

New Dynamics in European Higher Education

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European University Association (EUA)

- **EUA:** representative organisation of universities (c760) and their national Rectors' Conferences (34) in 45 countries across Europe
- **Mission:** to promote coherence in European higher education and research
- Through
 - ✓ Policy development & representation
 - ✓ Support to members - projects & services

“New dynamics” as a response to increasing demands on HEIs..

- Europe slipping behind in a changing world - demography (ageing societies) storing up problems...
- Increase participation & widen access
- be more local, more regional, more European, more global
- be more competitive / be more socially inclusive
- increase mobility within Europe / attract more students and scholars from outside Europe
- improve academic quality / be more responsive to labour market providing graduates with more employable skills
- provide compatible curricula across Europe / maintain cultural diversity & be more learner-centred
- be more autonomous / conform to set framework
- concentrate research / respond to regional needs
- do it all with decreasing public funding...

PurposeS of higher education

- Preparation for the labour market
- Preparation for life as “active citizens” in democratic, inter-cultural societies
- Personal development / fulfilment of different potential
- Development and maintenance of a broad, advanced knowledge base

Bologna and Lisbon

- ***The Bologna Process:*** Governmental push for convergence in 1999 → legislative reform and implementation in universities across Europe.
EHEA by 2010. 45 countries
- ***The Lisbon strategy:*** -> to make Europe the most competitive knowledge based economy - also *socially cohesive with more & better jobs*: EC priorities - shared expertise, knowledge and resources, LLL, research training, through FP7 - including ERC & now EIT.
Also by 2010 EU 25 countries
- HEIs recognised as central actors to Bologna & Lisbon

Europe: a changing higher education landscape - but changing (fast) enough?

- European & govt “strategy” needs to be more than words
- Funding Gap is real: beware policy discourse “HE is priority, but no more public funding”
- Need for re-thinking and refocusing HEI missions around societal needs and institutional strengths
- Every institution cannot do everything
- Recognise and value excellence in all aspects of institutional missions – teaching, services to society, research
- Clear evidence of change in Europe (wait for Trends V)
- Effectiveness of reforms enhanced when institutions are empowered (effective autonomy), and when all stakeholders are properly involved/consulted (cf Trends IV)

Reform Process: some issues to think about

- Reform doesn't begin at point zero: need to be sensitive to environment, socio-economic context, culture etc
- Attitude change (of "our best universities") most important step – conservative institutions in some societies
- Much to learn from the experience of others: all countries/institutions in a process of (permanent) reform and innovation, and plenty of diverse experience to tap...