higher education is an essential part. It extends to all those who will learn from university graduates. What they will learn is not simply facts, but attitudes and abilities to put their knowledge and understanding into practice.

What competences – subject-specific as well as transversal – should higher education convey to its students and graduates to enable them to live and work as citizens of their local communities, regions and countries as well as of the world (González & Wagenaar 2003; Bergan 2007)? What competences do our students and graduates need to function personally and professionally in a world characterised by very extensive contacts across borders that may at one time have been considered impenetrable but are now often a mouse click away? What is an educated person in the modern world?

Educated people of today must understand their own history and cultural background but must also know and understand the histories and backgrounds of others. They can be neither monolingual nor computer illiterate, and they must be able to understand subtle cultural signals as well as they are able to read a balance sheet. As the saying goes, whoever knows only his mother's tongue is limited to his mother's world.

Intercultural dialogue must, as we have mentioned, be founded on a firm and well-reflected set of values as well as on a willingness to consider the values of others and to reassess one's own convictions in the light of new and convincing evidence. Educated people of today must be able to transcend the categories of "us" and "them". Dialogue presupposes openness of mind in all partners, including the capacity to look at their own values and frame of reference with critical distance. These are also essential values and characteristics of higher education.

Intercultural dialogue, however, does not mean that all views are equally valid. Some values are non-negotiable, and many of them are found in the European Convention on Human Rights (Council of Europe 1950). Intercultural dialogue faces some of the same dilemmas as our democracies: what are the rights of those who seek to avail themselves of the liberties of democracy and dialogue to destroy the very foundation on which these values are built? Not all views and values are of equal worth, and there are views that are unacceptable in modern democratic societies, notably those that deny the human dignity of others. However, while there are unacceptable views and positions that is no excuse for not trying to understand how and why those views and positions were developed. Seeking to understand the world is not the same as saying "everything goes".

Higher education for values

European higher education is based on the conviction that each human being has intrinsic value as an individual, and also that each human being is inherently

responsible for the development and well-being of other human beings, of human society as a whole and of the environment on which we depend for our survival.

To be consistent with its own values and heritage, higher education must commit to the Council of Europe's key values: human rights, democracy and the rule of law. This must be a commitment not only in words but in deeds. In this context, one of the main contributions of higher education – as well as the main contribution of other areas of education – is helping develop, maintain and transmit to new generations the democratic culture which is indispensable to making democratic institutions and democratic laws work and to make democratic societies sustainable. Democracy and intercultural dialogue are not one and the same, but many of the values and attitudes that make democracy function in practice are also required for intercultural dialogue.

Higher education is further committed to the pursuit of knowledge unhindered by established dogma or schools of thought. It is committed to judging ideas on the basis of their merit as well as to ethical reflection and behaviour. As the Magna Charta Universitatum states in the first of its fundamental principles:

> The University is an autonomous institution at the heart of societies differently organised because of geography and historical heritage; it produces, examines, appraises and hands down culture by research and teaching. To meet the needs of the world around it, its research and teaching must be morally and intellectually independent of all political authority and economic power (Magna Charta 1988).[38]

The implementation of these essential values requires freedom of teaching and of research, freedom of organisation and freedom of movement for members of the academic community. These are also essential prerequisites for intercultural dialogue.

Higher education is committed to dialogue with those whose convictions differ from our own, as a means of increased understanding and of resolving conflicts by peaceful means. These fundamental values underlie the international co-operation – throughout Europe as well as with other parts of the world – that is part and parcel of the heritage of higher education. They underlie the setting up of the European Higher Education Area by 2010 as well as the relationship and co-operation between the European Higher Education Area and other regions.

Higher education reform and values

We see Europe as a unique balance of what we as Europeans have in common and the various cultural traditions that make up an important part of Europe's richness. One may call it unity in diversity or diversity in unity. Or maybe simply *uni-versity*?

Higher education plays a key role in ensuring this richness of diversity at a time when many developments pull towards greater harmonisation rather than greater appreciation of diversity. If research-based knowledge and understanding of diversity

38. Further information on the Magna Charta Universitatum and the Observatory is available at http://www.magna-charta.org/home.html.

are lost and are no longer transmitted, cultural diversity will ultimately be lost. For the Council of Europe's part, our Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) is a unique platform of representatives of higher education institutions as well as public authorities of 49 countries and with the active participation of students and other partners. It provides a singular opportunity for intercultural dialogue in a pan-European context. Arriving at a common platform on topics such as the public responsibility for higher education and research, higher education governance, the recognition of qualifications, access to higher education and the heritage of European universities would be impossible without engaging in intercultural dialogue.

The Council of Europe has played an important role in opening the most important process of higher education reform – the Bologna Process – to all countries of the European Cultural Convention that commit to implementing the goals of the process. The Council of Europe continues to play a leading role in integrating the newest members of the process – the countries of South-Eastern Europe and the newly independent states (NIS) that joined in 2003 and later – fully into the European Higher Education Area.

Beyond its pan-European framework, the Council of Europe's higher education programme contributes to intercultural dialogue through:

– participation in the working group addressing the relationship between the European Higher Education Area and other parts of the world;
– participation in UNESCO activities, including the preparation of the UNESCO World Conference in July 2009;
– the organisation, in March 2008 and June 2009, of higher education fora on the role of higher education in furthering intercultural dialogue;
– presentations and discussions of European higher education policies in appropriate fora in other parts of the world;
– publications on various aspects of European higher education policies, through the Council of Europe Higher Education Series.

Multiple missions and converging competences

The key word for this publication is "converging competences", and that illustrates a very important feature of higher education: it is multidimensional. One would not necessarily get that impression from observing the European public debate on higher education, and you would not necessarily get that impression from observing the rhetoric and actions of higher education leaders. Rather, an "innocent observer" could easily draw the conclusion that the sole purpose of higher education is to prepare its graduates for the labour market. That *is* of course an important purpose of higher education. The error does not lie in emphasising this purpose of higher education, but in emphasising this purpose alone.

The Council of Europe takes a broader view of higher education. In our view, higher education must fulfil four key purposes (Council of Europe 2007):

– preparation for the labour market;
– preparation for life as active citizens in democratic society;
– personal development;
– the development and maintenance of a broad and advanced knowledge base.

These four purposes are equally important, and they are not contradictory, since they are meant to shape what we define as characteristics of active citizens. Rather, they support each other. Many of the characteristics of active citizens also make them attractive on the labour market and contribute to their personal development.

Our tendency to compartmentalise illustrates one of the key challenges of higher education today: we are very good at educating highly qualified specialists in a range of disciplines. We are, however, much less good at educating intellectuals, by which we mean people who can put their advanced knowledge of a specific field into its proper context and ask fundamental questions about the purposes of our existence, people who are able to make subject-specific and transversal competences meet and reinforce each other.

One of our favourite quotes on education comes from the Chilean sociologist Eugenio Tironi, who says that the answer to the question "What kind of education do we need?" is to be found in the answer to another question: "What kind of society do we want?" (Tironi 2005). We cannot imagine that the society we want would not be fluent in intercultural dialogue, and we cannot imagine that higher education would not be one of the most important actors in making intercultural dialogue possible.

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III. Converging competences

Competences, learning outcomes and convergence

Stephen Adam

This article focuses on competences, learning outcomes and convergence. Such terms and the approaches they signify are rightly becoming increasingly important in the world of higher education. They are fundamental to the Bologna Process reforms that, since 1999, have been transforming European higher education. It is important to explore why this is so and what real benefits they offer. There is also a strong connection between learning outcomes and competences and the contribution of higher education to the broader political and societal agenda which is the focus of the forum. This agenda includes promoting democracy, human rights (especially equality and social inclusion) and the rule of law. Many of these concerns are part of our common heritage drawn from ancient Greece and Rome that have become collectively known as "civic virtues". But what exactly are these key generic competences that we might like all informed citizens to possess? Do these competences converge? How might higher education institutions promote these and how do they relate to tangible curricula and institutional reform?

The need to focus on practical tools and techniques to create change

It is obvious that the overall forum themes of "converging competences, diversity, higher education and sustainable democracy" immediately raise a plethora of questions that cannot be easily answered as they prompt still more issues that can lead into a quagmire of moral, philosophical, political, social and economic debate. In order to sidestep these difficulties this intervention focuses more on the practical ways that all stakeholders, and especially staff in higher education institutions, can make real changes using "learning outcomes and competences". The use of these can ensure that the process of curriculum development leads to qualifications that deliver the "big picture" democratic concerns and priorities outlined by other forum participants. Citizens need to acquire occupational skills and knowledge – as well as civic virtues. How can we ensure that qualifications and the educational experience deliver both and avoid the classic pitfalls of political indoctrination?

Unfortunately, a focus on the dry topic of learning outcomes and competences inevitably results in making any text on the subject technical and perhaps boring. This can hopefully be overcome by incorporating a discussion of the real challenges that face our too often staid and complacent higher education institutions. Many European universities are only just becoming aware of the exigencies of the 20th – let alone the – 21st century. There is a pressing need to reconceptualise the role and organisation of our higher education institutions, especially in the light of the current global financial crisis. It is important not just to echo the importance

of lofty democratic ideals but to explore exactly how these can be translated into reality – in other words move from theory to praxis and follow the advice engraved on Karl Marx's tomb:

> The philosophers have only interpreted the world, in various ways; the point, however, is to change it (Marx 1845).

In this context "change" means the re-evaluation of old and the development of new qualifications, which explicitly reflect the forum's commitment to higher education fulfilling its fourfold purpose:

1. preparation for the labour market;
2. preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies;
3. personal development; and
4. the development and maintenance of a broad, advanced knowledge base.

This means that higher education must explicitly assume the responsibility to ensure that it advances sustainable civic engagement, human rights, tolerance and diversity, and provides graduates with the subject-specific and transferable competences (learning outcomes and skills) needed for them actively to participate in, build and maintain open democratic societies.

Higher education institutions across the world need to re-think their qualifications in terms of exactly what sets of knowledge, skills and competencies they deliver, as well as how they are effectively delivered and assessed. All this has to be accomplished in a difficult and rapidly changing social, economic and technological context. It is certainly helped by an almost universal agreement by governments across the world that their future prosperity is dependent on the level of skills and education of their citizens. The problem is that this understandable fixation has tended to overemphasise employability skills (preparation for the labour market), too often to the exclusion of all else, including rather elusive and intangible civic virtues. Education in a democratic society cannot be about producing workplace automata. It must generate active, informed, enquiring and creative citizens.

What are learning outcomes and competences?

In order to focus on the practical aspects of how to bring about appropriate bottom-up change it is first necessary to be more precise about what is understood by "learning outcomes" and "competences" before they can be offered as a sensible device to facilitate the identification and inclusion of both "hard" occupational and "soft" civic skills and abilities.

The relationship between learning outcomes and competences is a complex area – the subject of some debate and no little confusion. "Competence" and "competences" are used in association with learning outcomes in a number of ways – hence the problem. "Competence" can broadly refer, for example, to aptitude, proficiency, capability, skills and understanding. A competent person is someone with sufficient skills and knowledge and capabilities. Some take a narrow view and

equate competence solely with skills acquired by training. It should be recognised that across Europe there is no precise, common understanding or use of the term. Competences have now been fused within the more general notion of learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes are a prosaic tool with the potential to have an enormous impact on 21st-century higher education. They have become increasingly significant in Europe, partly due to the momentum generated by the Bologna educational reform process designed to modernise its antiquated higher education structures and processes. In Europe learning outcomes are now widely understood as statements of:

> ... what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate at the end of a period of learning.[39]

In other words they are explicit assertions about the outcomes (results) of learning. Learning outcomes are commonly further divided into different categories. The most common subdivisions are between: subject-specific outcomes that relate to the academic discipline and the knowledge and/or skills particular to it; and generic (sometimes called generic/transferable/transversal) outcomes that relate to any and all disciplines, for example written, oral, problem-solving, team-working skills and using information technology. The identification of generic skills is important in the context of transmitting civic virtues within the curriculum. They can and should also be embedded and fused with subject-specific learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes are crucial for the process of modern curriculum development. How they are created and expressed, and their relationship to teaching, learning and assessment, are important but not the main subject of this intervention. Suffice it to say they must be clearly conceived, capable of assessment and of an appropriate level. Vague, un-assessable formulations need to be avoided. For example, it is no good formulating a learning outcome to illustrate what a reader of this article will be able to do that just indicates:

> On completion of reading this text the reader will be able to understand the relationship between learning outcomes and educational reform.

This employs the weak, almost meaningless notion of "understand". A superior learning outcome would be:

> On completion of this article the reader will be able to critically assess the potential contribution of employing learning outcomes to promote the delivery of civic virtues within the curriculum.

Obviously, if this is to be an effective learning outcome it must be capable of assessment at an appropriate level to establish that the requisite skills, knowledge and understanding have been acquired. It could well be that such an outcome cannot

39. There is a wealth of information on learning outcomes and the Bologna reform process and the following two sites are a useful starting place: http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/BolognaSeminars/Edinburgh2008.htm and http://web.uni-marburg.de/eurostudies/studienreform/eaie_cd/ACE_CoE_CD_2005/Bologna/Bol_semin/Edinburgh/index.htm.

successfully be delivered just by reading an article. The careful consideration of appropriate delivery and assessment mechanisms is an essential part of developing learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes are a heuristic tool to assist learners and educationalists. Learning outcomes do not have a particularly edifying history. Their origins can be loosely traced to the 19th and 20th centuries and the work of Ivan Pavlov (1849-1936) and then to the work of the American "behavioural school" of psychological thought developed by J.B. Watson (1878-1958) and B.F. Skinner (1904-1990). Pavlov undertook famous experiments associated with the "conditioning" of salivating dogs. Following this the psychologists Watson and Skinner pioneered the behaviourist approach that explained human behaviour in terms of responses to external stimuli. Notwithstanding Skinner's abhorrent ideas on mass conditioning, programmed instruction and the excesses of his extreme views, this work led to productive research that improved American teaching, learning and training methods in business, industry and the armed forces. From these dangerous beginnings, learning outcomes, as an American import, have certainly assumed within Europe, as part of the Bologna Process, a widespread acceptance and a more benign and constructive use.

The multiple applications of learning outcomes in the Bologna educational reform process

Learning outcomes as educational tools are difficult to create and easy to misuse. They are a means to an end, not an end in themselves. Nonetheless, their potential importance, acting as the basic building blocks of the Bologna education reforms, make them very much part of an educational paradigm change that emphasises clear standards, explicit and transparent qualifications anchored in qualifications frameworks. It is arguable that the main end product of the Bologna reforms is better qualifications delivered through their precise re-conceptualisation based on learning outcomes and certainly not just the development of new educational structures. The application of learning outcomes requires bottom-up reforms at the institutional level where academics are responsible for creating and maintaining qualifications.

Learning outcomes exemplify a particular methodological approach for the expression and description of the curriculum (modules, units and qualifications) and level, cycle and qualifications descriptors associated with the "new style" Bologna qualifications frameworks.[40] The potential of adopting learning

40. New style qualifications frameworks are a systematic description of a national education system using descriptors based on learning outcomes that describe the achievements of graduates. These European national frameworks are linked, through a Bologna-approved process of self-certification, to the overarching Qualifications Framework of the European Higher Education Area (QF-EHEA). Further information can be found at: http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/qf/qf.asp.

outcomes to achieve real reforms cannot be overstated. They impinge on all aspects of the Bologna reforms. They are fundamental to the process of curriculum development and force an output-focused approach to teaching, learning and assessment. Their proper application ensures the reconsideration of old and the development of new qualifications and becomes a cathartic process that transforms the student experience. Curriculum developers are challenged to be explicit about the knowledge, skills and abilities their successful students will gain. The all too common repetitive examination of memory skills can be replaced by a range of creative assessment techniques that reflect a variety of learning outcomes.

The use of learning outcomes in the design and expression of all qualifications is also intimately linked to the adoption of learner-centred learning where the role of the teacher moves from being a fount of wisdom and intoner of truth to become a facilitator/manager of the learning process. Learners are not regarded as empty vessels to be filled but rather it is recognised that students come with their own perceptual frameworks, learn best in different ways and prefer different learning styles.[41] Finally, learning outcomes play an important role in the expression of external reference points (qualifications descriptors, levels, level descriptors, subject benchmark statements) that help express standards and constitute "new style" qualifications frameworks. The following chart (Table 1) provides a brief overview of their role and significance.

Table 1: Towards a typology of learning outcomes – their multiple applications in higher education reform

Mode and area of application	Features and attributes
Module (learning outcomes employed at the level of the unit or module as statements that identify what a successful learner will be able to know, understand and/or be able to do)	They are concerned with the achievements of the learner. They differ from "aims" that indicate the intentions of the teacher. They directly link to a teaching strategy for the effective delivery of the learning outcomes. They directly link to an assessment strategy and appropriate assessment criteria. They are developed in a context of a wide range of internal and external reference points and influences.

41. Since David Kolb (1984) first published his learning styles model there has been much published on this topic.

Mode and area of application	Features and attributes
Assessment and grading criteria (at the level of the module, learning outcomes can be used to express the criteria that establish the standard of achievement and the relative performance of individuals)	Assessment criteria are the description of what the learner is expected to do to demonstrate that the learning outcome has been achieved. These are normally written at threshold level and distinguish the pass and fail threshold. Grading criteria refer to the precise quality of the achievement of the outcome. They distinguish the relative performance of each student. Grading criteria are also written as learning outcomes.
Unique individual qualification descriptors (learning outcomes used for describing and expressing individual subject-specific qualifications validated/accredited by a higher education institution)	These are written individually or collectively by academics and are unique to a specific qualification and institution. They include subject-specific statements of skills, abilities and understanding. They can include general transferable/transversal skills that are sought by employers. They will be created within the context of the appropriate national and/or international "external reference points" and qualifications frameworks.
National qualification descriptors (learning outcomes as generic descriptions of types of qualifications)	These exemplify the generic (non-subject-specific) outcomes of a nationally recognised type of qualification. They are produced by appropriate national authorities. They will include statements of the wider abilities of a typical holder of the qualification (transferable/transversal skills). They are linked to national level descriptors. A generic qualifications descriptor can encompass several national level descriptors to show progression or just typify one level. They generally describe the learning achieved by a student at the finish of a qualification (as do the international "Dublin Descriptors") They act as an external reference point, for those at the institutional level, developing individual qualifications.

Mode and area of application	Features and attributes
National subject sectoral/benchmark statements (learning outcomes employed as statements designed to make explicit the general subject-specific academic characteristics and standards of programmes)	Subject sectoral/benchmark statements set out expectations about standards of degrees in a range of subject areas. They describe what gives a discipline its coherence and identity, and define what can be expected of a graduate in terms of the techniques and skills needed to develop understanding in the subject. These have been extensively developed in the UK by the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). They function as subject-specific external reference points for curriculum designers. Internationally, the Tuning project explores the significance of subject-specific and general competences. It has encouraged detailed reflection on subject-specific learning outcomes associated with the first and second Bologna cycles.
National level descriptors (learning outcomes employed as generic statements that describe the characteristics, difficulty and context of learning)	They are designed to provide a shared understanding of each level and to facilitate the comparisons to be made between qualifications and learning at each level. A qualification will often straddle several levels. Levels facilitate the notion of progression. The number and complexity of national level descriptors is a matter of national decision. They are often expressed in terms of knowledge and understanding, cognitive skills, practical applied skills, learner autonomy, etc. They represent a developmental continuum that acts as a guide to the curriculum designer and the learner. They can be expressed in terms of what the best student might achieve (aspiration) or minimum standards (threshold) or something in between. They act as an external reference point for those developing individual qualifications as well as modules and units.

Mode and area of application	Features and attributes
Cycle descriptors (also known as the "Dublin Descriptors", describe the three cycles of the Bologna overarching qualifications framework in terms of learning outcomes)	These were adopted by the 46 Bologna Process countries and used to express the three cycles of the "framework for qualifications of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA)". They are composed of generic statements of the typical expectations of achievement and abilities associated with awards that represent the end of each Bologna cycle. They function as meta-level international descriptors (guidance tools) that act as an external reference point for those developing "new style" national qualifications frameworks and national level descriptors. They are similar to the eight "levels" of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (EQF) in function and nature.

Learning outcomes, civic values and the Bologna reform process?

The application of learning outcomes in higher education has a critical function in the wider political and societal spheres. Their use can help ensure that education is not reduced to just training. This helps to counter the current danger of domination by "market forces" in shaping the educational agenda. They can be used to facilitate "access" and "social inclusion". They force us to consider and articulate our values, moral attitudes and ethics – and to embed them in the curricula. In the long term, an enriched curriculum promotes social cohesion and an understanding of the diversity that increasingly marks modern life. These sorts of "life skills" are normally assumed to be implicit in our educational systems and qualifications but their neglect and lack of articulation has impoverished our society; without them we cannot hope to have informed, engaged, responsible graduates and citizens. This is clearly recognised by Bologna ministers who in 2007 pronounced:

> We reaffirm our commitment to increasing the compatibility and comparability of our higher education systems, whilst at the same time respecting their diversity. We recognise the important influence higher education institutions (HEIs) exert on developing our societies, based on their traditions as centres of learning, research, creativity and knowledge transfer as well as their key role in defining and transmitting the values on which our societies are built. Our aim is to ensure that our HEIs have the necessary resources to continue to fulfil their full range of purposes. Those purposes include: preparing students for life as active citizens in a democratic society; preparing students for their future careers and enabling their personal development; creating and maintaining a broad, advanced knowledge base; and stimulating research and innovation (Bologna Process 2007).

These are very positive and fine sentiments but the first purpose (preparing students for life as active citizens in a democratic society) is rarely, if ever, translated into concrete action using learning outcomes – this is the huge challenge and makes the work of the forum and subsequent development timely and significant.

The relationship between democracy and education

The relationship between democracy and education is fundamental to the forum's debates, and is perfectly illustrated by the following quote:

> Not that long ago, during a discussion of university teaching, a friend of mine posed an interesting question: "who," he asked, "is your ideal student?" After some thought, I replied something like this: one who has understood the course materials in relation to her own experiences of the world; one who has considered the validity of these course materials, challenged them, and found them to be inadequate on their own; one who has formulated her own, independent analysis of the world and her own position within it, and has found that these, also, are not complete.
>
> Upon further reflection, I found that this "ideal student" closely resembles my vision of an "ideal citizen" in a radical democracy. Substitute "common good" for "course materials" in the above description, and see what happens. To me, this similarity underscores the relationship between education and democracy. Not only should education (formal and informal) foster the types of awareness, empowerment, and participation that are crucial to active, democratic citizenship, but the processes of democracy themselves should be educative, dynamic, and ongoing. In this context, universities need to be both sites of education for democracy and sites, themselves, of democracy (Sandilands 1993).

The imperative message here is that all higher education institutions need to be both sites of education for democracy and sites, themselves, of democracy. The problem is often that they are neither! They often pay insufficient or no attention to including civic virtues in the curriculum and frequently have closed secretive decision-making processes that make a mockery of participatory democracy. Fortunately, there are good examples of good practice in the United States and Europe, several of which were highlighted in presentations at the forum.

Examples of competences in practice

The following five presentations made at the Council of Europe Forum on "Converging Competences: Diversity, Higher Education, and Sustainable Democracy" illuminate a number of innovative and diverse, practical examples of good practice in the application of learning outcomes and competences to advance democracy:

– Dr Ding-Jo Currie, President of Coastline Community College, California, United States, spoke about the Kaleidoscope Leadership Institute.[42] She described practical and successful programmes that inspired women of colour towards leadership roles. These programmes promote access and social

42. For more information on the Kaleidoscope Leadership Institute, see http://coastline.edu/kaleidoscope.

inclusion and employ mentors to help career planning as well as cross-cultural understanding. These are specific, targeted initiatives that improve social equality.

– Georgia Nugent, President of Kenyon College, Ohio, United States, spoke about the educational mission of her institution.[43] She emphasised the civic mission of her "liberal arts college" and the unique characteristics of such institutions and the diversity of students they cater for. They focus on "learning how to learn" and specifically exclude training for particular jobs and professions. They are designed to prepare students in terms of problem solving, communication skills and their mission often includes an explicit moral/ethical dimension.

– Žarko Nožica, Pro-rector of the University of Applied Sciences in Zagreb (a EURASHE[44] member institution) explored the impact of the Bologna reforms on his institution and how these reforms were helping to create an educational convergence across Europe where institutions face many common challenges.

– Áine Hyland, Former Vice-President of University College Cork (an EUA member institution), explained how her institution's strategic plan emphasised and valued effective and innovative teaching.[45] An important part of this was the intensive "learning outcomes project", which ensured that all modules and courses were re-written in terms of learning outcomes. Good staff development and support were features of this innovation, which provides an excellent case study of how to achieve change.

– Jeanine Bruun, European Students' Union (ESU), described the situation in her home institution, Oslo University College, Norway.[46] She described its strategic plan and the sophisticated teacher-student systems for interaction, together with its positive policies to promote multicultural learning and international student mobility.

These institutions in their different ways focus on redressing what could be termed part of the academic "democratic deficit" by rethinking the role, reach and responsibilities of academic institutions, combined with new approaches for the delivery of the skills and competences necessary for citizens and society in the 21st century.

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43. For more information on Kenyon College, see http://www.kenyon.edu/x1174.xml.
44. The European Association of Institutions of Higher Education; see http://www.eurashe.be/.
45. For firther information on University College Cork, Ireland, see http://www.ucc.ie/en/. The European University Association (EUA) represents and supports higher education institutions in 46 countries, providing them with a unique forum to co-operate and keep abreast of the latest trends in higher education and research policies: http://www.eua.be/.
46. More information on the European Students' Union can be found at http://www.esib.org/. Further information on Oslo University College (OUC), Norway, is available at http://www.hio.no/content/view/full/4563.

The connection between learning outcomes and competences and the contribution of higher education to the broader political and societal agenda

Although the main focus of this session was the exploration of practical hands-on ways to promote sustainable democracy values, equality and social inclusion, it is valuable to be more precise about the connection between learning outcomes and competences and the contribution of higher education to the broader political and societal agenda. This forces us to consider some fundamental questions:

- Are the purposes of higher education changing in the 21st century and do higher education institutions fulfil the current needs of our societies? There is mounting evidence that the heady mix of globalisation, terrorism, new technologies and public disengagement with politics underlines the need for change. Ironically, this change may, in part, require a return to older approaches (Renaissance humanist education?) with an emphasis on a wider education that encompasses the whole person and not just their narrow training and employment needs.
- What general transferable/transversal skills should we value? To live in a complex fast changing society these might well include: the ability to listen, interact and communicate, to be active and proactive, to understand other cultures and religions and be aware of our own cultural identity.
- What is the role of higher education institutions in the 21st century? This breaks down into specific challenges concerning the who, what, why, where, how and when of education. Traditional educational structures and ideas of the purposes of education are being challenged.
- What is the public responsibility for higher education – particularly quality assurance – as education provision becomes more diversified and international?
- What is the role of the university as a site for democratic citizenship and what does this mean in practice for the curriculum as well as for the internal functioning of our institutions? Too often, citizenship concerns are missing or relegated to a teaching ghetto resented by students, whilst within institutions governance is undertaken by a secretive clique with no public minutes or discussion of key decisions.

It is easy to identify some of the key generic competences that informed citizens should possess and all higher education institutions should promote, by taking these from the Council of Europe mandate set out below. The key test is how to encourage higher education institutions to translate these into viable and effective learning outcomes that can inform curricula in an engaging way:

- helping to incorporate the principles of human rights, democracy, tolerance and mutual respect, the rule of law and peaceful resolution of conflicts into the daily practice of teaching and learning;
- to protect human rights, pluralist democracy and the rule of law;

- to promote awareness and encourage the development of Europe's cultural identity and diversity;
- to find common solutions to the challenges facing European society: such as discrimination against minorities, xenophobia, intolerance, bioethics and cloning, terrorism, trafficking in human beings, organised crime and corruption, cyber-crime, violence against children;
- to consolidate democratic stability in Europe by backing political, legislative and constitutional reform **(**Council of Europe 2005)

The convergence of the various goals of higher education and their implications for higher education institutions

There is clearly some level of agreement about the convergence of the four higher education goals as expressed at the forum and identified in the London Communiqué. The individual goals should not be regarded in any sort of priority or competing way. The goals of higher education can mutually reinforce rather than contradict each other. They are interlinked and should not be seen as separate entities as the divisions between them are not clear cut. Perhaps the most radical point to be made, drawn from the Bologna experience, is that qualifications should be described in qualifications frameworks in such a way as to cover the full purposes of education.

There are practical ways in which higher education institutions can promote the fourfold purpose of higher education via curricula and institutional reform. It could be traumatic for many institutions as they represent a far-reaching cultural shock that includes:

- re-examination of institutional structure and process and the evaluation of the level of transparency, democracy (governance) and representation (staff and students) within the institution;
- reconsideration of the mission of higher education institutions to include civic virtues;
- strategic plans for appropriate staff development and curriculum development to express curricula in terms of learning outcomes and competences – a cathartic process;
- introduction of learner/student-centred learning;
- developing an appropriate, dynamic process of staff development and training.

National and international challenges

In Europe, the United States and across the globe, higher education providers and stakeholders are at present confronted by a series of urgent questions. These are useful areas for further Europe-US co-operation. Judgments need to be made:

- How do we ensure that the contribution to the broader political and societal needs (civic virtues) of learning outcomes and competences in higher education

moves up the policy agenda? Universities are facing increasingly difficult challenges associated with diversity, financial meltdown and social tensions.

– What is the role of these "converging not competing competences" in relation to questions about the rights of citizens, the content of their education and why, where, how and when we educate citizens?
– How do converging competences challenge our conception of education and higher education institutions in the 21st century (including their structure, management and mission)?
– What is the nature of non-subject-specific transversal/transferable skills and how can they be translated into reality (curriculum change)? They are not easy to write and even harder to translate into assessable practical activities. How can they be integrated with subject-specific skills and not sequestered in an academic ghetto and often resented by specialist students?
– What are the implications of introducing these converging competences into the curriculum for teaching, learning and assessment? How can we better share good practice?
– How do we overcome prejudice against the introduction of "civic virtues", sometimes described disparagingly as "soft skills", and ensure that such skills seamlessly permeate lifelong learning?
– How do we prevent the potential dominance of the higher education landscape by employers' market driven priorities (often echoed by students)?
– How do converging competences impact on the notion of learner/student-centred learning?
– What can be done to ensure that "converging competences" are fully reflected in the newly developing national qualifications frameworks as well as the Bologna framework for the EHEA and the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning (EQF)?

This list represents a huge set of issues – the solutions to which are complex and difficult to implement. One tool that is beginning to play a considerable role in European higher education reform – and is certainly applicable in the context of the forum debates – is "learning outcomes". For the reasons previously explored they can be written to encapsulate subject-specific and transferable knowledge, skills and understanding. Their use can ensure that civic virtues are properly represented within the curriculum.

In Europe and the United States there are growing and legitimate concerns over the low levels of citizen engagement, distant political elites, persistent social and economic disparities, and exclusive education systems. Academics must be positive and proactive in their approach to these and remember:

> "Democratic Citizenship" is a skill that everyone needs. In its most practical form, it is the knowledge about how a country and society works – why government functions as it does, where to get information and how to vote. But democratic citizenship is

> more than just the ballot box – it is also the skill we need to live well in a family and community. It shows us how to resolve disputes in a friendly and fair way, how to negotiate and find common ground, and how to make sure that our rights are respected. A democratic citizen knows about the ground rules of the society they live in and the personal responsibilities they need to respect (Council of Europe 2010).

Imparting these sorts of skills in a sensitive and constructive way is not a simple task. However, there are new tools and approaches to help us and we should follow the wise advice of a great European statesman:

> A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty (Sir Winston Churchill, 1874-1965).

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Competences, learning outcomes and convergence: a case study – University College Cork

Áine Hyland

I am pleased and honoured to be invited to present some of the work carried out in University College Cork, Ireland, as a case study for this book on competences, learning outcomes and convergence. My university, University College Cork (UCC) in Ireland, was nominated by the European Universities Association (EUA) as one of the case studies for this book. The EUA is an association which represents higher education institutions in 46 countries throughout Europe. It plays a major role in supporting reform and change in higher education, especially through its Institutional Evaluation Programme (IEP) and its support for quality culture within universities. It has played an important role in supporting European universities in the implementation of the Bologna Process, including the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS), modularisation and semesterisation, rewriting courses and programmes in terms of learning outcomes, reviewing doctoral education and supporting joint master's programmes. Of particular relevance to this forum was its Quality Culture Project on teaching and learning, specifically the collaborative project relating to learning outcomes, in which UCC was a partner institution.

I am particularly pleased to be sharing a platform, through this publication, with my friends and colleagues from the United States. My colleagues and I in University College Cork have long admired Derek Bok's work and writings. We were particularly impressed by his 2006 book *Our Underachieving Colleges: A candid look at how much students learn and why they should be learning more.* In that book, he raised a range of issues which challenged the leadership of universities to redouble their efforts to improve teaching and learning, and to take on board the lacunae in curriculum design and delivery which contributed to shortfalls in student learning – in critical and quantitative skills, in acquiring cultural and aesthetic interests and in learning what they need to know to become active and informed citizens. His book raised crucial and timely issues on diversity; on preparing for a global society; on acquiring broader interests; and on improving the quality of undergraduate education.

In the present publication, Professor Bok highlights three key issues in modern university education:

– the issue of widening access to include groups who have traditionally been under-represented in higher education;
– the need to ensure that learning outcomes address issues such as diversity, responsibility, critical thinking and citizenship;
– the importance of supporting the educational (teaching and learning) mission of the university.

My article will focus in particular on the third of these issues and will discuss how University College Cork supported its teaching and learning mission during the past decade, taking account of the Bologna Declaration and subsequent communiqués of the Bologna Process.

The European context for reform in teaching and learning

Towards the latter years of the 20th century, European Union statements relating to higher education began to focus on the importance of quality teaching and learning in higher education. Since the signing of the Bologna Declaration in 1999, there has been considerable development in harmonisation of university education throughout Europe. The demands on and expectations of universities have grown significantly in that period. The move from an elite to a mass system of higher education has considerable implications for teaching and learning within universities.

The Bologna Declaration in 1999 and subsequent bi-annual ministerial agreements on higher education in the EU anticipated changes in course design and structure in the higher education sector – changes which require support within and across individual universities throughout Europe.

The principles underpinning the Bologna Declaration include greater mobility of students and staff; student participation in the governance of higher education; public responsibility for higher education; and a greater emphasis on the social dimension of higher education. The action lines agreed at Bologna include the adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees and of a higher education system based on three cycles; the establishment of a system of credits; the promotion of mobility; European co-operation in quality assurance; and a European dimension in higher education.

The Prague Communiqué in 2001 introduced a new emphasis on lifelong learning and highlighted the significance of student participation in and influence on the organisation and content of higher education. In Berlin in 2003, student participation was again emphasised – students should be "full partners in higher education governance" and institutions and student organisations were asked to identify ways of increasing actual student involvement in higher education governance. The Berlin Communiqué also pointed to the role of higher education in improving social cohesion. While it highlighted the need for the EU to be more competitive in the international higher education scene, it emphasised that this competitiveness must be balanced with the objective of improving the social characteristics of the European Higher Education Area. Higher education institutions should contribute to strengthening social cohesion and to reducing social and gender inequalities both at national and at European level.

The Bologna agreement and its successor agreements have had, and will continue to have a significant impact on teaching and learning in Irish universities. Courses and programmes are being revised to take account of ECTS, in many cases resulting in the introduction of modularisation and semesterisation for the first time. Courses

and programmes are being rewritten in terms of learning outcomes, thus providing a greater degree of transparency for students. The Diploma Supplement is being introduced and there is increased involvement by students in university decision-making. A commonly agreed European credit transfer system across the European Higher Education Area will enable a greater degree of student mobility within it.

These changes have training and upskilling implications for teaching staff in universities, who will, *inter alia,* be required to ensure that there is alignment between learning outcomes, teaching approaches/pedagogies and modes and techniques of assessment. The commitment to strengthening social cohesion and to reducing social and gender inequalities in our universities has implications for teaching methodologies and approaches – implications which require support by appropriate training and development initiatives within the universities.

Supporting the teaching and learning mission in University College Cork

University College Cork is one of seven universities in the Republic of Ireland. It is situated in Cork city, the country's second largest city – a port city of about 200 000 people in the south of the country. The university has an enrolment of about 17 000 full-time students – about 20% of whom are graduate students. It is a research-intensive university which attracts very significant amounts of research funding from various sources.

Like many universities, nationally and internationally, it has been a challenge for UCC in recent years to balance the demands of research with the demands of teaching and learning. In the year 2000, UCC made a strategic decision to give parity of esteem to research and teaching and learning, and stated that teaching and learning development would form an important part of UCC's overall new strategy in the 21st century. The university's strategic plan, issued in 2000, stated that:

> There should be parity of esteem between teaching and discipline-based research, which should be formalised and validated by recognising effective and innovative teaching and learning practices by giving them the same status as research. Research into the teaching and learning process should itself be recognised and rewarded in the same way as all other forms of scholarship. There is a necessity to encourage and support academic staff in the scholarship and practice of effective teaching (UCC 2000: 13).

This commitment to encouraging and supporting teaching as a valid form of scholarship has gained momentum in many universities throughout the world in recent years. The movement was spearheaded by Ernest Boyer in the early 1990s, when he offered a new paradigm for recognising the full range of scholarly activity within universities (Boyer 1990). He suggested that there are four forms of scholarship: the scholarship of discovery, the scholarship of integration, the scholarship of application and the scholarship of teaching. The scholarship of discovery comes closest to what academics mean when they talk about research, although in its broader meaning as suggested by Boyer, it also includes creative work in literary, visual

and performing arts. The scholarship of integration makes connections within and between the disciplines. It seeks to interpret, draw together and bring new insight to bear on original work. The scholarship of application seeks to engage the academic with the issues of the day, whether these are in the areas of arts, social sciences, law, commerce, science, medicine or engineering. Lessons learned in the application of knowledge can enrich teaching, and new intellectual understandings can arise from the very act of application. In the scholarship of application, theory and practice interact.

Many universities, unhappy with the dichotomy between research and teaching, were energised by Boyer's statement that:

> Education is a seamless web, and if we hope to have centres of excellence in research, we must have excellence in the classroom. It is the scholarship of teaching that keeps the flame of scholarship alive (Boyer 1990: ii).

The same sentiment was echoed by Frank Rhodes, Emeritus President of Cornell University, in his introduction to a collection of essays published in 1998 to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Princeton University. Rhodes wrote:

> We need our best scholars to be our teachers, and we need them to give the same creative energy to teaching as they give to scholarship. We need to identify, support, and reward those who teach superbly. There is no antithesis between teaching and research. Great teaching can, in fact, be a form of synthesis and scholarship (Rhodes 1998: 8).

In Ireland, the centrality of teaching in the university's mission was referred to by Malcolm Skilbeck in his 2001 report, where he remarked:

> New and improved ways of teaching students is one of the challenges facing higher education staff. The status and prestige of research notwithstanding, according to the Carnegie Commission's international survey of the academic profession, teaching students emerged very strongly as the principal defining characteristic of the academy (Skilbeck 2001: 72).

At UCC, in the context of the commitment to teaching in the university's strategic plan, it was clear that a scheme for recognising and rewarding teaching needed to be introduced and that a structured and co-ordinated approach to supporting and enhancing teaching and learning needed to be put in place. Fortunately, funding for such a co-ordinated approach became available through a scheme of so-called "targeted initiatives" introduced by Ireland's higher education funding agency, the Higher Education Authority, from the late 1990s onwards. Among the projects in UCC which were funded under these targeted initiatives were a President's Awards Scheme for Excellence in Teaching and an Awards Scheme for Research on Innovative Forms of Teaching and Learning. Funding was also provided to support staff seminars on teaching and learning and for seminars on the development of teaching portfolios in the context of a more explicit recognition of teaching in the university's promotion scheme. Grants totalling more than €1 million were secured for a variety of projects over the five-year period 2000/1 to 2005/6. These included

a wide range of staff development initiatives – some of which formed the basis of certificated modules on teaching and learning in higher education.

The approval of the university's Academic Council for certificated courses in teaching and learning in higher education was a significant development. In 2003, a three-year cumulative postgraduate part-time certificated programme for university teaching staff was approved. The first-year course (totalling 30 ECTS) would lead to a postgraduate certificate. The second-year course (also totalling 30 ECTS) would lead to a postgraduate diploma. In the third year, participants would write a research dissertation on some aspect of teaching and learning – which would lead to a Master's degree in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education – worth 60 ECTS. The cumulative value of the three-year programme was 120 ECTS. It was envisaged that the courses would be taken by faculty who already had completed a doctorate in their disciplinary area and who now wished to deepen their knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning in higher education.

The demand for these courses has been unexpectedly high. Since they were first offered in the academic year 2004-05, more than 200 faculty have completed the certificate course, about 80 have completed the diploma course, and 20 have completed the master's course. Participants have come from all disciplinary areas in the university – Medicine and Health, Science, Law, Engineering, Commerce, Arts and Social Sciences. They include junior staff, in the early years of their university careers, and senior staff at professorial level with over 25 years of teaching experience. Working and carrying out research with colleagues who have already achieved at doctoral level in their own disciplines has proved an intellectually exciting challenge, with participants and course leaders learning from one another.

The approach to supporting teaching within UCC was influenced by the work of the US Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, especially the work of Lee Shulman, Pat Hutchings and Mary Huber (Huber & Hutchings 2006; Hutchings 1998; Hutchings & Shulman 1999; Shulman 1999). The 1990s publications of the American Association for Higher Education on Teaching and Course Portfolios were also significant as was the work of Project Zero at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, especially the research on teaching for understanding (Stone-Wiske 1998), on multiple intelligences (Gardner 1983, 1999a, 1999b), on teaching thinking skills (Perkins 1992) and on portfolio assessment (Seidel et al. 1997).

From 2000 to 2007, the following developments within UCC heightened staff awareness of the significance of teaching and learning:

– The President's Awards for Excellence in Teaching were won every year by highly respected faculty members, many of whom were known within the university for their research excellence.

– The awards for research on innovative forms of teaching helped to develop a scholarship of teaching approach to teaching and learning. Seminars led by successful recipients of these awards were well attended by faculty, thus

providing a mechanism to disseminate innovative teaching strategies and approaches.

– Two collections of articles written by staff members were published and widely disseminated. (Lyons et al. 2002; Hyland 2004).
– The wide-scale introduction of quality review (QR) of departments, with its associated self-assessment component, highlighted the role of teaching in the work of the university's departments.
– Student evaluation of courses, which had not been a general practice in Irish universities, was introduced as a required component of the QR exercise and undergraduate students were not slow to point out what was good and bad in the teaching they had experienced.
– The revised promotions scheme from 2002 onwards required applicants to submit a teaching portfolio. Many of those promoted at both the senior lecturer and the associate professor levels had won a President's Award for Excellence in Teaching or an award for research on innovative forms of teaching and this provided tangible evidence that teaching was valued in the promotions race.
– The publication of *Writing and Using Learning Outcomes – a Practical Guide* (Kennedy 2007) was a major catalyst for re-conceptualising and re-writing course and module outcomes.

UCC's reputation as a university that valued and recognised research-led teaching began to grow. UCC was asked to lead the Irish Universities' Quality Board Project on Teaching and Learning in 2004. UCC was one of a network of seven European universities involved in 2005-06 in the EUA Quality Culture Network on Teaching and Learning. In 2005, the Academic Coordinator of UCC's Teaching and Learning Support team, a member of the staff of the Geology Department, was chosen as a CASTL (Carnegie Academy for the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning) scholar by the Carnegie Foundation in Palo Alto, California. In summer 2006, UCC was successful in its application to join the Carnegie Foundation's CASTL Institutional Leadership programme and agreed to lead the network on graduate education for the three-year period 2006-09. This network includes Rutgers University, Michigan State University, Howard University in Washington, DC and the Central European University in Budapest. It also includes the Center for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning, based in the University of Wisconsin, Madison. In October 2006, UCC was successful in its bid for funding to set up and lead the (Irish) National Academy for the Integration of Research and Teaching and Learning. A sum of €3 million (almost $US4 million) has been provided from the Strategic Innovation Fund of the (Irish) Higher Education Authority for this national academy.

The publication *Writing and Using Learning Outcomes – a Practical Guide* (Kennedy 2007), which has proved to be a useful guide for academic staff in higher education institutions across Europe and has been translated into a number of languages, was written initially as a guide for faculty who were rewriting individual modules. It did not focus on writing overall learning outcomes for courses or

programmes. The guide drew on Bloom's taxonomy of educational objectives and provided examples of outcomes at all six levels of Bloom's taxonomy of cognitive objectives, namely, knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation when writing learning outcomes. It focused on discipline-specific knowledge and skills and, in the context of the discussion in this publication, it could be argued that more emphasis on generic knowledge and skills in areas such as democracy and citizenship might be desirable. All higher education courses and programmes should play a role in helping students to prepare for life as active citizens in democratic societies, as well as to prepare for the labour market. When re-designing modules and courses in terms of students' learning outcomes, this should be borne in mind.

In reflecting on the successes and failures of the various initiatives to improve teaching and learning in UCC, one is struck by the challenges and complexity facing academic "change agents" in a university context (Fullan 1993). The role of change agent requires a combination of political acumen, academic knowledge and pragmatism. University "change agents" must be eternally vigilant: to ensure that university strategic plans continue to be at the forefront of teaching and learning; to ensure that teaching and learning remains a university priority when funding is being allocated within the university; to apply for new funding opportunities for teaching and learning at national and international levels; and to ensure that any new structures that are developed within the university to support and enhance teaching and learning are not eroded or destroyed by colleagues who would prefer the old status quo to be undisturbed. Political awareness also means that when new senior managers are appointed (whether academic, for example deans, or non-academic, for example human resources directors or finance officers), they are appropriately briefed on the significance of teaching and learning and encouraged to become advocates or at least passive supporters.

At an academic level, effective and successful change agents must have academic credibility with their academic colleagues. To maintain and develop this credibility, they need to be visibly supportive of and active in the teaching environment. They should also maintain contact with national and international research on teaching and learning, so that they are able to answer questions such as: What constitutes "best practice"? What is the evidence for this? What actions are other internationally recognised universities taking to support and reward teaching and learning?

At a pragmatic level, change agents must take every opportunity to keep teaching and learning at the forefront of the university's mission and agenda. This might mean asking a high-profile national or local figure to make a speech at a teaching awards ceremony; ensuring that the university President and other senior management figures visibly support teaching and learning; ensuring that excellence in teaching is given public recognition – for example, in the university's newsletter and website and in local and national newspapers. It means ensuring that seminars and talks on teaching are prominently advertised and held in prestigious locations (for example,

the university's council boardroom); that high-quality refreshments are provided at teaching and learning events; and that celebratory events are appropriately marked.

Institutions of higher education must adapt and change to ensure their survival. In his 2001 report, Malcolm Skilbeck wrote:

> A defining characteristic of the modern learning organisation is the readiness to recreate itself through a close understanding of its environment and the opportunities provided by that environment for both adaptive change and novel ways of growing and developing. ... The university should be, by definition, a learning organisation. ... The challenge for (universities) is to … demonstrate a capacity to recreate themselves. This means, first, to sustain and develop their role as primary agencies for the creation, interpretation, application and communication of advanced knowledge. ... Second, the challenge is to become more closely and fully engaged with their environments, including the regions and communities they serve, and thirdly, to address the great social, cultural and ethical issues of the day (Skilbeck 2001: 146).

It is not easy for universities to "re-invent" or "re-create" themselves, given their culture of academic freedom and autonomy and the difficulty of engaging academics in cross-cutting issues which are not specific to their discipline. But, in order to achieve their wider mission, universities across Europe need to address the major overarching goals of democracy, human rights and active citizenship which have been the theme of this forum.

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Translating converging competences into the reality of teaching, learning, research and life at higher education institutions

Ligia Deca

Introduction

In a time when cultures are becoming increasingly international, voting turnout rates are declining, religious and political fundamentalism is increasing and youth continue to give vent to their alienation from politics, higher education remains of key importance to stimulate democracy and active citizenship. Education is the most important factor in allowing citizens to be more sensitive to the democratic spirit and in enabling them to be better skilled for participation in democratic processes in institutions.

The role that higher education, and in particular students, have played in "new democracies" in central and eastern Europe is one good example of the positive role of a responsible higher education community. So, however, are political debates in higher education institutions, lecturers who are active in public debates and democratic participation within the governance of higher education institutions themselves. A Europe based on knowledge can also effectively promote these values to other regions of the world in a more constructive way than the democracy-building that we have witnessed in recent years.

In the coming years, demographic changes will force Europe to confront a decreasing workforce, which will undoubtedly lead to new discussions about migration from different parts of the world. The current discussions about immigration in many European countries are worrying in this respect. As extremist parties acquire more influence, we see increased xenophobia, Islamophobia and intolerance. The rise of these political parties across western Europe, as well as the anti-gay movement in significant parts of central and eastern Europe, are real threats to European social and cultural values and show the importance of continuing to allow new immigrants to work and live in Europe. Higher education should serve to bring another perspective on nationalism and the backlash against globalisation.

Historically, universities, scholarship and knowledge have been international, and they have been effective tools to promote multicultural values. In order to make this vision a reality, the European Higher Education Area should be open to students of all regions in the world and should maintain its aim of increasing student mobility. Higher education institutions are shaping our future leaders and Europe should play a role in making sure that they acquire the values that create open and

tolerant societies. This contribution of higher education to civic responsibility and democracy is, however, not self-evident and should never be taken for granted.

The European Students' Union (ESU) argues that higher education should set the example for society – a European Higher Education Area free from discrimination and corruption. Furthermore ESU emphasises that an important role of higher education institutions should be to uphold the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in an increasingly volatile and globalised world. The present article will touch on the following topics: inclusive and student-centred learning, student participation and the contribution of the student movement to debates about a sustainable society free of discrimination.

Converging competences and the basic values of the Council of Europe: democracy, human rights and the rule of law

In these times, one can only say that taking a step back and pondering one's role in society or the direction of one's personal development often appears to be a luxury, instead of being acknowledged as a true need. The enormous amount of information storming its way through all our senses each morning leaves little room for much self-reflection unless we make a determined effort to make room for it. Stress seems to be a common social disease and the chronic lack of time is a curse felt by everyone. In this environment, where rationalising and taking the time to analyse before taking day-to-day decisions has become scarcer than ever, we need to have an almost instinctive capacity to take decisions as active and responsible global citizens. For this to happen, one's personality has to be based on a strong mix of values, principles, beliefs, traditions, attitudes, skills and competences that enable us to cope with the increasing challenges coming our way. But where does this transformation take place?

It starts earlier than ever, but at the same time it seems to require constant attention and maybe a specific point in time where one can redefine oneself, regardless of one's family origins, social status or other preconditions in one's background and experience. I think that this place that acts as a milestone in the development of one's personality could easily be identified as higher education institutions. Here one should be able to find the space and the temporal bubble to explore ethical, religious, scientific, political, economic and social beliefs until you find the unique combination that will define one as an individual. This is not to say that preparing future graduates for a successful professional career is outdated, but it is at least beneficial, I would even say essential, to have a well-defined personality in order to be a truly successful professional.

If we consider higher education institutions as both melting pots and shaping vessels of individual characteristics and personalities, we need to see what their responsibilities are as well. Looking at history, it seems that the biggest challenge we have faced was to learn from past errors and educate new generations as well as ourselves so as not to repeat previous mistakes made in the societal evolution process.

This rationale stood as the basis for the build-up of the Council of Europe as an inter-governmental institution founded on the values of democracy, human rights and the rule of law. If higher education institutions are to foster overall societal progress through individual development, the values on which the Council of Europe was built have to be passed on and absorbed at the individual level. This is where the challenge begins – how do you make this a reality in the everyday life of the academic community? What are the obstacles and the possible solutions to translating converging competences into the reality of teaching, learning and research and life at higher education institutions?

In its essence, the traditional academic relationship between the professor and the student is hierarchical rather than democratic. The obvious difference in subject-specific competences between academic staff and students is often confused with the overall right of students to be seen as equal partners in the academic world. Already in Prague in 2001, European ministers clearly stated that they see students as members of the academic community, and it is only sensible that there should be no hierarchy in the role and status of professors and students as human beings, citizens and members of the community. The academia in itself was built on a hierarchical relationship between, for example, older and younger professors, university and faculty leadership, academic staff and students. So how can we hope that higher education institutions will be ready to educate for democracy when they are sometimes hardly democratic themselves? And yet, relatively recent socio-political developments in Europe have shown that in fact the academia is a trend setter in the fight for democracy and social justice. So, in fact, how can higher education institutions mainstream democracy at both levels – for every individual and for themselves, as microcosms of modern societies?

In the attempt to answer this challenging question, I went back to my own life as a student and tried to identify those moments in which I could say that I experienced democracy. Being a student in maritime engineering, the curricula as such did not encompass subjects related to political science, philosophy or sociology. If one only looked at the subjects included in my programme, it could be argued that teaching democratic competence was completely out of the focus. Indeed, I think that the university leadership showed no concern for the competences their students would need to become active citizens at a later stage. But beyond this limitation, I experienced democracy in a different manner.

Some of the professors chose to move away from the classical lecture aimed at transmitting information and opted for debating the righteousness of their own beliefs. In my own experience as a maritime transport engineering student, I was a part of interesting debates on the strengths and weaknesses of the American and Russian styles of conducting astronomical navigation. These were the arena in which students learned how to listen to their peers, although they had very strong convictions of their own. We learned that in the end we will have to choose as teams (ship crews) one system in a democratic manner and that even if there is a majority opting for one solution, if the minority is uncomfortable using it, the voyage might

end up tragically. The different national regulations imposing one style or another in specific procedures were often taken into account in heated debates. Critical thinking was at the basis of these arguments and it empirically demonstrates that any scientific or technical subject can foster the development of competences related to democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

I have always argued that student-centred learning is, in fact, bringing democracy to the core of the academia. The end aim of student-centred learning is to enable all individuals to reach their own full potential, by tailoring the learning experience to the needs of each specific individual. All human beings are active in a societal context and as such, their full potential is only achieved when they become an active citizen in this society. If the aims of student-centred learning are fulfilled, there should be a natural focus on democratic competences that will enable individuals to reach their full potential as members and builders of democratic societies (ESU 2008a).

A student-centred higher education institution is more expensive (and effective) than a traditional university and requires a huge shift in all dimensions of the university community. Professors must be given more recognition and time for teaching and learning activities and engage their students more actively in research. With these descriptions, it should be easy to find examples of good practice in institutions which describe themselves as being student centred. Indeed, institutions like the University of Maastricht, Roskilde University and many universities in the United Kingdom fit these criteria. To take it one step further, university leaders must start to understand students' minds and to enable the students to be a full part of the university community. This requires a fundamental shift in the governance of higher education. Students must be stimulated and recognised to do more than vote in general elections**.** They should be seen as full partners, for instance in quality evaluations, social activities, university referenda and teaching. The student-centred higher education institution yet again pays attention to the social conditions of its student, while challenging their talents to the maximum level (ESU 2008b).

Student participation and the contribution of the student movement to the role of higher education in democratic societies

A perfect way to experience democracy within academia is to be a part of the associative student movement. The direct participative democratic skills you acquire when representing your colleagues are essential to foster an understanding of democracy and the fight for human rights and the rule of law from an early stage.

Having both the authority and the responsibility of contributing to the progress of the academic community can only increase the conscious realisation that one's own well-being is strongly linked to respecting others' rights and beliefs. Only through real ownership of the decisions taken at the highest level and the strategies in place to attain institutional goals can there be real student involvement in academia, as small scale replicas of our communities and societies.

It is interesting to look at the understanding of the role of the student movement on different continents. In my dealings with student representatives from the United States, I could see that European and American student movements are complementary. The European student movement is highly involved in the governance of higher education institutions and in the policy-making processes at the institutional, national and European levels. Historically, there is a lot of ideological involvement in the fight for human rights and democracy.

The American student movement has an increased awareness of its societal role – focusing its activity on the link with the surrounding communities, trying to play an active role in humanitarian actions and having a strong link with other civil society organisations. Their focus on practical rather than policy or political actions is recognised in the mission statements of many student organisations. What unites the two continental student movements is the fight for human rights and the call for democracy. Almost all student organisations have in common the demand that higher education should be more than professional training and that it should fulfil its essential societal role in fostering the personal development of students.

In many of the relatively "new democracies" in central and eastern Europe, students have been on the front line in the battle against dictatorships and oppression. The European Students' Union determinedly believes that it is important to maintain the political and social benefits of education in the future in order to promote the democratic spirit and to spread the influence of democracy in all levels of society.

An important threat to education acting as a force for democracy and active citizenship is the neglect of this function. The current political discourse in Europe has radically changed public thinking on higher education, with people increasingly seeing higher education less and less as a human right and more as an expensive, but essential commodity.

In my view, this way of thinking threatens the status of education as a cornerstone of democracy for future generations. If you consider that higher education programmes can and should be simply bought as products, then you cannot expect them to contribute to anything more than a professional upgrading. There is no time for developing the ability to engage in critical thinking, teaching tolerance and multicultural understanding in a time when short and intense programmes have to be developed and delivered to satisfy the immediate need for super-specialised professionals.

There is also no time for creating personal identities or for considering yourself as part of a community. This is the unfortunate attitude we see in the day-to-day reality that surrounds us. Voting turnouts are dropping with each election cycle, extremism, xenophobia and nationalism are returning to the political mainstream, while human rights seem to be respected only when politically convenient and not economically disruptive.

Students from all continents strive for quality higher education for all. Why is access to higher education and support for progression and successful completion so important? Because diversity should not mean inequality. Diversity in socio-economic background should not mean that some are denied the chance to achieve their full potential. Education is empowering, but at the same time it is the base for tolerance and cultural understanding. How will a young person feel that a specific societal group is equal in rights and deserves the same rights in society when (s)he does not have the chance to equally acquire the most important personal good: knowledge? Migrant children are often discriminated against in primary and secondary schools. Some even learn to hate their host country, never manage to access higher education – or even complete secondary education – and then come to be seen as a societal problem. Some minorities use their traditions as an excuse to segregate their children in the educational process and that leads to problems of insertion in the society.

Democratic Europe was shaken by the social movements in 1968, a strong reaction to "old society", seen as the replacement of traditionalist morality (religion, patriotism and respect for authority) by the liberal morality (equality, sexual liberation and human rights) that dominates European societies today. New political streams increased their visibility, such as environmentalism and women's emancipation. Students were at the forefront of the protests in Spain, Italy, West Germany, Great Britain, Belgium and especially France, where UNEF[47] led the "French May" with approximately 500 000 protesters forcing President de Gaulle's government to near collapse. The year 1968 echoed through the Iron Curtain. Chronologically, the 1968 protest followed Polish student protests for student rights and against communism, to which the regime responded with counter-protests under the form of "worker squads" and police interventions. The movement had a liberal background and was centred on freedom of speech for intellectuals and artists. Noteworthy is the fact that Hungarian university students in Szeged snubbed the official communist student union, the DISZ, by re-establishing the MEFESZ (Union of Hungarian University and Academy Students), a democratic student organisation, previously banned under the dictatorship. Romanian students, mainly in Timişoara, protested as a sign of solidarity with their neighbours. It was the first phenomenon of students standing up to the imposed communist student organisations, used as a tool of propaganda and repression by the regime.

Such a system has survived until today in Belarus. Our member union from Belarus is functioning in a clandestine manner, as it is deemed illegal by the government authorities and thus every meeting of its members could result in expulsion from university and imprisonment. A number of students were arrested in December 2005 for standing up for democratic elections in Belarus and students' rights within the Belarusian Student Association. This was one of the moments when I realised how lucky I was being a Romanian student after 1989 (Proteasa 2009).

47. UNEF – L'Union Nationale des Étudiants de France.

The role of academic communities in converging competences into the reality of teaching, learning and research

Our democratic societies base their evolution on the understanding that each individual has to be an active citizen so that the system is socially just. But when the individuals are incapable of rising to the challenges that active citizenship poses, do we really think that democracy will continue to bring respect for cultural diversity, critical thinking, freedom of speech or equal respect for human rights? Diplomatic ballets when ambassadors speak about "culturally sensitive" issues such as "honour" killings, forced and child marriages, domestic violence, child abuse, war crimes and ethnic cleansing will not help us in the fight for human rights; nor will increasing the numbers of police or investing in military defence capacity. Countries will see that they are just patching up the effects but not addressing the cause. But so is passing laws without changing the societal mentalities and set of values, which can only be achieved through education. And perhaps this message has not quite yet come across to our political decision makers, although the 1968 generation has perhaps not quite lived up to the expectation it created in this regard.

Academia has an essential role in stepping up to the challenge. Fighting demagogical, extremist and populist statements about the dangers that come with migration or raising the public's attention to the unacceptable developments in areas such as the economy or medicine, should be the norm for the involvement of academia in society. Academic freedom will be difficult to preserve when political or economic pressures limit the freedom of research or of expression and this is why they must embrace the responsibility of speaking up against obvious misuse of public authority.

At the same time, academic freedom should not provide an excuse for conveniently avoiding the rule of law. Respect for laws should be developed in all students, regardless of the field of study they are pursuing. Even if critical thinking says that laws could be improved, the intellectual advantage that higher education brings should be combined with a strong conscience that includes respect for the rule of law. It is the duty of active citizens to continuously work towards improving existing laws, but using their knowledge to avoid respecting them only leads to an unfair societal stratification and to lack of motivation for societal progress.

It is indeed noteworthy that some of the biggest achievements of the academia as societal actors were linked to challenging the legal status quo in the areas of civil liberties, human rights and the fight for democracy. What is the balance between healthy academic protest and teaching respect for the regulatory frameworks of the societies we live in? Higher education has also undoubtedly been used throughout history for propaganda, ideological manipulation or regime consolidation. In order to restore the public trust in higher education, we would need to take a close look at the inseparable pair of concepts constituted by authority and responsibility, step up to the challenge and understand the modern role of education.

Higher education institutions have a duty to equip future generations with appropriate tools in support of societal progress and personal development. This debate

should be started by the academic communities themselves according to a long-term development strategy and with full awareness of their role. This long-term vision is not necessarily the attribute of public authorities, as they are usually pressed to give immediate answers to financial pressures and public opinion that is to be ultimately transformed into votes.

In the debate on how to translate converging competencies into the reality of teaching, learning and research, we sometimes have a tendency to start all over again. "Reinventing the wheel" can bring a lot of ownership, but it can also slow down overall progress. As such, there needs to be a permanent and supported dialogue between institutions, at all their levels – leadership, students, teaching and administrative staff, researchers – on how to better fulfil all four of the main missions of higher education established by the Council of Europe (Council of Europe 2007): the promotion of active citizenship and democracy; developing the labour market; knowledge development; and personal development. Higher education institutions have a lot to gain from supporting increased dialogue, whether it is established through mobility of students and staff, attending conferences and seminars, research and teaching networks, student and staff representation activities or in other areas.

On a final note, I believe that it is relevant for all societal actors that higher education assists in the personal and social development of every individual. As such, real support and constructive debate will be essential in the public sphere. Some might argue that public responsibility and support for higher education is a thing of the past, but can we really afford to allow future citizens not to have the competences to act as expected in our fast advancing democracies? We would say not. In October 2008, the Council of Europe and the US Steering Committee of the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy organised a global forum to address the issue of converging competences for diversity and sustainable democracy and the role of higher education in developing these competences. This forum can be considered as a stepping stone in the work ahead. Every stakeholder has its work cut out and the European Students' Union will continue to honour our share of the responsibilities on behalf of our 11 million student members fighting for democracy, human rights and the rule of law.

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Converging competences: diversity, higher education and sustainable democracy

Manja Klemenčič

Introduction

The purpose of this article is to provide an analytical note and a personal reflection on the theme of converging competences for diversity and sustainable democracy, and the role of higher education in developing these competences. The article builds on the forum on "Converging Competences: Diversity, Higher Education, and Sustainable Democracy", organised jointly by the Council of Europe and the US Steering Committee of the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy at Council of Europe in Strasbourg on 2 and 3 October 2008. It does not, however, provide a comprehensive description of the presentations and discussions in the forum, but is rather a reflection of these through highlighting some of the key issues, and it occasionally adds points that were raised but left unanswered in the forum.

Our societies are undergoing profound social and economic changes. Through processes of globalisation they are becoming more interconnected, but also more interdependent with other societies around the world. Populations in our societies are becoming more diverse, be that according to nationality, ethnicity and race, socio-economic standing, religion or age. Diversity provides each of us with better opportunities for expression of ourselves but also makes our societies more fragmented and thus poses new challenges for the maintenance and development of a sustainable democratic order and culture. These challenges affect also our higher education institutions. Given their role as the "main source of development and prosperity"[48] in our societies, increased attention is given to the role and capacity of higher education for providing a service to society in terms of fostering democracy, human rights, civic engagement and managing the increasing diversity of our societies.

For some time now, the main public demand on higher education institutions has been to cater for the needs of the knowledge economy. This demand is justified in many ways. Employers complain that graduates entering the labour market are poorly prepared. There has also been insufficient attention given to ensure co-operation and knowledge transfer between higher education and industry. However, these concerns have somewhat overshadowed other purposes. In particular, the discourse on competences has tended to focus primarily on the workplace and not enough on their importance for citizenship and enriching personal life. Although

48. Derek Bok's article in this volume.

the public expectation that higher education be an agent of societal development has never been completely absent, it has in many instances been marginalised by efforts to make universities cost-effective and responsive to the needs of the economy. This imbalance in the agenda for higher education has to end if we are, as we should be, genuinely concerned about sustainable democracy in our societies.

In accordance with discussions at the forum on converging competences, as well as with the established policy of the Council of Europe (Council of Europe 2007; see also Bergan 2005), this article argues that the multiple purposes of higher education – teaching, research and public service for the knowledge-economy and society at large – are not conflicting, but in fact converging. Equally converging are the objectives of higher education institutions to prepare students for employability and successful performance in the labour market, for continuous personal development, and for active, responsible, ethically sensitive citizenship in democratic and increasingly diverse societies. Furthermore, fulfilling these purposes and objectives should not mean taxing more resources of (often already economically strained) higher education institutions, but rather finding ways to develop an integrated agenda and use and reuse existing resources to reach the goals set by that agenda.

Within the plethora of objectives of higher education, this article focuses on higher education institutions' role in the development of student competences for democracy and diversity. Participants at the forum were in wide agreement that active, responsible and ethically sensitive citizenship does not come automatically, but requires competences. That is, it requires knowledge and understanding of the social and political concepts and structures (knowing what); skills to effectively participate in the social and political systems (knowing how to act); and the values associated with and commitment to active citizenship in diverse, democratic societies (knowing how to be) (European Commission 2006). In addition, one should posses a whole range of other so-called "transferable competences" that are seen as "needed for personal fulfilment, social inclusion and employment in a knowledge society" (ibid.). And, higher education is only one, but important, stage in a lifelong trajectory of acquiring these competences. As Henry Teune argued at the forum, higher education is a particularly important stage since "competences for democratic citizenship of judgment, wisdom and long-term perspectives develop more rapidly in young adults of university age than among younger [and perhaps also older] students" (Teune 2008).

Finally, the objective of educating students for active and responsible citizenship in diverse, democratic societies is necessarily part of other aspects of higher education missions: that of research into questions of democracy and diversity and that of the civic engagement of higher education institutions. Crucially, however, higher education institutions themselves need to apply the principles of democracy and diversity in their structures, processes and daily life.

In the remainder of this article, I will first discuss different conceptions of competences for democracy and diversity. Then I will elaborate on teaching and learning

practices and how these are interlinked with other aspects of the higher education mission. Finally, I will describe some differences between the US and European conceptions of and practices towards development of student competences for democracy and diversity.

Competences for active and responsible citizenship in democratic, diverse, interconnected societies: what they are and what they entail

There is no widely accepted definition of what competences for democratic citizenship and diversity are or entail. In fact even the use of the term "competences" is often disputed.[49] The most widely-accepted definition of competences is that they represent a set of knowledge, skills and attitudes that are developed as an outcome of a learning process (that is, they describe the learning outcomes of an educational programme) and that can be divided into discipline-specific (specific to a field of study or discipline) or transferable competences (common to any degree course and applicable in a range of contexts) (González & Wagenaar 2003: 255, 261).[50] Defined and described in the language of learning outcomes, competence should be something that can be assessed and continuously evaluated for relevance and impact, that has a clearly developed teaching and learning methodology associated with its acquisition, and that is referred to in the qualifications frameworks.[51] While discipline-specific competences are relatively less disputed, it has proven rather challenging to identify the most important and desirable transferable competences. This challenge is present particularly when we speak about competences for democratic citizenship and diversity.

Those who have tried to identify and define competences for democracy and diversity – or so-called social and civic competences – have mentioned some of the following examples of knowledge, skills and attitudes (European Commission 2006; see also The President and Fellows of Harvard College 2007). Core knowledge includes understanding of concepts such as democracy, human rights, justice, equality, citizenship and how these are applied in various contexts at the local, regional,

49. Other terms used (often interchangeably) are "skills", "graduate attributes", "abilities", etc.
50. Transferable competences are also called "generic", "key" or "transitive". For a detailed discussion on the concept and identification of key competences see Eurydice (2002: 12-16). For a useful description of different practices of assessment of learning outcomes see OECD Working Paper by Nusche (2008).
51. Learning outcomes are defined as statements of "what a learner is expected to know, understand and/or be able to demonstrate after completion of a process of learning" (González & Wagenaar 2003: 261). In the European context there are two overarching frameworks: the Overarching Framework of Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area – EHEA-QF (adopted by the ministers of the (then) 45 countries of the Bologna Process in 2005) and the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning – EQF-LLL (adopted within the framework of the European Union in 2008). Countries are in the process of developing their national qualifications frameworks compatible with the overarching frameworks.

national and international level. Furthermore, civic competences should also include the understanding of rules, norms and values permeating political systems in the local, national and international environment and how they relate to historical and contemporary events and developments both nationally and internationally. Given the increasing interconnectedness of our societies through mechanisms of globalisation, the understanding not only of the society we belong to, but of societies around the world, and how diverse cultures, identities and histories shape various political systems and influence relations between societies and global trends is becoming an essential component of knowledge within civic competences. Also, knowledge of ethics and moral reasoning, as pointed out by Derek Bok in this volume, is critical for students' ability to judge the ethical consequences of actions they may take in their professional and personal lives.

In terms of the skills component of civic competences, a core skill can be defined as the ability to interface effectively with members of the community and institutions in the public domain. These skills are inevitably convergent – and overlap – with other transferable skills, such as critical thinking, the capacity for analysis and synthesis, the capacity for applying knowledge in practice or problem solving. For example, the critical reception of information by the mass media, which reflects the capacity for analysis, helps students in making appropriate judgments to guide their actions. Intercultural skills, such as intercultural communication, negotiation and conflict resolution are also highlighted as those that are increasingly needed to prepare individuals for effective participation in any community to which they belong, and especially in increasingly multicultural and multilingual communities.

While knowledge and skills are considered cognitive outcomes of learning, there is also a third category – the non-cognitive development of students referring to development of (or changes to) beliefs, attitudes and values, and identity in general (Nusche 2008). It is particularly difficult to judge which attitudes and values should be developed. Some of the values and attitudes highlighted by the aforementioned references include a sense of social responsibility, ethical sensitivity, tolerance and respect for human rights. This is by no means an exclusive list. Developing a commitment to civic participation and a concern for the public good might be particularly difficult, as Derek Bok suggested, in times when due to diversity in our societies common bonds are weakened, when students are preoccupied with making money and more suspicious of authority, especially of government and politicians. It is also disputable to what extent classroom learning, or higher education learning as such, contributes to the development of these non-cognitive elements of competences.

In the area of competences for democracy and diversity in general, and especially in the non-cognitive element of these, traditional classroom teaching might not be the most effective method of propagation. The next section will explore some common principles and practices linked to teaching and learning of these competences.

Some common principles for the teaching and learning of competences for democratic citizenship and diversity

There exist different perspectives among academics on whether and to what extent responsibility for the development of competences for democratic citizenship and diversity as described above (and indeed other transferable competences) lies in classroom teaching (Barrie 2007). Some see them as central, while others do not think they belong in the classroom at all but are part of the general higher education experience or even natural processes of social maturation (ibid.). Arguably, however, higher education institutions cannot rely solely on informal and independent academic effort to find ways to incorporate social and civic competences into their usual teaching. Hence, an institution-wide policy that articulates mechanisms and instruments for the development of the social and civic competences of students needs to be in place if concrete results are to be expected. As is the case with transferable competences in general, practice has shown that competences for democracy and diversity, as defined above, cannot effectively be developed if this is attempted to be done only within formal course learning. Rather, an integrated effort needs to be made in the broader context of student learning experiences of participating in the intellectual and social community of higher education institutions (Kuh 2001). In other words, developing competences for democracy and diversity should be integrated into the teaching, research and public service functions of higher education institutions. It is the university leadership that has a unique ability to initiate such a policy and develop it in full collaboration with academics, student representatives, and other internal constituencies and external stakeholders. The following presents some important aspects of a higher education institution policy that aims at developing student competences for democracy and diversity.

Even though it is not a sufficient condition, teaching nevertheless remains an essential aspect of institutional policy. Social and civic competences can be part of learning outcomes integrated in the curricula – be that through introducing new mandatory or elective courses, new themes within existing courses, and/or new teaching and learning methodologies. Each of these aspects would lead to inclusion of these competences in course learning outcomes and, as such, provide ground for assessment of the level or degree of a student's competence as well as for continuous evaluation of the relevance and impact of these competences.

The crucial question here is what the most appropriate way of teaching civic and social competences at higher education level is. We know that "civics courses" offered within mandatory schooling tend to prioritise knowledge of democratic institutions, but pay less attention to questions of democratic culture and social and civic competences in general. In the liberal arts and sciences tradition, specifically designed "general education courses" on these themes can be offered in the curriculum. There should be some system of ensuring that students take at least some courses falling broadly into the category of learning for democracy and diversity. Within European universities, adding new courses on civic themes, as discussed in the next section, might be more difficult and even counterproductive. There is

a danger that civic courses, if made mandatory, would be resented or not taken seriously (or both) by students already pressed with discipline-specific (that is, employment-relevant) courses. Adding new themes to the existing courses, as well as experimenting with new teaching and learning practices, including (and especially) activity-based learning and real-world problem solving, might be more appropriate.

While arts, social sciences and humanities students will necessarily be exposed to some of the social and civic competence development through the discipline-specific courses, it is particularly important that students in natural sciences and engineering do not remain unaffected by these questions. In my personal experience as a student, I have far too often encountered science and engineering students (but of course not students from these disciplines exclusively!) who were utterly disinterested in topics concerning our society, poorly equipped to deliberate on themes concerning our society and who even held dogmatic and rigid views on some of the key – and certainly debatable – concepts concerning justice, morality, religion or politics. Derek Bok in his article for this book also mentions that recent research in the US shows that some popular courses of study – business, engineering – actually weakened civic responsibility. It is, I believe, of the utmost importance that these students also are challenged to think and deliberate, for example, about issues that concern the societies that we live in, about the contemporary and historical events that shape our societies or about the value and belief structures in our populations and how these affect our societies. Certainly, these students also need to be exposed to deliberations of the ethical and broader social consequences of work and research within their own disciplines.

Finally, as Derek Bok reminds us, there is a need for change in attitude towards education and the ways it is taught. This is especially the case when it comes to teaching for democracy and diversity which are complex themes in themselves, and which, as discussed earlier, contain an important and arguably non-cognitive dimension of developing values and attitudes. More attention needs to be given, as Derek Bok points out, to educate the educators on how to teach, to develop new and better ways of teaching to help meet a more difficult set of educational responsibilities, and to enable a continuous process of evaluation of how much and what students are learning, in order to build a culture of continuous self-scrutiny, experimentation and improvement. We must remember that teaching in our higher education institutions is no longer offered primarily to a homogenous cohort of 18-24 year-old students. The students entering into undergraduate programmes (and indeed graduate and continuous education) are an increasingly diverse body of students according to age, ethnic background, socio-economic status or beliefs. These students bring with them richness and variety of life experiences and a different set of expectations.

Given this diversity in the student body, and given the difficulty in teaching themes such as democratic culture, teachers have to take advantage of numerous methods that are particularly suitable for such learning, especially activity-based learning through community service, internships and other service learning, as well as to experiment with different learning environments and teaching methodologies. In

fact, a report from the Association of American Colleges and Universities' initiative Liberal Education and America's Promise (LEAP) suggests that "students who engage in learning communities, internships, service learning programs and undergraduate research projects perform at higher levels than their peers who do not" (Kuh 2008). It is crucial, however, to link activity-based learning to classroom learning, in other words to provide space for reflection within formal teaching, in order to help students to develop the knowledge and understanding alongside skills and attitudes. Furthermore, students also develop competences through engagement in extracurricular activities within the institution and outside of it.[52] These activities, especially those offered by student organisations and groups within the institution, need to be acknowledged and supported.

We should not forget the importance of research in view of developing basic and applicative knowledge on sustainable democracy in our societies. Catering to the demands of the knowledge economy, much pressure has been exerted on higher education institutions to bring natural sciences and engineering closer to industry, to accelerate transfer of knowledge and to develop competences based on the needs and expectations of the employers. Consequently, the funding base has also increased in the areas that are seen as directly benefiting the economy. The importance of advancing knowledge in humanities and social sciences for the sustainable development of our democratic societies has to be reaffirmed, and accordingly encouraged through funding. Furthermore, within these fields, academics and researchers should also be encouraged to address complex societal questions rather than purely scientific ones. There tends to be a certain bias in the scientific community towards the purely scientific questions which bring more prestige and also tend to attract more funding (Weber 2007).

The public service role of higher education, as the third mission alongside teaching and research, is usually the least developed and elaborated in university policies and strategy plans. This is especially the case for an institution's community engagement. The teaching of student competences for democracy and diversity should be accompanied by programmes of civic engagement and social responsibility in the framework of its public service mission. This means that mechanisms need to be in place to encourage, support and reward practices of public service by academics, students and staff. Public service expectations and requirements within the institution have to be as clearly defined as are those of teaching and research.

Furthermore, principles of democracy and diversity have to be embedded in the institutional policies, practices and structures. One major aspect of applying such principles is the transparency of, and student participation in, institutional decision making. Students, especially, have to be seen as partners within the higher education community. Another aspect is to widen access to higher education to provide

52. See National Survey of Student Engagement at http://nsse.iub.edu/html/origins.cfm for a survey of student participation in programmes and activities that higher education institutions provide for student learning and personal development.

equal opportunities and to help make the student body reflective of the diversity of the overall population. Derek Bok suggests that higher education institutions need to actively recruit students from minority and working class communities if their student populations are to reflect the diversity of our societies. Such recruitment may include admissions that are not strictly on merit, with the precondition that once accepted, their grades and academic degrees will be merit-based. This also means that additional educational support may have to be offered to students to ensure their successful performance. Furthermore, diversity has to permeate the entire institutional life and be modelled by making faculty and staff also diverse.

Finally, higher education institutions make an ideal forum for even the most contentious debates within their local communities and society at large. Academic space is by definition free of ideological choices and built on freedom of enquiry and the search for truth based on dialogue and rigorous scientific research. Academics have a reputation for independence and credibility and sharing their expert knowledge and perspectives with the public. Higher education institutions should carefully guard this space and continue to provide a forum for critical and intellectually honest discussion about even the most contentious and emotionally charged issues in our societies. There is some evidence of the emergence of taboo topics even in academic surroundings. This is a dangerous development.

In conclusion, the development of student competences for democracy and diversity cannot be seen simply as the consequence of an institution's educational quality or an automatic by-product of higher education experience. Good education does not prepare students automatically for citizenship and civic and ethical responsibility. Development of these competences is rather a function of an institution's systematic and strategic effort to present students with learning opportunities for these competences within teaching, research and public service, and to facilitate students' active engagement with the various curricular and extracurricular learning opportunities. These three core functions should incorporate mechanisms for preparing students for life after higher education as active, responsible and ethically sensitive citizens. Through what concrete measures and initiatives this objective will be achieved depends on the particular higher education institution. It will be a reflection of how the institution sees its contribution to the society, as well as of the particular environment – local, regional and national – in which the institution is embedded. It is a task of each individual institution, as Nancy Cantor pointed out in the round table debate at the forum, to develop an authentic institutional practice fitting the particular context that institution belongs to.

Differences between Europe and the United States in conceptions of and practices towards student development of competences for democracy and diversity

The discourses on the development of competences for democracy and diversity in Europe and the United States are strikingly different. In the US context, we rarely

find higher education institutions that do not have civic and social involvement mentioned in their mission statement. This attitude reflects the historical development of American land grant universities where the traditional role of teaching and research has been modified by including close social ties and service to the community in which they were established. The community colleges, as a distinct sector of higher education in the US, are particularly vocal in highlighting the purpose of offering services to and catering for the educational needs of their local communities.

Compared to Europe, it can be noted that US higher education has a particularly well-developed practice of service learning, especially community service which has a relatively high rate of participation by students (Kuh 2008). Such learning is also widely considered as a particularly effective way of educating for democracy. Less clear is whether and to what extent individual students actually develop civic and social competences within formal courses. A liberal arts and sciences education is particularly well suited for providing general education courses including courses that explore civic and social concepts, and should as such help students to develop such competences. However, many students do not take courses that are essential to every informed citizen. In many higher education institutions there certainly is a scope for strengthening institutional policies on the provision of general education, which would – complementing the rest of the curriculum – ensure that students are prepared also for active, responsible, ethically sensitive citizenship.

Judging from the European angle, US higher education institutions do not appear to fully (or even sufficiently) apply democratic principles within their structures and procedures. In particular, the governance mechanisms seem not to encourage full participation from faculty and especially students and their influence on actual decisions appears to be limited. The key institutional decisions tend to be taken by a relatively small group of people, usually close to the President's circle. Given the rather strong "presidential system of governance", decisions concerning the development of student competences and other aspects of institutional civic mission will also typically be decided by the President and her/his circle. At the level of individual higher education institutions there might be, hence, a scope to reconsider whether and how democratic principles could be better modelled within the governance mechanism.

Unlike the US, European higher education is not typically considered to be responsible for the general education of students who have opted for higher-level professional training or academic education in a specific discipline (Weber 2007: 31-32). The absence of liberal arts and sciences higher education makes it more challenging to find a "space" for the development of competences such as those for democracy and diversity in disciplines other than social sciences and humanities where such topics fall within discipline-specific teaching. Curricular reforms initiated by the Bologna Process have often created battlefields within faculties over which course will be offered within a particular programme, and with what credit. Individual academics have been understandably eager to retain their own courses. In such

circumstances, the incentive to add new courses on citizenship and democracy into the curricula among higher education leaders and academics has been rather absent.

Another reason for the low incentives for "democracy and citizenship" education across European universities lies in a particular discourse highlighting "graduate employability" and "serving the knowledge economy" as the main purposes of higher education (Mazza & Bergan 2010; see also Bergan 2005, 2006). This discourse has been especially reflected in a number of formal documents coming from the European Union institutions but also individual European governments, and has as such permeated the "public space" of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). To be fair, the Bologna Declaration and subsequent communiqués signed by the education ministers within the EHEA express appreciation for the multiple purposes of higher education, including "preparing students for life as active citizens in a democratic society" and for "the important influence higher education institutions exert on developing our societies, based on their traditions as centres of learning, research, creativity and knowledge transfer as well as their key role in defining and transmitting the values on which our societies are built" (Bologna Process 2007). The problem is that there has been little effort made to articulate how the objective of preparing students for life as active citizens should/can be implemented. It is as if this is expected to happen automatically as a by-product of quality higher education learning.

The most vocal proponent of education for democracy and diversity within Europe has been the Council of Europe (Huber & Harkavy 2007). It has developed a long-standing programme on Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights,[53] and in 2006 the Council of Europe and the US Steering Committee of the International Consortium for Higher Education, Civic Responsibility and Democracy organised a forum on the responsibility of higher education for democratic culture.[54] One visible step towards concretising education for democracy and diversity has been made also by European Union institutions through the Key Competences for Lifelong Learning – European Reference Framework developed in 2006 (European Commission 2006).[55] This framework also defines and explains "social and civic competences" which "include personal, interpersonal and intercultural competence and cover all forms of behaviour that equip individuals to participate in an effective and constructive way in social and working life, and particularly in increasingly diverse societies, and to resolve conflict where necessary. Civic competence equips individuals to fully participate in civic life, based on knowledge of social and political concepts and structures and a commitment to active and democratic participation" (ibid: 17). Preceding this recommendation, the Council of the European Union in 2004 declared in a report that "education contributes to preserving and renewing the common cultural background in society and to learning essential social and civic values such as citizenship, equality,

53. See http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/education/edc/default_EN.asp?.
54. See http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/highereducation/DemocraticCulture/Default_EN.asp#TopOfPage.
55. See also http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/education_culture/publ/pdf/ll-learning/keycomp_en.pdf.

tolerance and respect, and is particularly important at a time when all Member States [of the EU] are challenged by the question of how to deal with increasing social and cultural diversity" (ibid: 1). While it is commendable that this reference framework has been established, and that it includes social and civic competences, a major step still needs to be taken to include these into the overarching European qualifications frameworks (EHEA-QF and EQF-LLL). Even more pressing, but also more challenging, is the quest to include the acquisition of transferable competences – including competences for citizenship and democracy – in curricula and institutional policies across European higher education institutions.

The key question here is whether European higher education leaders are motivated and able to develop and identify clear actions on how to achieve this. The Tuning Report, that researched the state of transferable competences across European higher education institutions, has made a comprehensive list of those competences that have been most frequently mentioned in various literatures, and surveyed students, academics and employers across Europe to assess their importance and to what extent they are achieved within their respective institutions (González & Wagenaar 2003: 33). The results show that the understanding of cultures and customs of other countries, appreciation of diversity and multiculturality, ability to work in an international context, even knowledge of a second language, tended to be concentrated in the lower part of the scale with respect to importance and achievement as perceived by all three main stakeholders (ibid.). Competences for democratic citizenship were not even included in the survey. It appears that European academics (including perhaps deans and rectors) do not consider education for democracy and diversity to belong to the objective of higher education and see it, as such, as being outside their responsibility. It would, thus, take a strong message from the public authorities (in most cases still the primary funding body) and the students to achieve a change in attitude and proceed to concrete action.

Other aspects of the civic mission of higher education, for example collaboration with local schools and enterprises and creating student volunteer programmes, are much more common. As the role of governments in terms of funding diminishes and higher education institutions seek additional external sources of funding, their openness towards society and relationships with the community and region increases. This development too will inevitably force European higher education institutions to reconsider their public service role and civic mission in general.

Finally, it should be added that cultural differences between the US and Europe also play a role here. European higher education students are often resistant to overt attempts to "shape" them or to "instil" particular values in them. European administrators and academics are less likely than their American counterparts to be comfortable with the idea that they are societal "leaders" who have broad responsibilities for helping students become informed, tolerant and ethically responsible citizens. Talk of higher education providing competences for "democracy and diversity" can easily be misunderstood in Europe as patronising to students and as

an effort at propagating political correctness. These remarks are, of course, generalisations that disregard nuances and exceptions (there are, for example, relevant differences in these areas between different parts of Europe). However, they do highlight the necessity of proceeding with the task at hand with sensitivity to such cultural differences.

Conclusion

While we are becoming increasingly ambitious in terms of what we expect higher education institutions to do and accomplish, and while demands by students, employers, governments and other societal actors are becoming ever more vocal and more precise in their formulations, this does not mean that we should be demanding ever more resources from the institutions to meet these increasingly expanding goals. Henry Teune made the point at the forum that *expanding* the goals of higher education should really mean *integrating* goals. In other words, the task of higher education leadership is to find ways to employ and reemploy existing resources to meet these multiple goals. Furthermore, as the scope of relationships between higher education institutions and societal actors widens – due to diversifying funding, recruitment of students or otherwise – so too the institutions need to reconsider their priorities in terms of the way in which they will be serving their immediate communities and society at large. This will increase the diversity of what higher education provides in terms of programmes, faculty and public service initiatives. There will be institutions, like the community colleges in the United States, which will prioritise the mission of social inclusion and service to the community. Other institutions will seek to facilitate the economic development of regions where they are placed. Others again will continue to be concerned with reaching internationally recognised research excellence. Regardless of the particular role an institution seeks to achieve for itself, and the priorities it has in its mission, there should be a space in each of them for preparing students for active, responsible, ethically sensitive citizenship in democratic and increasingly diverse societies alongside and in convergence with the objective of preparing them for the labour market and encouraging their personal development. It is only through a combination of these competences that higher education fully prepares students for life after college.

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Appendix – Statement by the Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) on the contribution of higher education to intercultural dialogue

Adopted by the 2006 plenary session of the CDESR

Context and purpose

The Council of Europe's Steering Committee for Higher Education and Research (CDESR) reaffirms the strong role of education, not least higher education, in developing and fostering intercultural dialogue.

This is particularly pertinent in view of the emphasis on intercultural dialogue given by the Action Plan adopted by the 3rd Summit of Heads of State and Government of Council of Europe member states (Warsaw, 16-17 May 2005) and the Faro Declaration, adopted by European ministers of culture at the closing of the celebration of the 50th anniversary of the European Cultural Convention (Faro, 27-28 October 2005). The CDESR also recalls that the European Year of Citizenship through Education, to which it contributed, and the pilot project on the University as a Site of Citizenship are highly relevant in this context.

The purpose of the present Statement is to outline the contribution of higher education to intercultural dialogue within the Council of Europe's programme.

A tradition of intercultural dialogue

The world of higher education is a natural partner in intercultural dialogue because higher education has been international in its culture and essence since the founding of the first universities in the 11th and 12th centuries, and also because progress in research and teaching require open minds, a spirit of enquiry, readiness to co-operate across borders and a willingness to learn by exploring the unknown. No areas of human endeavour can be foreign to universities and other higher education institutions or to those involved in higher education in various capacities as researchers, teachers, students, administrative and technical staff members and policy makers.

The multiplier effect of higher education

The key role of higher education is further underlined by the multiplier effects of higher education institutions. In training future teachers and other professionals in a whole range of academic disciplines, as well as in the role of higher education institutions and their students and staff in forming public opinion, the attitudes and values conveyed through higher education will be transmitted in very varied

contexts and in all walks of life. The role of higher education in promoting intercultural dialogue therefore extends well beyond the number of staff and students engaged in higher education at any one time.

A dialogue built on values

Intercultural dialogue must be founded on a firm and well-reflected set of values as well as on a willingness to consider the values of others and to reassess one's own convictions in the light of new and convincing evidence. Dialogue presupposes openness of mind in all partners, including the capacity to look at their own values and frame of reference with critical distance. These are also essential values and characteristics of higher education.

European higher education is based on the conviction that each human being has intrinsic value as an individual, and also that each human being is inherently responsible for the development and well-being of other human beings, of human society as a whole and of the environment on which we depend for our survival.

The CDESR is committed to the Council of Europe's key values of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. In this context, the CDESR sees the main contribution of higher education – as well as the main contribution of other areas of education – as helping to develop, maintain and transmit to new generations the democratic culture, which is indispensable to making democratic institutions and democratic laws work, and to making democratic societies sustainable.

Higher education is further committed to pursuing knowledge unhindered by established dogma or schools of thought, to judging ideas on the basis of their merit and to ethical reflection and behaviour. Implementation of these essential values requires freedom of teaching and research, freedom of organisation and freedom of movement for members of the academic community. These are also essential prerequisites for intercultural dialogue.

Higher education is committed to dialogue with those whose convictions differ from our own, as a means of increased understanding and of resolving conflicts by peaceful means. These fundamental values underlie the international co-operation, throughout Europe as well as with other parts of the world, that is part and parcel of the heritage of higher education. They underlie the setting-up of the European Higher Education Area by 2010 as well as the relationship and co-operation between the European Higher Education Area and other regions.

The higher education contribution to intercultural dialogue

Within its pan-European framework

Europe is a unique balance of what we as Europeans have in common and the various cultural traditions that make up an important part of Europe's richness. The CDESR, as a unique platform of representatives of higher education institutions as well as public authorities of 49 countries and with the active participation of students and

other partners, provides a singular opportunity for intercultural dialogue in a pan-European context. This is an important feature of the CDESR plenary sessions as well as of the activities of the Steering Committee. Arriving at a common platform on topics such as the public responsibility for higher education and research, higher education governance, the recognition of qualifications, access to higher education and the heritage of European universities would be impossible without engaging in intercultural dialogue.

The Council of Europe has played a fundamental role in opening the most important process of higher education reform – the Bologna Process – to all countries of the European Cultural Convention that commit to implementing the goals of the Process. The Council of Europe continues to play a leading role in integrating the newest members of the Process – the countries of South-East Europe and the newly independent states that joined in 2003 and 2005 – fully into the European Higher Education Area.

Beyond Europe

Beyond its pan-European framework, the Council of Europe's higher education programme contributes to intercultural dialogue through:

- participation in the working group addressing the relationship between the European Higher Education Area and other parts of the world (working group on the external dimensions of the Bologna Process);
- participation in the UNESCO Global Forum on International Quality Assurance, Accreditation and Recognition of Qualifications in Higher Education;
- advice on setting up, in the framework of the UNESCO Regional Convention for the Mediterranean,[56] a network of national information centres on recognition and mobility in the Mediterranean region, modelled on the European Network of National Information Centres (ENIC Network);
- advice on the review of the UNESCO regional conventions on the recognition of qualifications, based on the experience of the Council of Europe/UNESCO Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region;
- ad hoc presentations and discussions of European higher education policies in appropriate fora in other parts of the world;
- publications on various aspects of European higher education policies, through the Council of Europe Higher Education Series;
- inviting representatives from other parts of the world to participate in CDESR activities.

56. International Convention on the Recognition of Studies, Diplomas and Degrees in Higher Education in the Arab and Europe States bordering on the Mediterranean (1976).

Future possibilities

The Council of Europe's key contribution to the European Higher Education Area and as co-secretariat, with UNESCO, of the European Network of National Information Centres on academic recognition and mobility (ENIC Network) will alone ensure that the CDESR will play an important role in intercultural dialogue within as well as beyond Europe in the years to come.

However, depending on the extent to which the necessary resources can be identified, the CDESR would like to increase its engagement in intercultural co-operation, in particular by:

– inviting partners from outside Europe to contribute to and participate in the new project on The University between Humanism and Market: Redefining Its Values and Functions for the 21st Century, which will be launched in 2007. This project will consider the role and mission of higher education in the context of our changing political, social, cultural and technological environment. Intercultural dialogue is an integral part of this context, including the fostering of the required skills, competences and attitudes through higher education and research. The project will be relevant for other parts of the world and will also benefit from such participation;
– setting up a university network focusing on intercultural dialogue, as proposed by the Russian chairmanship of the Council of Europe;
– the organisation, in co-operation with ALECSO[57] and other appropriate partners, of conferences and activities on higher education policies and reform, including at least one conference at political level;
– co-operation with the Anna Lindh Euro-Mediterranean Foundation for the Dialogue between Cultures, where the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council of Europe and the Foundation makes reference to higher education policies, in particular relating to mobility of students and staff, and to the interaction between the European Higher Education Area and the southern Mediterranean states;
– continued commitment to developing co-operation and understanding between European higher education and appropriate partners from other regions;
– in particular, seeking to develop dialogue on higher education policies and reform with partners from central Asia and Latin America.

In fulfilling its mission in promoting intercultural dialogue within and beyond the international community of higher education leaders, staff and students, as well as representatives of public authorities, the CDESR will seek to further the values to which European higher education is committed and on which the Council of Europe is founded. The CDESR will seek to do so in co-operation with appropriate partners, in particular UNESCO, European and international organisations of

57. Arab League Educational, Cultural and Scientific Organization.

higher education institutions and students, appropriate regional and international organisations, institutions and the public authorities of member states.

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Developing learners' competence is an important part of the mission of higher education. The kind of competences that higher education should develop depend on what we see as the purposes of higher education. The term "converging competences" points to the need not only to train individuals for specific tasks, but to educate the whole person. Education is about acquiring skills, but also about acquiring values and attitudes. As education policies move from an emphasis on process to a stronger emphasis on the results of the education processes, learning outcomes have come to be seen as an essential feature of higher education policies both in Europe and North America.

This book explores the roles and purposes of higher education in modern, complex societies and the importance of competences in this respect. Although public debate in Europe could give the impression that the sole purpose of higher education is to prepare for the labour market, this important role is complemented by at least three others: preparation for democratic citizenship, personal development and the development of a broad and advanced knowledge base. This work draws on the experiences in both Europe and North America to underline that the discussion is not in fact about which of these different purposes is the "real" one; they are all important, and they coexist.

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