3 DIVERSIFICATION OF UNIVERSITY EDUCATION (INSTITUTIONS, PROGRAMMES) SEEN FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE INTENDED AMENDMENT OF THE UNIVERSITY LAW (R)

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Abstract: Conditions and determinative factors of "extensive" development of the sphere of tertiary university education and its impact. The "value" and the quality of education and what affects them.

Diversification of University education and attitudes to its solution. Diversification of educational programmes or diversification of educational institutions?

Specialization of study programmes (vocational, academic, research ones), possibilities of their determination – defining their particularity, relation to "types" of study programmes (bachelor's, subsequent master's, master's, doctor's). Practical implementation aspects of the "diversification" seen from the perspective of the intended amendment of the University law.

Key words: university education, vocational training, type of study programme, profile of the curriculum, quality of education, excellence, university autonomy, managerial approaches to university management, university funding, position of universities in the region, research, development and creative activity at the university, survey research

Abstrakt: Podmínky a určující faktory „extenzivního" rozvoje sféry terciárního (vysokoškolského) vzdělávání a jeho důsledky. „Hodnota" a kvalita vzdělávání a co je ovlivňuje.

Diverzifikace vysokoškolského vzdělávání a přístupy k jejímu řešení. Diverzifikace vzdělávacích programů nebo vzdělávacích institucí?

Profilace studijních programů (profesní, akademický, výzkumný), možnosti jejich vymezení – stanovení jejich specifiky, vazba na „typy" studijních programů (bakalářské, navazující magisterské, magisterské, doktorské). Praktické realizační aspekty „diverzifikace" z pohledu připravované novely VŠ zákona.

Klíčová slova: univerzitní vzdělání, profesní příprava, typ studijního programu, profil vzdělávacího programu, kvalita vzdělání, excelence, samospráva vysokých škol, manažerské přístupy k řízení VŠ, financování VŠ, postavení VŠ v regionu, výzkum, vývoj a tvůrčí činnost na VŠ, tzv. „sledovatelský výzkum"

INTRODUCTION

The key importance of education for the development and competitiveness of contemporary society is widely accepted. Externally, this fact is mainly apparent by the attention that is given to the area of education, research, and development in documents of the European Union as well as individual European countries. The real situation, which we encounter in analyzing the current state of higher education, is somewhat more complicated. Some of the positive aspects in this area undeniably include the establishment of international cooperation, especially with regard to achieving higher quality of the educational process, resolution of common problems that higher education institution face, improvement of mutual communication of educational institution of individual countries, etc. At the same time, however, there are many problems associated with the different development level of the educational system, especially of the tertiary education system in individual countries. The educational system is significantly affected by national traditions, national culture, but also by economic and political development. Given that the area of tertiary education has been more or less permanently developing since the 1940s, whereas the development more or less reacted - in a natural manner - to the real social (technical, technological, and economical) needs, countries of Central Europe were not "hit" by the process until the early 1990s. It was largely motivated by the effort (it is a question whether it was an objective necessity) to "catch up" with the "more developed countries" in this regard. In the majority of the Central European countries, this fact has resulted in the need to make certain changes in the structure of the tertiary education institutions and, to a great extent, also in the nature of educational programs carried out by such institutions. If these changes are to meet their objectives, it is not possible to implement them via an administrative process set down by the public administration, but they require very active approach of all the concerned parties that alone may implement those changes – i.e. of higher education institutions.

1 DIVERSIFICATION AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION

The significant increase in the number of higher education institutions (not only of "traditional universities") already starts at the turn of the 1940s and 1950s in Europe (and not only in Europe). It is particularly intensive in countries with a traditionally developed educational structure. It reacts to a real social need, which is relatively adequately presented as (market) demand for specifically qualified labor force in societies with market economy. With increasing complexity and technical (technological) demands of manufacturing processes, the various types and number of higher education institutions has been rising. This development trend is analogous in the majority of the aforementioned countries, although the specific form of the higher education institutions and educational programs is significantly affected by national traditions. In Austria and Germany, for example, there are other types of educational institutions developing besides the traditional universities that mainly provide "academic" education, such as the more specialized "hochschule" and more or less "professionally" oriented "fachhochschule". It is also possible to come across a similar process (although with a different terminology for higher education entities) in France and other countries of Southern and Northern Europe. In the United Kingdom and countries affected by the British educational system, the process has also been marked by traditional national traits. Common to all the above mentioned countries were both the increasing number of higher education institutions (and thus attendants) as well as the expansion of the higher education institution types. In principle, these "types" corresponded to the real needs for the preparation of qualified specialists.

Until the 1990s, the countries of Central Europe, centrally planned economies, mainly addressed the problem of increasing demand for education and qualification of labor by developing secondary education, which was, in principle, able to meet the social needs for qualified workers. With minor exceptions, higher education was viewed as more or less "elite" (with 8-10% of population

graduating from such schools) and was provided by schools which are in current discussions about the diversification of tertiary education described as "university" type schools.

In the first half of the 1990s, there were many discussions in the Czech Republic (but also on the international level) dedicated to the need of significantly expanding the chance of participating in the higher educational studies and increasing the number of attendants. At the same time, international cooperation in the area of higher education is increasing ever more intensively in Europe in the 1990s. This trend is characterized by the so-called "Bologna Process", but also by a number of programs financially and organizationally supported by the European Union. Under these circumstances, the number of university students as well as of higher education institutions is sharply increasing in a number of European countries (including the Czech Republic). Similarly as in other countries, this growth is also supported by the state. However, the majority of the newly formed higher education institutions (both public and private) specialize in the manner, which is given by the classic type of higher education institutions dominating until the 1990s. As a result, the number of higher education institutions doubles in many countries (triples in case of the Czech Republic; with the number of attendants increasing even more), with absolutely insufficient differentiation of the types of schools and study programs. Therefore, the "diversification" of higher education institutions and study programs is becoming a very pressing issue namely in these countries.

The characteristics of the following three basic types of higher education institutions have formed over time in the Czech Republic and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe in discussions on the given issues or, actually, on the solutions presented by official government institutions in respect of the given issues, as well as in discussions on research reports and considering foreign experience:

Research universities – should offer "excellent" follow-up Master's programs, but predominantly "long" Master's and Doctoral study programs, and mainly prepare prospective graduates for work in the field of science and research. This largely defines the position of science and research at such universities. They should be the centers of excellence and coordination centers of scientific research.

Universities („Teaching Universities") – are characterized by a wider range of study programs, both Bachelor's and Master's programs. Significant part of the study programs should correspond to "canonized" fields of science. To a limited degree, these schools should offer "long" Master's and Doctoral study programs. This is also associated with the position of science and research – it should be executed on a relatively wide basis, largely in the area of applied research.

Higher education institutions ("specialized" higher education institutions) – are characterized as schools specializing in practical training. Their mission will mainly be the execution of Bachelor's (practical) study programs and their learning plans should incorporate professional/hands-on internships. These schools should only offer follow-up Master's study programs on a limited (exceptional) basis and only if such programs are "professionally/practically" oriented. Research activities should only be undertaken on limited basis by these schools and should mainly be aimed from applied research to development and innovations.

This concept that basically assumes an administrative method of implementation has not been positively received by higher education institutions. This diversification method had its upsides as well as its downsides. The upsides included its certain "unambiguity" and, in case of adoption of the relevant administrative measures, also the possibility of a relatively "prompt" implementation. The downsides included the fact that the approach consisted in an implementation diversification "from the top", by the public administration or the relevant ministry, as appropriate. Although cooperation with the academia was foreseen, decisions about the classification of individual higher education institutions would be made by the "ministry".

In line with this approach to diversification of higher education institutions other questions also arise. The above mentioned "division" of higher education institutions into "research", "teaching" and "specialized" would also require certain evaluation of the "structure" of the institutions which in the given country (given state) carry out research (or scientific research). In the case of the Czech Republic a significant part of (scientific) research is carried out by public research institutions joined in the Academy of sciences of the Czech Republic. Apparently, the position of "research universities" is quite different in countries, where a significant (in most cases "decisive") part of research (above all basic) is concentrated on these universities.

According to the intentions of the authors of proposals on the deliberated diversification in terms of the Czech Republic the "research universities" should be institutions concentrating key research projects, whose basic and main activity should be research, and education would follow up (with a bit of overstatement it could be said that it would "complement" it).Studies on these research universities were oriented above all (according to some opinions almost exclusively) on training of new research (science) workers. Further issue was the ambiguous question of the relationship between "research" and "teaching" universities. The restriction of the research on "teaching" universities to mainly "applied" research would necessarily lead to certain stagnation, especially of the "academic" programs.

A simplified interpretation of the position and function of "research" universities can lead to (and these opinions have in fact appeared throughout the academic community) concerns about the emerging of a certain kind of "monopoly" on university research on these universities especially in the relationship to the changes in funding of public universities. The consequences for the development of quality of the education process, which is directly conditioned by the interconnection of the university education and the development of science (i.e. not only "research" but also the generalization of findings from factual research and their implementation into the structure of given science as a whole), which such approach to the position of "research" universities would have for "other" universities, is well imaginable.

A fundamentally different diversification method is currently contemplated. The first step should be the diversification of "study programs". Since the term "study program type" is used to identify a "Bachelor's", "Master's", and "Doctoral" study programs in connection with the Bologna Process, the term "study program profile" has been introduced in this connection. In this sense, a study program will be characterized by a profile as a "professional", "academic" or "research" study program. The characteristics of such "profiles" will be prepared by expert collectives, with significant representation of the academia. All "types" of study programs may be represented in all the aforementioned "profiles". As suggested by current elaborations, it is not possible to set their basic characteristics in general (for all existing study programs). It is clear that the characteristics of a "professional" study program will differ considerably for "physics" and for the study program "economics" or "theory and history of fine arts". For this reason, the said characteristics of individual profiles will be prepared by expert groups from individual fields. It is expected that different "profiles" of one study program may be implemented simultaneously (even by one and the same higher education institution). The demands for the study program resources (including personal resources) will be differentiated – they will mainly correspond to its "profile" and be reviewed by an "accreditation authority". According to the people proposing this diversification method, higher education institutions should crystalize over the next 6 to 8 years that will mainly (but not absolutely) offer one of above mentioned "profiles" of educational programs, which will gradually result in the diversification of higher education institutions through natural development. (The aforementioned proposal is currently being prepared for interdepartmental discussion.) The situation arising from the introduction of study program "profiles" is characterized by the following table:

It is clear from the above mentioned that both Bachelor's and Master's study programs may be offered under all "profiles". After completing any study program profile, it is possible to start a Doctoral study program, which is the only type that does not distinguish profiles. It is safe to assume that this study program diversification method, with subsequent diversification of higher education institutions, will be received more positively by the academia than the "administrative" approach proposed approximately a year ago. In all countries that feature functional and meaningful diversification of higher education, the current form of such diversification has been formed "naturally" and not "administratively".

Profile **Type**	Professional	Academic	Research
Bachelor's	Yes	Yes	Yes
Master's	Yes	Yes	Yes
Doctoral	Yes		

2 QUALITY OF EDUCATION – ROLE OF EDUCATION IN A "KNOWLEDGE-BASED SOCIETY"

The diversification of the higher education process is one of the consequences of the higher education development in the countries of Central Europe; however, it is also a significant instrument for increasing functionality and quality of an educational system. The idea that it is possible to conceive higher education in the same manner when nearly 70% of the population having the opportunity to frequent a higher education institution as in the time when only 6 to 8% of the population reached this "level" has proven to be delusive. This underlines the issue of the social function of education. Given that graduates of "elite" education were very likely to become part of not only the "professional" but also "social" elite, the same cannot be expected from "mass" or "multi-purpose" higher education. For this reason, we come across the need for change – and not only in the countries of Central Europe – both in the nature of higher education and in the management method of higher education institutions and the structure of educational institutions. The same factors, further highlighted by certain specific issues, induce the need for major reformatory changes in the area of higher education institutions in the Czech Republic.[5] As evidenced by the current state of discussions on the given issues, unambiguous definition of the social function of higher education is not simple. The significant increase in the number of students of higher education institutions was associated with various changes in the "nature" of education (which could also affect its contents in many aspects) as well as the expectations of one of the most important groups of external stakeholders – i.e. potential employers. The "massification" of higher education goes hand in hand with higher pragmatic expectations of employers that higher education institutions would "produce" not only educated, but also prepared or even trained graduates. The "massification" itself – i.e. a process in which the majority of population may get higher education (according to some authors, even those with IQ below 100)[6] - naturally forces a different nature (and often a different contents) but also different methods of education or studies. This does not have to and should not necessarily mean a universally lower level of all studies. It could rather lead to a more significant differentiation of study programs, i.e. a differentiation which would allow to preserve or rather deepen and improve the quality of studies of the population segment that would undergo tertiary study programs even in case it remained (similarly as many years ago) elite. We

[5] These issues are addressed in the essay of H. Nazaré: A new role for "old world" universities. In: University World News, 207 – 2012, 5 February 2012.
[6] For example: O. Štefl: Anyone, who shows interest, can graduate from a university. In: Hospodářské noviny, 3 March 2011.

are thus not faced with a strict alternative of "either high-quality, elite" or "average (or rather subpar) mass" studies and education, but with a solution to the problem of how to assure corresponding (standard) quality of studies for a high number of people interest in such studies and "excellent" studies and education for those who meet the necessary prerequisites. In a way, the aforementioned diversification of study programs could serve as a "guidepost" to the solution of the problem.

There is a certain issue if the increased emphasis on normative aspects connected (or rather supported by appeal to ……) with the "Bologna process" create strong enough motivation environment. (A further question is whether "excellent" education is identical, or if it is possible to obtain it only by studying at a "research" university or in a program with "research profile")

It is undeniably safe to say that higher education has become more practically-oriented, i.e. in the direction of "professional training", and, at the same time, the profile of graduates has been more closely linked to the labor market needs. Even private higher education institutions have had certain – and by no means meaningless – achievements in this regard. The practical/professional orientation of higher education does not mean a necessary impairment of its quality and intellectual level. However, if this is in fact the case, it is rational to seek its causes elsewhere than in the emphasis on the practical/professional aspects. The concept of professional training/professional education has also been undergoing a certain development, which cannot be described as a straightforward one. Until recently, there has been a general belief (in many cases, this belief is present to this day) that the more specialized (narrow) the professional training is (i.e. the more it focuses on "practicing" the necessary skills), the more efficient and, from the perspective of future success on the labor market, more effective it is. This belief is based on the hypothetical assumption that by hiring a graduate, namely a university graduate, his/her workplace acquires not only an "educated" but also appropriately "professionally" prepared and partially "trained" employee. In this case, the value of education obtained by such employee is assessed based on how much it is necessary to invest in his/her further "preparation" (training) for a specific job. Under this approach, general specialization and narrowly conceived professional specialization are – contrary to the sufficiently developed knowledge base of methodological competencies and professional flexibility – viewed as the basic attributes of the quality and education value. Nevertheless, mainly business entities voice concerns relating to "insufficient" links of study program/specializations to "job descriptions" of the majority of professions that require higher education qualification. The implementation of the "European qualification frameworks" and also the drafting of the "national qualification frameworks" should contribute to an improvement in the situation, as the frameworks should ensure significant conformity of the aforementioned "job descriptions" and the requirements for "knowledge and skills" of graduates of the relevant study programs.

The aforementioned approach to higher education is implicitly reflected in the evaluation of the "successfulness" by the higher education institutions themselves. School (faculty) successfulness is evaluated on the basis of a single criterion – i.e. getting a high-income job (after 1 year and 5 years after graduation from a higher education institution). The success on the labor market is undeniably one of the fundamental indicators of how higher education institutions fulfill their social role; however, the social or educational function of higher education institutions may not be reduced to that indicator. The question remains to what extent a higher education institution should prepare its graduates for other functions – other than professional training – that are to be fulfilled by intelligentsia with higher education, particularly within a knowledge-based society.

The differentiation between "profiles" of individual study programs may also contribute - in a certain manner - to the specification of this more generally conceived social function.

Certain problems, associated with a relatively high number of workers with higher education, are also present in other countries, not just in Europe. A similar problem, though under absolutely different economic conditions and different social-political context, appeared in the United States in

the first half of the 1970s, with the massification" of higher education leading to almost 60% of population entering tertiary education. The very inspiring (and "revolutionary" at the time) work of R. Freeman: The Overeducated American[7] represented a more or less theoretical reaction to the situation. The author addresses the issue, its consequences for the educational system as well as for the social development. The work of J. Smith: The Overeducated American?[8], published two years later, was a critical reaction to the aforementioned piece. Both of the aforementioned pieces are undeniably interesting in terms of today's deliberations on education as well. Particularly the work of Smith evokes a number of questions, among others, whether and in what ways is society able to assess the "knowledge potential" it possesses. According to the author, the "overeducated" factor does not consist in the surplus of higher education (or other) institution graduate, but rater in the fact that the existing development trend of the job structure does not create sufficient room their professional or even social utilization. The author also sees some constraints on the part of the educational process. The "inconsistence" between the structure of graduates (in terms of specialization) and professional opportunities is relatively easy to resolve; however, the nature of the educational process is a pending issue. While the above mentioned works of the American authors date back to the 1970s, one of the serious aspects of contemporary education in the United States was pointed out by V. J. Cabaniss in 2006, the Ambassador of the United States in the Czech Republic at the time. In his speech at an international conference on the knowledge-based society, he warned about the fact that mass introduction of extramural studies and use of electronic media in higher education reduce education to the "transfer of information", which consequently impairs the capabilities of graduates in terms of teamwork as well as communicability. He warns that "they have a good ability to collect information, but they absolutely lack the ability to create or co-create (new) information". It is this fact that significantly impairs the value and social function of education and reduces the "return" on investments in education.[9]

The issues that were possibly the inspiration of the aforementioned work of R. Freeman start to occur also in the Czech Republic. Recently, even in the daily press a statement pointing to the fact that R. Freeman considers as a display of "overeducation". "From last year's official Eurostat resources it is clear that already in 2010 20% of European university graduates in ages 25 to 34 ended up in positions requiring no tertiary qualification."[10] This trend in its own manner can be supported by the statement of R. Kvačková and B. Říhová with the reference to the findings of Masaryk University, that "last year in general 30% of MU graduates did not find jobs immediately, which was 6% more than two years before."[11] Analogically seems also the prognosis of J. Koucký from the Centre of education policy of the Pedagogical Faculty UK mentioned in the same paper: "It is assumed that while the number of university graduates in the adult population will by 2020 increase by 43% in the CR, the number of jobs designated for university graduates will increase only by 10%."[12] We can encounter a similar situation in some areas of public administration. P. Lessy stated in his paper on the conference of personnel officers working in public administration, that the Police of the Czech Republic currently employ 19% officers with a Bachelor's degree and 19% with Master's degree although it has only mere 4% of jobs for officers with a Bachelor's degree and 8% of jobs for officers with Master's degree.[13]

These issues certainly deserve deeper analysis and attention than they currently receive. Any "simple" immediate (administrative) solutions could do more harm than bring a resolution.

[7] Freeman, Richard B.: The Overeducated American. New York, Academic Press, 1976. ISBN 0-12-257262-6
[8] Smith, James P.: The Overeducated American? Santa Monica, Rand, 1978
[9] Knowledge economy, International conference symposium, VŠFS, Prague 2006, pp. 6-7
[10] Kvačková, R., Říhová, B.,: Only knowledge is not enough, its value decreases. Lidové noviny, Akademia supplement, 1.10.2013, p. 17
[11] Ibid., p. 17
[12] Ibid., p. 18
[13] Conference paper by P. Lessy at the konference Personnel work and education in public administration, 26.10.2013

Definitely, from the above mentioned one cannot draw a conclusion that it is necessary (by an administrative decision) to head towards decreasing the number of students in tertiary education.

This brings us back, once again, to the issue regarding the role of (higher) education in contemporary society, referred to as the "knowledge-based" society. It is also possible to come across certain, more or less "skeptical" positions on this adjective. K. P. Liessmann characterizes what we normally refer to as the "knowledge-based society" or "knowledge society" rather as the society of "lack of knowledge". This society, according to his opinion, does not "replace" the industrial society, but rather "industrializes" and "economizes" education and knowledge.[14]

In this connection, we are, once again, faced with a problem: is education really just a "transfer" of information or is it something "more demanding"? We cannot dispute the importance of the transfer of information for obtaining knowledge. However, education cannot be reduced to a mere transfer of information. Such position would represent the beginning of stagnation of knowledge, and consequently of education. Knowledge and education are not drive forward by the "transfer" of information, but by the "production" of information. This also applies to the so-called "professional" study programs (in terms of their profile), where the transfer of information, together with the training of capabilities aimed at the performance of specific profession, is considered as the basic teaching method.

In economically – and namely technically and technologically – developed societies, a significantly different view on professional training has been forming more and more, whereas the orientation on the development of skills and quality of "professional thinking" has been playing a dominant role. While the ability to "acquire" specialized (professional) information was viewed as one of the key capabilities in the area of professional training a few years ago, it is more or less seen as a common feature today. "Professional thinking" as a supporting aspect of professional training is characterized more as the ability to "exploit" any acquired information, the ability to extract – through comparing and analyzing – even those things that are not explicitly declared by such information (if viewed in isolated manner). This approach to the evaluation of professional education is characteristic by achieving a balanced harmony of flexibility and specialization.

The clarification of the role and function of tertiary education is also a general prerequisite for a purposeful and creative diversification of universities as well as for addressing the quality issues of higher education studies. This area has been receiving attention on national as well as international level. The quality of higher education studies is targeted by the "Bologna Declaration" and, in the subsequent years, by the meetings of Ministers of Education of the countries that joined the Bologna Process. During the 2005 meeting in Bergen, the countries of the Bologna Process adopted the "European standards and Guidelines" document, which played an important role in ensuring comparable evaluation of quality of studies in the participating countries. The EUA (European University Association) gives exceptional attention to the area of quality assurance.[15] In 2010, the EUA committee issued a declaration, in which it recommends the following four basic principles for quality assurance[16]:

- ✓ A higher education institution shall be responsible for the quality of its activities. The basic task for external quality assurance should mainly be the evaluation of an institution's internal processes.
- ✓ Institutional quality management requires a comprehensive approach, i.e. it should cover all activities of a higher education institution: education, research and development, social

[14] Liessmann K. P.: The Theory of Miseducation. Akademia, Prague 2009, p. 9
[15] Chvátalová A., Kohoutek J., Šebková H.: Zajišťování kvality v českém vysokém školství. A. Čeněk, Plzeň 2008, p. 33 (Quality Assurance in Czech higher education)
[16] Hodnocení kvality vysokých škol. Masarykova univerzita, Brno 2011, pp. 10,11 (Evaluating quality of higher education institutions)

service, and supporting services. Furthermore, quality management should rely on the basic fundamental goals of an institution.

- ✓ Quality must be perceived within context. It is necessary to consider the diversity of the missions and profiles of individual institutions as well as the national context and traditions. Therefore, this means that there is no one-dimensional definition of quality. The quality assurance processes must thus be flexible and adaptable in order not to suppress innovative development.
- ✓ Key goal of quality assurance (both internal and external) is to improve quality and promote the trust of all concerned partners. In order to fulfill this goal, it is necessary to maintain balance between responsibility and improvement. (EUA, 2012).

Activities of Czech higher education institutions and the Czech Rectors Conference follow up on these ideas. A quality of a higher education institution is always assessed in reference to the social role (mission) of higher education institutions.

Most discussions and research studies in the area of higher education quality consider quality to be the compliance with set standards, namely targeting the specification and assessment of various indicators. This procedure contributes to adequate evaluation and, on the basis thereof, to certain comparison of higher education institutions, which is one of the instruments for improving quality. However, it should be an integral part of a higher education institution management in the following period.

3 MANAGING AND FINANCING HIGHER EDUCATION SYSTEM

According to existing legislation, higher education institutions are self-governing corporations in the majority of countries (and in almost all European countries). The vast majority of amendments to acts that regulate the status of higher education institutions further promote their autonomous standing and self-governing nature. (This also applies to the prepared amendment to the Czech Higher Education Act.) The government may, more or less, affect the tertiary education development solely through legislation, method of financing, and "regulation" through "accreditations" – i.e. through an "accreditation authority".

While the legislation sets down the basic legal framework for the operations of higher education entities, their relation to the government, and conditions for their operations, the accreditation authority basically carries out the (rightful) authorization of the government in respect of the higher education quality and acts, to a great extent, as a "regulator" of entry to the "higher education territory". The financing of higher education institutions creates (regulates) economic (material) conditions for their activities. Any changes or modifications of these "three" tools of the government for impacting the operations of higher education institutions are thus always met with a great interest of the academia and are subject to negotiations of higher education representatives with public administration officials. The amendment to the Higher Education Act expressly specifies documents, which a higher education institution is to present to the ministry for approval. The fundamental document of a higher education institution should be – similarly as in the predominant majority of EU states - its "statute" as the sole document approved by the public administration (by a ministry). Another fundamental document of a higher education institution should be the "Long-term Plan". Both documents should be approved by an "academic senate", similarly as budgets and annual reports. The relevant legislation should also set down the structure and the number of the academic senate. The structure as well as the number of members of the academic senate should also be set down by law.

The amendment equally strengthens the position of a higher education institution rector (president). The election by an academic senate is preserved. Based on the remarks of the higher education institution representatives, the institute of "approval of a rector's election by an administrative board" was revoked. The position of a higher education administrative board was modified for the

same reasons; its "decision-making" competences were reduced, which more or less supervisory/inspectional competencies being accepted. With a certain degree of simplification, the status of the board may be compared with the status of a "supervisory board" within the corporate segment.

In connection with the modification of the status and competences of the managing bodies of higher education institutions, the question of the so-called "managerial" control (management) of higher education institutions comes to the forefront again. In reference to international experience in the past three years, this concept has been significantly preferred by some experts. In a way, it was considered as one of the potential reactions to the constant reductions in the higher education institution financing from public budgets. However, in such discussions, managerial control (management) of higher education institutions was mainly characterized – once again in reference to international experience – by a considerable strengthening of decision-making competencies of the "administrative board", even with regard to strategic and conceptual matters. Another significant feature of the managerial control (management) of higher education institutions was a major change in the method for selecting a rector/president (not election). According to the aforementioned ideas, a rector/president would be selected on the basis of a "selection procedure announced by the administrative board" – the winning candidate would enter into a "managerial contract" with the administrative board. Such contract should mainly include "measurable" parameters of economic nature. The failure to comply with such parameters – either final or on continuous basis – would also constitute a reason for removing a rector/president. It is apparent from the said characteristics that participation in the given selection procedure would not be subject to membership in the academia of the relevant higher education institution. In this regard, neither the "administrative board" nor the "rector" would represent self-government bodies of a higher education institution, but rather bodies of managerial nature. On many occasions, these proposals contained controversial parts. For example, a rector/president (who does not have to be a member of the academia) selected on the basis of a selective procedure should also have undeniable academic competences, act on behalf of academic bodies, and appoint persons in not only managerial but also academic positions. It is clear that these "conceptual" suggestions were not positively received by the academia. The reception in other countries is not unambiguous either. For example, the Austrian author K. P. Liessmann states the following in his famous piece: "If we talk about universities as corporations that are managed by knowledge managers, who present knowledge balances, which allow identifying whether the proportion of inputs and outputs is profitable, it means that all industrial procedures and defined parameters of business management must be applied to knowledge in order for to make some sense".[17]

It is indisputable that the economic aspects and management of higher education institutions should be given due attention; however, this does not mean that it is useful to replace academic bodies with "managerial" bodies. Academic bodies are fully responsible for the quality of academic activities; it is also necessary to consider financial and economic aspects in ensuring such academic activities. Their role is absolutely irreplaceable in the area of educational and research activities. However, it would not be practical if they were to include operational (economic) management within their competences.

Another aspect of a higher education institution management, which increases in importance in connection with the change of accreditation procedures, is the "quality management". The proposed formation of a new "National Accreditation Agency" and establishment of institutional accreditation assume implementation of an "internal quality management system". It is the evaluation of such system that will serve as the basis for acquiring institutional accreditation. The acquisition thereof, together with acquiring accreditation for certain "area of education", authorizes a higher education institution that acquires it to internal (in-house) accreditation of other study

[17] Liessmann K. P.: The Theory of Miseducation. Akademia, Prague 2008, pp. 31,32

programs within the given area of education. In addition to public administration and the National Accreditation Agency, experts recommended by higher education institutions will also be involved in the drafting of accreditation standards. The outlined change in accreditations may create for favorable conditions for an improvement of activities of higher education institutions; however, this will require significantly higher activity on their part. In case the objective of the current changes in the area of tertiary education is to promote the motivation of entities operating in this segment for improving the quality of their primary activities, it is safe to say that this objective can be met.

4 SO-CALLED THIRD FUNCTION/ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

In addition to ensuring the educational process, research and development, another fundamental mission of higher education institutions is the cooperation with corporate and public entities, namely with those that are located within the "environment" (both in terms of specialization and territory), in which the respective higher education institutions operate. This dimension of the higher education institutions' activities represents an exceptionally significant contribution to the implementation of the knowledge-based society. Higher education institutions have their irreplaceable place in the development of lifelong learning, as well as in the area of production and transfer of findings into practical activities of both private and public corporations. Educational activities carried out within the lifelong learning system should focus on systematic and conceptual provision of "new" findings to graduates, who completed their studies in the past. The pressing nature and the literal need for development and ensuring the widest possible access to such forms of education stands out if we consider that about 80% of technical equipment and technological procedures have changed in the developed countries during the past ten years, while less than 20% of the total labor force changed (i.e. newly hired employees) during the same period. It is the continuous education for "adult" population, and particularly professional education, that offers significant potential for utilizing extramural study forms and modern information technology. The importance of the widest possible access to further education, similarly as comprehensive concept of lifelong learning, is also underlined by other facts. A person, who currently completes his/her initial education (on higher education level) at the age of 25 years, has the real perspective of at least forty years of economically active life ahead him/her. It is very likely that the contents and the nature of the knowledge necessary for the performance of his/her profession changes several times during the period. It is not even possible to rule out cases, where various professions that currently require higher education (either Bachelor's or Master's) will cease to exist entirely. This means not only creating conditions, i.e. possibility of lifelong learning, but also sufficiently functional system of motivation and stimulation. One aspect that has been substantially neglected is the analysis of the "contents" dimension of educational activities carried out under the term "lifelong learning". The "systematic and methodical" (not only) monitoring, as well as rigorous and deep investigation of new findings, together with potential changes of fundamental paradigms of "studied" specializations will necessarily and naturally become (i.e. not just has to) a standard, but significant part of not only professional but also personal life of every higher education institution graduate. Higher education institution will have to pay exceptional attention to this type of lifelong learning, which represents a natural necessity, although some countries (including the Czech Republic) still lack relevant administrative reports for it required by the government authorities. This, once again, imposes not only higher, but also new requirements on the management of higher education institutions. It also assumes a significant "opening" of higher education institutions to "external" partners.

It is this area that provides a wide sphere of action for very narrow organic cooperation of higher education institutions with corporate sector/public administration entities. Higher education institutions should not only significantly consider the needs of the corporate sector and external partners in framing the contents and material specialization of the relevant lifelong learning activities, they should also serve the role of an active center for transfers of specialized, research, and scientific information, including the context, in which they came into existence. This means,

among others, significant strengthening of the focus on in-house research, which must also include the type of research that can be referred to as "search"; this part is often underestimated, but its importance for economic growth and higher competitiveness is exceptional in many regards. If a higher education institution is to be an "active" entity of knowledge transfers vis-à-vis external entities, it is necessary to focus not only on the collection of information, findings, and research results, but its irreplaceable role mainly consists in their analyses, classifications, evaluations, and "interpretations" for real context, in which such findings are practically utilizable for the partner entities operating in the given area, i.e. for context, in which they bring ("measurable") added value. With regard to the said transfer of knowledge, it is necessary to focus not only on "immediately applicable findings", but also on advances and changes in the area of theory of the relevant scientific discipline, in which such findings were produced, including potential innovations and changes in the fundamental paradigms of the given science. The activities focused in the aforementioned manner usually exceed the strictly (and sometimes more or less schematically) defined area of "applied research".[18] While simple transfer of (plain) information may also be ensured (and maybe even more easily) by other entities (e.g. various "information" or "documentary" centers), it is the above mentioned active, contextual-interpretation activity in the transfer of (scientific) knowledge and findings that makes a higher education institution absolutely irreplaceable vis-à-vis external corporations, whether private or public. At the same time, these activities are organically linked to follow-up (in respect of the previous higher) educational activities of the above mentioned lifelong learning. From the perspective of a higher education institution management, the existing (and prevailing throughout the European Union) method of research evaluation is a limiting factor in framing and managing this process.

Furthermore, "innovative" studies of experienced, qualified employees with higher education create conditions for synergy effects: integration of practical experience with new theoretical findings. If we take into account the aging population – i.e. not only the increasing life expectancy but also the increasing number of those that reach that age, it seems very practical to look for ways of "extending" the period of active (including but not limited to economic) operations.

CONCLUSION

In addition to ensuring high-quality education and research, higher education institutions may also very significantly contribute to the implementation of the "knowledge-based society" concept ("knowledge society") by their continuous and organic cooperation with organizations, businesses, and institutions that operate within the (professional, geographical) rage of the given higher education institutions. In this regard, their fundamental role (mission) consists not only in ensuring the relevant follow-up educational activities and the transfer of findings in the area of science/research to entities that can use them and "practically" utilize, but also in contributing – in cooperation with such entities – to the generation of new, original findings. One of the consequences of such operations of higher education institutions will apparently be the "scientification" of the practical production process, i.e. one of the fundamental ideas behind a knowledge-based society. On the other hand, this creates objective motivation for companies to take part in the financing of higher education institutions, which would be a real step in the direction of the often declared "multi-source" financing of higher education institutions.

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