

Universities and Global Market

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The article interested in the universities in the global market. Author briefly describes the situation of the many universities of the point of view of education, research, orientation, system of financing and management of the universities. The whole article is based on the author's practical experiences. The research objective was to determine how the professional community is looking at private universities and state universities. It was based on the opinion of the quality of graduates and the number of academic staff who are working at state universities. These academics have mostly negative view of private universities as well as the knowledge of graduates of these private schools. However, the opinion of staff in practice, especially managers in manufacturing companies, trading companies, companies selling services, as well as senior officials in government, are not so negative. By contrast in certain areas such as marketing, business, management, Information and Communication Technology etc., was rather neutral or positive. The politicians were interested about these information with regard to educational reform (reform of universities is still not actual—note the author) and the expected necessary cuts of spending to higher education from the state budget. Unfortunately, the research project due to political changes in 2009 was not completed and obtained only partial results. Despite of this fact the author decided to process the article below. Opinions on the topic of public vs. private universities were mainly obtained informally from experts from academic area (both public and private), managers, various specialists, but also from the students themselves. In conclusion man can say that the demand for people who are able to quickly demonstrate their knowledge in practice is still stronger. The title becomes second-rate (unfortunately not quite in the public and state administration). Very strong demand is the active practice of communication in English (it fulfills especially private universities). Graduates of technical universities in the classical fields are sought less in the labor market. Very high pressure is developed by state universities to private. This implies a lack of professors and associate professors who can work in full time at private universities which are more flexible and better adapt to labor market requirements. Stronger position have private universities that are in any way connected with foreign partners from developed countries.

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Introduction

We cannot disregard that this convention takes place at a certain time which is characterized primarily by globalization of the economy, historically the fastest developing technologies of all kinds, lingering economic

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crisis (for many word experts, owners of the Nobel Prize for Economics, not expected), change of thinking (unfortunately often connected to a deflection from the traditional human values, including religion). This post is logically influenced by this fact. Universities, students, educators, researchers, etc., do not give their vision and fulfilling their objectives and strategy in a vacuum, but everything takes place in the global marketplace.

What is essential and has a significant effect on the functioning of the universities is economic situation, especially in the G7 countries and Russia, as well as in rapidly developing economies such as China, India and Brazil and finally in the EU countries. One can not overlook perhaps the declining influence of the global economic crisis, with all its various potent effects both to the business community and the State itself and not least its impact on people's minds.

Where to Begin?

As a basic and essential factor to embark upon or continue a successful way, strategies for world renowned university are the appropriate political climate and the resulting legislation.

It is possible to put the basic and fundamental questions: What will be able to do for the graduate of the university, if he will enter the global work market? Will the interest in these graduates be in practice? In other words, is the competent university and the education obtained the guarantee to get an appropriate job?

Then should follow the answers to these questions: What university should be? What the parameters should be to teach subjects, in science and research, in personnel equipment etc., and all in what timeframe?

Of course, it is still necessary to distinguish between technical universities and other traditional universities.

The author is not a supporter of the philosophy that it's possible to get an education at each university and the practice will show what should be done. In some fields such as medicine, it is also impossible. Today would be a big luxury for the taxpayers to facilitate education to proceed in an uncoordinated random way. Relevant education should meet the requirements of the world's knowledge of the graduate. Successful university is only that which is recognized throughout the world. Only this university can serve as a model, to aim at such university has only the sense.

Specifics of Universities, Education and Research

Universities should be pretty specific in selected areas but always, and it is essential, should move around the lath of the world grade. No sense to follow other levels, no sense wasting energy and time.

It is essential that the courses and curriculums have a comparable level. However, at the concrete university, there should include something special or specific, which students could obtain only just at this university. This is certainly in virtue for the educator, who is known in his field like the world-known expert. Also, the student should spend part of the semester in practice in company or public administration, for example, where the university cooperates successfully.

And now we come to the substantial. May the university only to teach or also engage into the science, research and innovation?—Currently, it is a highly debated issue in Czech Republic. Trend is to divide universities into two types. Then it is necessary to take a think and say whether concrete university is able to carry out science, research and innovations at the global level. Otherwise, currently it has very sporadic importance. Very important is the kind of financing. Like the most effective and practically certifiable the author feels a combined funding in specific ratio—the private sector and state, to public universities as well as private universities. It is also appropriate that on the science, research or innovations to participate, more than one

university together with interested companies.

Despite low investment in research and development in the European Union, EU commissioner for the digital agenda Neelie Kroes rejected the popular notion that the member states should resort to state assistance in order to reduce the gap between the EU and its competitors. Bizarre is the fact that the EU commissioner Neelie Kroes rejected it at the time when the European Commission established a new expert group focused on the development of smart technologies (e.g., photonics, nano- and bio-technology, nano-electronics). EU commissioner told at the press conference about the so-called Key Enabling Technologies (KET)—Technologies of the future: “In this environment of tight fiscal situation, we definitely cannot choose the way of subsidies. We need sustained investment in the right areas and we need to eliminate barriers to business...”. The speaker of EU Commission said: “It is furthermore high-tech share of total production in Japan by 33%, in the United States even 50% higher than in Europe”. “Most products and services that will be available within five to ten years are still unknown but will be based on next generation technologies”, said EU Commissioner for Industry, Antonio Tajani (Retrieved July 16, 2010, from <http://www.euractiv.cz/vzdelavani0/clanek/eu-odmita-povolit-statni-podporu-novych-technologii-007725>).

Any research must have a certain rate of return, but on the contrary may occur that the path is blind. If the university should have an effective research, then it:

- Should be able to participate in selection procedure around the world (see the June 2010—contract was signed between the Czech Republic and the USA, which shows that Czech companies can participate to selection procedure in the U.S.);
- Keep long and closely cooperate with companies which applied results of research in practice;
- To have long-term feedback to their students and know how they are able to apply themselves;
- Keep long and closely cooperate with selected world universities and do benchmarking;
- Exchange of the teachers and students;
- Make cooperation with foundations, etc..

Specify of the Management of the University

From an outside view, it can be said with a little exaggeration that unlike other resorts, everybody talks about education because everyone attended a school and so have the feeling that they understand this issue.

It can be said that in Czech Republic, there are two basic ways. Supporters of the first claim, that management appertains to the field of business and not to the university. This is to be controlled by the so-called academically. For example, the view of Ivan Wilhelm, Rector Emeritus of the Charles University (2010):

Argument that the renovation of universities consist in introduction of managerial methods in its management is quite funny. No businessman can take into account academic freedom in business management, as well as management of university cannot orient only to the commercial success of the market. Academic freedom is one of everyday undeniable need for high school, without which it cannot be realized.

Proponents of the second alternative, to which the author belongs, say that the university has to be controlled managerially, but with the preservation of academic freedom.

The author thinks that in today's time of a global competition, university is not a place to meet smart and successful people and less smart and less successful people, depending on how the person one will want, or will teach or make a research (by how to make their own determination and that under the guise of academic freedom).

Also the university has to have its business plan. University management must work project-oriented to fulfill its vision and goals. Then it has a sense as for a taxpayer support the university “voluntarily”. Otherwise, it is necessary to push this in the spirit of its elected politicians.

If the university is supposed to behave so as to be successful (see above), then one of the key assumptions is the competent management. From the experience and subsequent management perspective, it is appropriate to look at the university as at a specific form of the company. The specificity can be seen just in the academic freedom.

The criteria must be clear for the ideal graduate, and this objective should be directed by the university. The method by no means confined to the typical discussion on university land, flying into the unknown in the field of research. This is mainly reflected in the move towards to the predetermined goals. It is clear that if companies, research, government, other public institutions will “fight” for graduates, then the vision will be fulfilled, the strategy is right and objectives are fulfilled.

Often we see that the brilliant scientist is elected by the Academic Senate into the managerial function at the university, which means that he should automatically become a top manager, automatically get another profession. Top universities have in long time ago recognized that it is in most cases a nonsense. In the Czech Republic we start to realize this slowly, but we just realize. This is similar in a row of eastern countries. It means that management is still underestimated and it is seen as something that is man “given from the above”, and something, that does not need to learn and in practice to demonstrate that he can.

University Ranking

We cannot forget the evaluation of universities such as <http://www.arwu.org/index.jsp>; <http://ranking.heeact.edu.tw/en-us/2009/TOP/100>; <http://www.topuniversities.com/university-rankings/world-university-rankings/2009/results>, but add to the usefulness of graduates in practice.

There are many methods of university rankings by number of publications in the selected databases (many universities accept different) to a number of successful graduates. The author thinks that only the combined method, which is an essential criterion for success of graduates in obtaining adequate jobs and a position or positions in prestigious companies and institutions, non-profit sector, research and scientific institutions (especially here it is: a world-renowned scientific contribution such as Nobel Prize, etc., measurable economic benefits in practice projects, publications in: prestigious databases, journals, and books that are sold and not handed out, etc.). This should be done in certain horizon.

This can be achieved only, and only if the executives have a vision, clearly identified targets with financial and political support.

It is necessary to implement a system of evaluating the success of graduates in the longest period of time after graduation.

If we say ourselves: “... we are producing excellent students...” and we do not have it confirmed by the monitoring of practice or research, so it is not entirely true.

We can get reviews from various agencies (see, now notorious known review of the U.S. mortgage market), to move on different rankings of the evaluation ladders, but the author believes that the best award is a hunger for graduates, award of interesting appropriately priced research projects.

It is not a problem (unsolvable) to find out in today’s information society how successful graduates are. In particular, it is very topical in countries where Faculties and Universities grow like mushrooms after rain. In case of any new in the author’s neighborhood, the author wonders: “Where do the new turn of brilliant professionals

with rich experience in both research and actual practice comes from? How much will it cost taxpayers? What value of the diplomas of graduates of these new schools, are for the labor market?”.

Public Versus Private Universities

The Czech Republic is considered that private colleges are not as good as the state, and that is due to the fact that students, that pay tuition fees, actually buy a diploma. It could be said that it is wrong and misleading idea or claim that certain parts of the public likes.

But what you may think then, when public schools receive money based on the number of students. You must also take into account the fact that at the public schools, there is much more assistants, lecturers and professors. If these schools do not have students, it is not relevant to the financial evaluation of these assistants, lecturers and professors and the amount of payments for these expenditures is higher than those at private schools. This is particularly evident in the technical universities, where is not so high interest in the last ten to fifteen years, but the number of teachers do not fall. Then it is logical that if this situation is fixed, students perform “successfully” test. Or you can also from the above facts to conclude that students of state universities and especially technical universities are buying their education.

With a surface area of financing research and development and redistribution of funds within the frame of the universities it is similar. In most cases, it happens that allocated funds for research and development are re-allocated across the board within the faculty. Here is not a space for someone to excel, and it leads to an overall egalitarianism. Such universities have no chance to succeed in the global market.

At the university, we cannot look from a flat perspective, for example, the situation in the Czech Republic, where mainly technical universities were supported. Interest in the studying population is concentrated mainly on economics, business administration, law, medicine, and philosophical orientations.

Negative phenomena in the financing are reflected in particular with technical universities. Consequently, traditionally very good schools are not so much interesting for students.

Conclusion

In the end we can say that the education is in any case the basis of successful development of every economy. Therefore we should pay close attention to education as well as to science, research and innovations. Absolute basis is the realization of this fact.

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