

# The new dynamics in European Higher Education

Janja Komljenovič  
ESIB - The National Unions of Students in  
Europe



# Higher Education... a matter of society

“The question of what university we want , also depends on what type of society we want” (*M.A.Dias, former DG for HE in UNESCO*)

# Background and trends

- More people wish to obtain higher education degree - massification
- Crowded classrooms impacting on quality of teaching
- Less public money per student in higher education
- Modern economy requires more graduates, research and innovation
- Increased competition among universities
- Attractiveness of American universities

# International processes

- ***Bologna Process***, European HE systems should become by 2010 the European Higher Education Area;
- ***Lisbon Objectives***, the EU should become the most competitive knowledge based economy by 2010;
- **Trans-national Higher Education** – liberalisation of trade-WTO-GATS
- Regulations in education provision on international level (OECD/UNESCO guidelines);
- Economic development projects run by WB, IMF, etc. emphasise the role of HE and human capital.

# Controversities of different processes

- All these processes often clash between each other;
- Uniform solutions not always respond to the local needs;
- International trends should not be an excuse to implement certain policies on the national level.

Minimum criteria in order to guarantee the fundamental role of higher education in society

3 basic goals of universities:

1. Give high quality teaching/education
2. Independent research rooted in pure academic values
3. To contribute to the development of society

# Public versus private funding

# Diversity versus unification

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# Co-operation versus competition

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# Academic versus professional higher education

# Trade regulation versus Quality Assurance and recognition

# Academic freedom versus responsibility towards society

# Governance versus management of higher education institutions

# The walls of the Ivory Tower

It would be a major mistake to neglect the changes in society

This is not the time to hide behind the walls of academic freedom and institutional autonomy

It is time for European academics to take responsibility towards the society

# Turbulent period for higher education

- The era of Internationalisation
- The era of stakeholders community
- Old values challenged
- Old concepts challenged
- Financing challenged

# Nevertheless...

The European policymakers, academics, students, employers and other stakeholders in higher education should keep in mind the broad and vital role of higher education for the progress of a socially coherent European society

**Critical thought dies last**



# Contacts

- [www.esib.org](http://www.esib.org)
- [janja@esib.org](mailto:janja@esib.org)

