



INSTYTUT ALLERHANDA

Law 2.0

Reforming Higher Education in Poland

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TD1210 workshop Alternative metrics or tailored metrics,

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A promising point of departure:

- good ***scolarisation*** at the higher education level – high enrolment rates
- established tradition of **academic culture** and the heritage of **intelligentsia** as social group
- **high social status of university professors**
- sound and competitive, though not enough innovative economy
- **good primary education (PISA)** → abundance of talent as a human capital or substrate to be further polished at the universities

... but then something goes wrong



Main problems:

- even the best Polish universities are outside or at the bottom of European and international **rankings**
- the **impact of Polish science** on the **global developments** is for the most part **negligible**
- **innovation**, as measured by patents, commercialisations and the proportion of high-tech in exports remains **low**
- **internationalisation** of Polish academia is weak, if measured by the proportion of foreign scholars and students as well as absorption of int'l grants
- Polish academia tends to be **inward-oriented, conservative, not enough interdisciplinary, age-stratified** and thus **oligarchic**



Underlying principle: **institutionalised mistrust**

- investing in **tangible assets** (infrastructure) rather than in human capital
- **bureaucratic** burdens (excessive reporting requirements etc.)
- **pensum**
- relative significance of **research grants** in the overall financing

Is this mistrust justified?

- **money and performance** – the „chicken and egg” - question
- investor protection analogy



- maintaining its position as one of the best universities in the world is *“really quite simple”*; it comes down to recruiting the best talent
- *“Any university is only as good as the academics it can attract”*
- ***“The best academics attract other top academics as well as smart early career academics. They attract the best students and the most competitive research funding, so it really is a virtuous circle. The key is for universities to provide an environment in which these academics are valued, in which young academics are supported and in which all are free to set their own research agendas”***

Louise Richardson, the vice-chancellor of the University of Oxford (w wypowiedzi po zajęciu przez Uniwersytet Oksfordzki pierwszej lokaty w 2016-17 Times Higher Education World University Ranking, źródło: <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/news/world-university-rankings-2016-2017-results-announced>)



market *vs.* mission

business *vs.* ethos

free scholars' republic *vs.* goal oriented corporation

conflicts of substance or conflict of narratives?



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The goal (and a challenge) is:
(how) to harness the market
mechanisms to serve the mission so
as to better implement the mission
of the University (?)

getting incentives right



Źródło: Neoclassical_Velocity.JPG: UnitfreakCarrot.svg: Nevit Dilmen (talk)Stick.svg: Nevit Dilmen (talk)derivative work: Nevit Dilmen (talk) - Neoclassical_Velocity.JPGCarrot.svgStick.svg, CC BY-SA 3.0, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=15756537>



✓ can

✓ want

✓ must

- Reform of the **academic governance** (**can**)



- Reform of **incentives** (**want**, **must**)





Reform of the **academic governance** system (**can**)

- from the trade-union mentality to **excellence-oriented governance** (quality as the governing objective)
- broadening the base of **stakeholders' involvement** and limiting the inertia effect resulting from the ill-designed democratic (in fact oligarchic) governance regime → **board of trustees** not dependent upon the community of professors as the appointment and co-governing organ → **strong president** (with some checks and balances)
- borrowing ideas from corporate governance?
 - **independent directors** → **independent members of BoT**
 - best practice codes/industry standards as self-regulation
- **market for university executives** (domestic and Int'l)
- from university bureaucracy to **professional back-office**





Reform of the **academic governance** system (**can**)

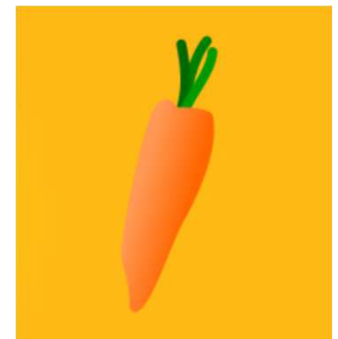
- **Smart consolidation** – towards **multicentric** organisations with **strong brand** and **coordinated central management**
 - **leading universities should absorb some other local universities** and other institutions
 - **new structure** of leading universities should provide for **a limited number of colleges or schools with high research and leadership potential**
 - within colleges/schools a **flexible environment for establishment of centres** (multi-centric, horizontal structure)
 - **scholar's autonomy in research, but managerialism in HR, enrolment policies, organisation development strategies** etc.
 - from adaptive and passive towards creative and competitive mentality





Reform of incentives (**want**)

- **financing algorithm** tied up to **research quality** rather than to education *en masse* → **incentive to hire the best scholars**
- special funding for **excellence initiatives**
- special incentives for obtaining third-party funding, e.g. „**1+1 rule**” (if funding from business, alumni, or municipalities/regions)
- optimisation of HR policy
 - towards the race for talents
 - „adjust the staff to the goals and not the other way round”
 - „have a formula to get professionals involved”





Reform of incentives (**must**)

- More transparency – both on the demand (students) and supply (academic staff) side
- **Supply side**: how to **recruit academic staff**?
Objective: more meritocracy, less inbreeding
 - radical solution (germ. *Hausberufungsverbot*) ?
 - market approach
 - expiration of a contract after PhD or Habil. → push out on the academic „meat market”
 - open, transparent recruitment procedures
 - *ex ante* transparency and no-arbitrability of criteria
 - *ex post* transparency (evaluation reports, edu watchdogs?)





Reform of incentives (**must**)

- **Demand side**: how to let (potential) **students** make informed choices?
 - ***entry & exit***: transparency through mandatory disclosure (cf. US *college score card*)
 - ***voice***: consumer feedback & evaluation





Deregulation

- **Supply side**

- habilitation? – law vs. custom & social norm – objective: empowering scholars in their most productive age
- pensum
- egalitarian vs. competitive compensation schemes
- internal organisation of the university

- **Demand side**

- formal: critical review of professions where the law mandates university degree. Instead: 5 level education.
- „mental”: social campaign towards change in values and perception („it is better to be a good craftsman than to hold a dubious master-degree”) → towards educating citizens (general education) with skills (artisan or professional training)



Transition

- Regulatory competition
 - regulated (charter B) and deregulated (charter Q) governance model
- Greenfield establishments?
- Fallback system / social benefits / golden parachutes for the prematurely retired academic staff



Financing universities and science

- basic, stable and reliable subsidy from the state (national government)
- excellence initiatives
- third-party funding
 - business
 - alumni
 - municipalities/regions(!) incentives for fundraising activities, e.g. „1:1 rule”
- tuition fees: the taboo of paying for education (but constitutional constraints)



Tentative recommendations

- identify problems correctly: the main problem of Poland's higher education is not a certain number of poor quality universities, the real problem is the lack of world class universities
- do not follow the egalitarian German model, instead follow a model of diversified higher education landscape
- create centres / schools of excellence (through i.a. smart consolidation) ...
- ... but avoid pauperisation of the peripheries, take account of sustainable development and regional policy
- if there is special funding for excellence initiatives (recommended) – make sure, it is awarded on competitive terms
- reinvent the role and mission of universities of applied sciences (FHH, PWSZ)
- promote internationalisation, but do it in a smart way
- combine leadership strategy with the strategy of sustainable development – take it as a criterium in developing consolidation plans and internationalisation programs



Thank you for your attention!

Q&A

Discussion

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