

**MASTER STUDIES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM  
(MSDP)  
Training Seminar**

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***Higher Education and Labour Market,  
New Linkages***

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Originally, universities were **teaching** institutions, but still with an early dichotomy between "skills or intellect", i.e., between medicine/law, and "knowledge for the sake of knowledge".

**Research** entered universities only in the 19th century, especially by the introduction of the *Humboldt* concept, also copied by American universities.

Now universities are given **the third task**, or 'service to the society', or, 'regional engagement'.

The **role** of universities has changed and is still changing.

There is an apparent correlation between level of education and human capital in the nations;

But building sufficient human capital is also a very long-term process; yet every country has to start building it right now;

In education, and in Higher Education (HE) in particular, the outcomes matter!



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## ***Estimated numbers of universities in 1875 / 1913***

<b>North America</b>	<b>360 / 500</b>
<b>Latin America</b>	<b>30 / 40</b>
<b>Europe</b>	<b>110 / 150</b>
<b>Asia</b>	<b>5 / 20</b>
<b>Africa</b>	<b>0 / 5</b>
<b>Australasia</b>	<b>2 / 5</b>

**(Hobsbawn)**

***Current total of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)  
in the world is ca. 17,000***



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## Global trends and developments in HE:

- 'Massification' of HE, a lot more students;
- Globally, demand for HE generally far exceeds the supply; student mobility!
- New HE market situation, internationalisation, and competition; also, brain drain!
- The old concept of academic trust replaced by accountability, towards society, the students, the citizens at large, etc.
- A move from supply-side policies towards more demand or market-driven actions...
- New professional requirements set by the market, for learning outcomes, general skills, and competencies!



Traditionally, the universities have been given the task of basic research – 'knowledge for the sake of knowledge'; *little risk* involved;

The applied research is target-oriented, towards a specified and applicable goal; often a matter for research institutes, or the industry itself; and a *high-risk* exercise;

For the universities, the differences between basic and applied research are fast disappearing: the task of any (good) research is *solving problems!*



'Employability' and 'meeting the labour market' are very complex matters, though proper **curricular design** is a necessary step, but not quite sufficient alone;

- Matching **strategies** at the national, regional, and institutional levels;
- Institutions: clear and open **funding**; 'core' funding and performance-based funding; internal and external efficiency; (external efficiency: 'quality' of graduates);
- Internal quality assurance (QA) systems in place and functional; transparent!



- The impacts of universities are so manifold that it is better to use the term '**knowledge diffusion**' rather than 'commercialisation'; the university is not a mere 'seller', rather one end of a two-way-street; **transparency** for the skills offered and available!
- Responsive administrative and managerial skills and **structures** needed; development of internal human capacity; **professionalism** in management!
- Plenty of institutional **autonomy**, but **not** without accountability! Proper administrative instruments;





- The new **Bologna** degree structure well suited to the **dynamism** of the labour market: 3+2+4 years
- Curricula: seek **feedback** from the outside: partners, stakeholders, alumni, industry, etc.; a liaison office?
- Develop capacity for **multidisciplinarity**; very narrow academic fields may miss the target!
- From early on, prepare students also for use of **life-long learning** (LLL) opportunities; most of them will eventually need it; is the university itself prepared for it? (A good source of feedback from the outside!)
- Collaborate with other universities; look for best practices; take note and care of your own 'marketable' strengths;



**Innovations** are often market-driven, aimed at meeting some defined needs; but good innovations can also produce unexpected side effects, new uses for the old tools...

But totally new markets can also be developed or 'discovered' through new innovations;

Innovations can be both **technical** and **social**!



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For efficient **technology transfer** development certain types of **buffer organisations** are often useful as liaison between the university and private companies and/or public organisations;

They should assume also part of the risk taking especially for the SME's;

In Finland, this is a crucial part for the national technology and innovation policy.



The learning outcomes:

1.The core **professional** skills,

2.The **generic** skills: in many a field crucial for employment!

- communication skills,
- IT skills
- language skills
- team work, management skills, etc.

3. **Entrepreneurial** skills, gaining in importance!



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But you do not need to be alone, since there exist plenty of examples from Europe and elsewhere;

IMHE/OECD launched in 2004 a review of HEIs and their regional engagement:

*"Supporting the Contribution of Higher Education Institutions to Regional Development"*

The reports are available on the internet.

(Also Jyväskylä/Finland was one of the review targets.)

*The world's most compelling ideology is  
neither democracy nor capitalism nor...  
...but success.*

*(Parag Khanna, 2008)*



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Some links to the Finnish HE, Innovation, and QA Policies:

[www.research.fi](http://www.research.fi)

[www.finheec.fi](http://www.finheec.fi)

The following **aerial view** is from the University of Kuopio (Finland) campus, showing a concentration of

- the University (ca. 6000 students)
- the Savonia Polytechnic
- the Science Park (over 230 companies)
- several National Research Institutes;

...all in close physical proximity, promoting collaboration...







Thank you, kiitos!



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