

WORKING DOCUMENTS

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EDUCATING FOR AN OPEN SOCIETY

HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM IN CENTRAL AND
EASTERN EUROPE AS A CATALYST FOR THE
EMERGENCE OF A SUSTAINABLE DEMOCRATIC
MARKET ECONOMY

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PREFACE

This study surveys the progress in reforming the system of higher education in Central and Eastern European countries. Such a reformed system plays a pivotal role in the sustainability of their transformation, by delivering the professional knowledge required in a modern society, and by contributing to developing attitudes conducive to an open, democratic society.

The overview given by dr. Jones, the author of this study, shows a picture of mixed progress. Many innovations have taken place in the countries under scrutiny. At the same time, sustained reforms are sometimes hampered by considerable obstacles, among which a structural lack of resources for higher education. However, although the process of change is far from finished, dr. Jones concludes that it has by now acquired a dynamic of its own.

This study has been written for the project 'Enlargement of the EU to Central and Eastern Europe', which the Netherlands Scientific Council for Government Policy (WRR) is currently undertaking. It offers background material to answering the central questions of this project: to what extent will the accession cause problems for the proper functioning of the Union, and, hence, to what extent will reform of the existing institutions be necessary to maintain their effectiveness, legitimacy and cohesion?

In preparing for its forthcoming report to the government on these matters, the WRR has commissioned a number of studies and assessments. Background studies on 'closer co-operation within the EU, and on 'administrative capacity of accession countries' have recently been published. Others will be published in the months to come.

Dr. Richard H. Jones is an independent expert on international relations and higher education. Among his numerous activities was his close involvement in establishing the Anglo-American College in Prague.

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INTRODUCTION

Abbie Hoffman¹ once wrote: “Democracy is not something you believe in or a place you hang your hat, but it’s something you do. You participate. When you stop participating, democracy crumbles.” The idea is simple, real democracy is based upon active citizenship, and its survival depends as much upon the habits of the community as upon the actions of governments. The sources of these habits of participation, respect for the rights of others and sense of responsibility for community actions are hard to tie down, but it is clear that they are not inherent within us. They come from the society in which we grow up and are acquired as part of our socialisation as citizens.

Vaclav Havel, the former dissident and now President of the Czech Republic, recognised this fact in a 1993 speech in the United States, when, ruminating on some of the disappointments of post 1989 Central and Eastern Europe, he observed that:

“When Communist power and its ideology collapsed.... people couldn’t simply absorb and internalise a new structure immediately, one that would correspond to the elementary principles of civic society and democracy. The human mind and human habits cannot be transformed overnight; to build a new system of living values and to identify with them takes time.”²

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The educational system, whilst not the only factor involved, can play a vital role in forming the attitudes that people carry over into their adult lives, attitudes which will help to decide whether their society is characterised by openness and transparency or by secretive and bureaucratic decision making.

This report, which deals with higher educational reform with special reference to developments on the arts/humanities or social science side of the curriculum, will look at the different ways in which this sector, in particular, is contributing to the development of open, democratic market economies in the region. A process made all the more important in view of the fact that the countries concerned all hope to become members of the European Union and that their future membership hinges on their meeting certain specific democratic criteria, laid out at the European Council Summit in Copenhagen in 1993.

Scope of the study

This study will be looking at the situation in the ten current Central and Eastern European candidates for European Union membership: Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia, plus Albania. An occasional reference is also made to the situation in Moldova, because this former Soviet republic provides a good benchmark from which to judge the developments in the three Baltic Countries, themselves long unwilling parts of the Soviet Union, and in the countries of South Eastern Europe, Romania and Bulgaria, with which it shares some historical traditions.

It is what these countries have in common, rather than what divides them, which is of importance here. All but Moldova are hoping to be able to join the European Union in the foreseeable future and all, as a result, are trying, in so far as possible, to approximate their developing educational structures to the common patterns that are beginning to emerge in Western Europe. However, it should not be forgotten that the goal of a common 'Europe of Learning', as proclaimed by organisations such as the Council of Europe and the European Union,³ is founded upon the concept of a common core enriched by national and regional traditions. In the same light, the transition from socialism to the European Union should not be seen merely as an attempt by one group of countries to become as similar as possible to the 'Europe' with which they demanded to be united in 1989. Although there is an important element of catching up involved, the candidate countries are constrained by their own traditions, social norms, interests and existing capabilities as they try to adopt European Union standards, which themselves are in the process of creation. The European Union that they may eventually join will be a different organisation from the one to which they applied, not least because of the complex process of interaction involved in the approximation procedures themselves.

National differences

This interaction is not only an East-West process, because the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are themselves not socio-politically or culturally homogenous. Beyond the shared characteristics of radical change, substantial differences can be observed. Neither the starting points nor the reform paths have been uniform. In political, economic and cultural terms they have varied within countries and between countries and regions. In Poland some seventy percent of agricultural land was in private hands in 1989, in Hungary and the Czech Republic the figure was much lower. Hungary had been experimenting with looser forms of economic planning since 1968, whilst the Czech Republic maintained an almost Stalinist system of economic planning throughout the 1980's. Poland had a strong Catholic Church, which remained a focal point for anti-communist opposition from 1945 onwards and, in Solidarity a wide based opposition movement. In the Czech Republic, despite a few admirable religious dissidents, atheism was the norm and Charter 77 remained a small, persecuted group almost till the fall of communism. In 1989 gross domestic product per capita was \$9361 in East Germany, but only \$4117 in Romania. Slovenia has a population of about two million and has traditions which link it both to the German crown lands of the Habsburg Empire and to the Slavic traditions of the Balkans. Albania with a population of 3.2 million and Bulgaria with a population of 8.4 million have both experienced a decade of political instability and massive social and economic dislocation, whilst the Czech Republic appeared, for a long time to have combined a velvet revolution with a velvet divorce and a velvet transition to capitalism.

Regional comparisons

At the start of this study, the author expected to be able to draw specific regional comparisons concerning higher educational reform between the Baltic Countries, the Central European Countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland and Slovenia) and the South Eastern Countries (Albania, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia). In practice it has not proved so simple to relate progress in educational reform to geographical, historical and economic factors, although all of these are undoubtedly of importance. The siren song of European Union membership has drawn all of the Central and Eastern European countries towards a programme of comprehensive and similar educational reform. It is clear that the richer countries have been able to devote more funds to their educational system than their poorer neighbours, but underfunding has sometimes meant that structural experimentation has triumphed over complacency. In all countries there has not been enough money to ensure that the higher educational system functions optimally, but everywhere in the region, there are centres of excellence. The Czech Republic, with its aversion towards private higher education, is quite dissimilar in this regard from Poland, which has embraced it. Bulgaria and Romania have proved to have fewer problems in changing their degree system towards the now European Union favoured two-tier structure than Hungary, which in other ways has far outpaced them in modernising its higher educational system. What we are left with is a cross section of change within a number of different areas, in which the tardy in one area can be the pacesetters in another.

Higher education and long-term societal change

In general when the role of the higher educational sector in the transition and approximation process has been considered in previous studies, more attention has been paid to short-term, stop gap educational processes than to long term structural changes. Higher education, from such a perspective, is seen as little more than an often not very successful provider of courses designed to quickly retrain civil servants for EU accession talks, or judges and lawyers for the implementation of EU law. Little attention has been spared to its long term role as a vital element in a far longer process of creating:

- an inclusive, constitutionally regulated political system, with well-informed and respected politicians, discussing the questions of the day in a responsible manner, with the politics of extremism banished to the margins;
- a properly functioning legal system, supported by civil and criminal lawyers, judges and support staff, all of whom understand the letter and the principle of both national and European Union law;
- a properly functioning public administration, staffed by well educated civil servants, conversant with the principles of an open society (transparency, accessibility and responsiveness to the demands of the ordinary citizen);
- a well-regulated, market-orientated economic system, in which ethical business practices are the norm, rather than the exception;
- a local and national media able to present different points of view in a fair manner, with due regard to journalistic ethics;

- an informed, educated and articulate public, able to make choices and judgements in pursuit of their civic duties.

That, however, is the focus of this study. Its aim is to delve beneath the veneer of short term, and sometimes cosmetic changes, into the longer term processes of structural change that are taking place within higher education. Throughout the study, the situation in Central and Eastern Europe will be placed within the context of international moves to reform higher education and it should always be borne in mind that some of the problems being confronted by Central and Eastern European institutions of tertiary education have by no means been successfully resolved by their European Union neighbours as they too try to come to terms with the demands of the 'knowledge society' and mass access to higher education.

Empowering individuals

In this author's opinion, the biggest hurdle to be confronted in creating truly democratic systems in Central and Eastern Europe after decades of communism is the empowerment of ordinary citizens. They must be transformed from being passive observers and instead take their place at the centre of an open civil/civic society. This is not to say that there is a real danger of a return to the past. As a Russian commentator recently said the toothpaste in that tube has effectively been squeezed out and there is no putting it back. But, there can be many forks in the road leading away from communism. The rush to privatisation and market mechanisms has not by itself replaced a closed society with an open one. It is true that the trappings of such a society are to be seen. Elections are held and governments change, interest groups vie with each other for advantage, but the game that is going on is often a 'win-lose' one, in which a victory for one side is seen as a defeat for the other. Rather than striving for solutions, interest groups strive to avoid defeat by delaying decisions and thus allowing problems to fester. In some countries, a neo-corporatist morass currently occupies the centre ground, seemingly devoid of truly democratic principles and ethical standards. A morass characterised, to a greater or lesser degree, by the mutual distrust separating the public from the political system, the politicians from their parties and the parties from each other.

At this stage of Central and Eastern Europe's post-communist transformation, the emphasis needs to be directed towards getting the individual citizen to understand and espouse the ideas, institutions and practices of democracy. It is only on this basis that they will, in turn, insist that their problems and aspirations are addressed by the governments and other interest groups, which have taken upon themselves the task of representing them. Concern for the latter group, although important within a general sociology of democracy, is consequently not the centre of attention in this study, which looks almost exclusively at the problem from the perspective of arming the individual for democracy, through education.

Higher eEducation and civil society

Although paying passing attention to the school system, this study concentrates upon the role of higher education in developing the norms and values required to make truly representative democracy function. It is not that corruption and insincerity do not also form an identifiable part of Western European democratic cultures, but they are seen as aberrations, rather than the norm. It is, after all, not our perfectibility, but a recognition of our tendency to sin, that explains why democracy is still the least worst form of government yet invented. Democracy is sustained by society's belief that the behaviour of its public servants can and should be measured against high ethical standards, ethical standards that are reflected in all walks of life from big business to the factory floor. It was the absence of such ethical standards that created the late-communist societies in which large scale corruption and petty pilfering became the norm.

David Putnam and other theorists of civil society have suggested in their writings that the wider socio-economic performance of a region can be positively or negatively affected by the presence or absence of what have been called networks of civil engagement. Networks of citizens that through their interaction create 'norms of reciprocity', creating in turn a sense of social trust and co-operation which is carried over into the political and economic spheres. A society, which searches for mutually satisfactory solutions to difficult problems, gives rise, in turn, to a tolerant politic culture and a relatively uncorrupt business culture.

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As 'civic' institutions, higher educational colleges and universities, especially as they spread from the capital cities to the provinces and become involved in regional development and societal partnerships, can play a key role in developing precisely the social and cultural networks which Putnam identified. Higher education can meet this challenge in three ways. Firstly, as more and more people go on to tertiary education, the higher education sector must ensure that all of its graduates – the future elites in almost all walks of life – have been trained to assume their social responsibilities in an open and constructive way and to act ethically. The flexibility, problem solving and choice making skills that industry increasingly calls for in its graduate entrants is one side of this coin, but the other side – civic education – should be seen not just as an optional extra, but, increasingly as a contribution to long-term economic growth. The second way for higher educational institutions to meet the civic/civil society challenge is to increase their role, and that of their staff, in civil society as such. This means both taking the lead in creating local societies, NGOs and other civic groups and opening their management structures up to civic involvement and control. At the same time, in their role in pedagogical research and in the initial and in-service training of teachers, higher educational institutions meet the challenge in a third way by ensuring that new subject areas and new approaches to existing subjects, along with new teaching techniques, are introduced into the primary and secondary school sectors.

“Higher education institutions have a key role to play, not only as centres, but also as incubators of cultural diversity and of multiracial harmony and understanding. This means they have a particularly important role to play in creating a civil society and in preparing young people for shaping and living in a democratic society, a place where higher education plays an active role in public debate on ethical and policy questions.”⁴

Innovation amidst continuing crisis

This study, which is the first to cover these topics from a multi-country perspective, is full of examples of what is being done throughout Central and Eastern Europe to update higher education and to make it more compatible with Western European norms. This includes creating a new legislative structure, expanding student intake, creating autonomous but socially responsible institutions, expanding the non-university and private higher educational sector, and diversifying and updating curricula and teaching methods on the social science/humanities side of higher education. The examples have been chosen because they represent either a worthwhile initiative in one country that could usefully be adopted elsewhere, or because they typify a process of change going on across the region. In a multi-country study of this kind it is inevitable that some significant national innovations have been ignored and that not all of the latest developments have always been considered. The reform of higher education in Central and Eastern Europe is a dynamic process, there is much to do and much that is being done. Perhaps inevitably, a report that concentrates upon areas of innovation and examples of ‘good practice’ has a tendency to leave the impression that the situation is actually far better than it is. Much has indeed been done in an incredibly short time, and credit should be given for the efforts being made. However, it should not be forgotten that most of the examples cited in this study are small scale and fragile achievements, which, whilst showing the road to the future, could easily be swept away by even small changes in the already desperate financial picture.

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Indeed the major problem influencing the process of educational reform throughout the region is a shortage of funds, determined by the general state of the economy. Inadequate funding in turn means that many of the most capable people choose either to find jobs outside education where the salaries are better or never to enter the profession in the first place. The Commission for Education for the 21st Century (the Delors Commission) suggested that all countries would need to invest at least six percent of GDP in education to meet the demands of the future. The European Union figure for 1995 was actually slightly lower than this at 5.2 percent, and these countries are still far ahead of their eastern neighbours. It is clear that if the Central and Eastern European countries are to have any hope of catching up they must be prepared to invest considerably more than the Delors Commission recommended minimum, but this will necessitate a complete reappraisal of current government priorities.

**EXTRACTS FROM A STATEMENT ON EDUCATION
ISSUED BY THE HUNGARIAN PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE⁵**

One of the key tasks of modernisation is, therefore, to foster a more positive attitude to knowledge as the driving engine of modern, information societies and to persuade people that permanent self-education, the culture of civil society and a higher level of education are of fundamental personal interest...

...The expansion of secondary and adult education is a much more up-to-date and cost-effective way of managing unemployment - particularly among young people - than the provision of aid; labour market flexibility, opportunities for innovation and the conditions of a democratic political culture will also substantially improve through education...

...The comprehensive reform of the education and training system must be directed above all at enabling the young to become motivated by the positive values of the evolving social order, helping them to acquire the skills necessary to assert themselves and successfully to manage social and other conflicts...

...A social market economy and parliamentary democracy require the growth of new generations capable of enforcing their own interests independently outside the all-embracing care of the state, and equally capable of recognising the right of others to do the same...

NOTES

- ¹ 1960's American radical, best known as Yippie party leader.
- ² Vaclav Havel: *The Post-Communist Nightmare* (speech delivered at George Washington University, 22nd April 1993).
- ³ The EU Commission's White Paper: *Teaching and Learning: Towards the Learning Society* (1996) analyses the relationship between education/training and unemployment and social exclusion, and proposes priorities for future EU action.
- ⁴ CRE/CEPES: *A European Agenda for Change for Higher Education in the 21st Century* (CRE/CEPES European Regional Forum, Palermo, September 1998).
- ⁵ Hungarian Prime Minister's Office: *The "Engine" of Modernisation: Hungary's Intellectual Capital* - (Abstract VII) [www.meh.hu/egyeb/modprog/angol/7.htm] paper issued under the previous government.

1 CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE AND THE CHALLENGE OF EU ACCESSION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

In 1993, the European Council at its meeting in Copenhagen agreed to start talks about eventual membership of the European Union with ten countries from Central and Eastern Europe. Their eventual accession was made dependent both upon the European Union's own eventual ability to absorb new members, and the applicant countries' fulfilment of certain specific criteria, drawn up to ensure that each of them would be able to meet the responsibilities of membership. Negotiations were started with five of the countries (Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Poland, and Slovenia) which were adjudged to be in the so-called 'fast lane' to membership. Negotiations with the five remaining countries (Bulgaria, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, and Slovakia) were delayed, although they too began the process of 'approximation' with EU norms, standards and regulations. The Helsinki European Council meeting in December 1999 agreed to a European Commission recommendation that it should be prepared, from the year 2002, to admit any of the first group of candidate countries that fulfil all the necessary criteria. Furthermore, in the year 2000, negotiations should be started with all the remaining candidate countries so long as they fulfil the Copenhagen political criteria and have taken positive steps to comply with the economic criteria.¹

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1.2 THE COPENHAGEN CRITERIA

The Copenhagen criteria can be divided into political and economic requirements, the adoption of the European Union's 'acquis' of common legislation and a commitment to the European Union's aim of eventual political, economic and monetary union. The political criteria, as defined at the EU's 1993 Copenhagen summit, state that "membership requires that the candidate country has achieved stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, the rule of law, human rights, and the respect for and protection of minorities."² The Copenhagen summit also defined the economic criteria, in particular the existence of a functioning market economy and the capacity of each national economy to withstand the competitive pressure and market forces within the EU.

In both of these areas, and in that of the adoption of the 'acquis communautaire', the European Council has implicitly recognised the importance of the emergence of an open, civil and civic society in post-communist Central and Eastern Europe and the important role that education must play in this process. Furthermore, Article 13 of the Amsterdam Treaty, which came into effect on May 1st 1999, granted to the European Union the right to legislate and act against all forms of discrimination based on "gender, racial and ethnic origin, religion or belief,

handicaps, age, sexual preference". Although specifically aimed at the workplace, this article, which will be immediately applicable to any new European Union member state, is one more effective weapon in the on-going struggle against racism and xenophobia in the candidate countries, as they struggle to create equitable societies encompassing all of their citizens. The attempts of the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe to meet the demands of the Copenhagen Criteria, with special reference to higher education, will be the subject of the rest of this paper.

In the Hungarian government's current 'Programme for a Civic Hungary', there is a recognition that, although there is no specific requirement for the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe to harmonise their educational systems with those of the European Union countries prior to accession, "education policy is highly influenced by the accession talks" and by the need to ensure international competitiveness. Participation in European Union programmes is seen as being an important factor in reinforcing 'openness' and encouraging pedagogical innovation, improvement of course materials, the European dimension, and cultural openness. Indeed, the government is now convinced that "in order to put Hungarian higher education in a position from where it can come up with new initiatives, universities and colleges do not only have to create well thought-out and well-founded integration strategies, but they also need to establish their direct lobbying capabilities in Brussels and in other centres of the EU". At the same time, the Government promises to speed up the process of making Hungarian diplomas internationally recognised by making the Hungarian credit system match the developing European one.³

1.3 INTERNATIONAL AND INTERGOVERNMENTAL HIGHER EDUCATION INITIATIVES

1.3.1 COUNCIL OF EUROPE

Within this context, it is worthwhile, at the start, to briefly survey some of the international and inter-governmental initiatives in higher education that are currently developing in Europe. The Council of Europe has often involved itself in educational initiatives that relate to its mission of preserving human rights, the rule of law and democratic pluralism by strengthening democratic institutions and civil society.⁴ It is, for instance, concerned with issues such as non-discriminatory access to education, the provision of lifelong learning, and student mobility. At its October 1997 Summit Meeting in Strasbourg, the Council launched an initiative entitled 'Education for Democratic Citizenship'. Its aim is to facilitate the creation of strong civil societies in member states and a common European identity, based upon mutual understanding of both Europe's rich diversity and its common heritage. From the first, this initiative has been seen as being related to the priority, set by the Strasbourg Summit, of aiding the process of the integration of Central

and Eastern European countries into existing European structures and thereby creating a “vast area of democratic security”. The limited resources of the Council are therefore being directed at helping member states and local and regional authorities to “co-operate through education, the media, cultural action, protection and promotion of the cultural heritage and youth participation.”

1.3.2 BOLOGNA DECLARATION 1999

The June 19th 1999 Bologna Declaration, signed during the annual Confederation of European Union Rectors’ Conference, by the Ministers of Education of twenty nine European countries also recognised “the importance of education and educational co-operation in the development and strengthening of stable, peaceful and democratic societies.” The Bologna Declaration marked one more step in the slow process of harmonising the architecture of higher education qualification systems and developing common European standards in higher education. The intention here was to begin the construction of a ‘European Higher Education Area’. This marked the combination of two separate but parallel initiatives from the previous year. The first of these was the Sorbonne Declaration of 25th of May 1998, signed by the education ministers of France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom⁵ and the second was a declaration of principles, the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum Europaeorum, drawn up by the European higher educational sector itself.

As with any intergovernmental declaration, the Bologna Declaration searched for consensus rather than controversy and so avoided specific policy recommendations, such as the call for more undergraduate multidisciplinary programmes made at the Sorbonne in 1998. However, the common ground that it created amongst European nations in the higher educational sector did represent a major policy commitment on the part of the signatory nations and marked a major step forward in regional educational cooperation.

The Bologna Declaration calls for the creation of ‘A Europe of Knowledge’ as the intellectual, scientific, technical and cultural counterpart to the process of European political and economic unification. This Europe of Knowledge must, it declares, be both competitive with other regional educational systems and truly pan-European. Indeed, the promotion of trans-national inter-institutional co-operation in areas from curriculum development to research was one of the declared aims of the Bologna meeting.

The first step towards achieving real harmonisation between the different European higher educational systems is the agreement, reached at Bologna, to introduce a common, transparent and easily comparable European degree structure over the next ten years. This will be based on internationally recognised two cycle (undergraduate and graduate level) degrees. The first cycle, lasting for a minimum of three years, will be where many students complete their studies and enter the

job market. The second cycle, leading to masters and/or doctoral degrees will be more geared towards research. The intention is not so much to create a single rigid model, but rather, whilst allowing for continued diversity, to increase the transparency of the different national systems and thus encourage mutual recognition and enhance student mobility and graduate employability.

Whilst not going so far as the previous year's Sorbonne declaration, which had suggested that, at both undergraduate and graduate level, students should spend at least one semester in universities outside their own country, the Bologna declaration did recognise that, for the system to become truly 'Europeanised', students, lecturers, researchers and administrators should be encouraged to spend time studying, teaching and working away from their national base. The problem is that such mobility has up until now often negatively influenced either a student's progress towards a degree or a university workers legal position once they returned to their home institution. Furthermore, the cross recognition of courses and diplomas, the basic prerequisite for the creation of an open European area of education, has sometimes been troublesome even within the countries of the European Union.

That is why the Bologna Declaration recognised that one way to encourage student mobility between universities across Europe with similar degree structures would be to develop a common credit based degree system, in which credits from one university could be used to complete a degree at any other university. The Bologna meeting recognised that for this to happen an agreed system of fixing the standards and content of credits would have to be developed and suggested that the European Union's existing European Community Course Credit Transfer System (ECTS) would be a suitable point of departure.⁶

The Bologna Declaration took one step further than this, though. Having called for the growth of degrees based upon a module/credit structure, the signatories recognised that it should also be possible for individuals to acquire nationally and internationally recognised credits for work that they had done in a non-higher education context, including lifelong learning. By this act, the development of continuing, lifelong education systems was put firmly on the educational agenda. This is to be seen as the first step towards creating links between different levels of post-secondary education and experience allowing individuals to accumulate educational credits, which can be used to fulfill or partly fulfill the requirements for different tertiary level educational qualifications.

For its part, the Bologna Magna Charta Universitatum, whilst also calling for greater teacher and student mobility, pan-European equivalency in status, titles and examinations and the encouragement of more inter-European university level research projects, addressed a number of other issues of specific interest to the institutions of higher education themselves. For them what was equally important was the maintenance of institutional autonomy, whereby research and teaching

would not only remain inseparable from each other but would also remain morally and intellectually independent of all political authority and economic power. They too recognised that higher education needed to adapt to find new ways to serve society as a whole, but warned that moves to develop continuing and lifelong educational structures would require considerable investment.

What is significant in these declarations in terms of the present study is that all of the ten Central and East European candidate countries signed the Bologna Declaration.⁷ Perhaps equally significant is the fact that amongst the 16 national student organisations that signed the same day's Bologna Students Joint Declaration which questioned some of its provisions⁸ were delegations from Lithuania, Latvia, Hungary, Slovenia and Croatia, even though the last of these had not been a party to the Bologna Declaration itself. At the same time, the Confederation of European Union Rectors' Conferences, responsible for the Magna Charta Universitatum, has in recent years welcomed, as associate members, countries from outside the European Union which have a commitment to EU policies on university and higher education and research. This has meant that heads of higher educational institutions in countries such as the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and the Slovak Republic have been involved in the deliberations which led to the drawing up of its Magna Charta. The Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania and the Slovak Republic are also represented by national organisations of presidents, directors or principals of higher education institutions (colleges, polytechnics, universities of professional education etc.) in the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE), an organisation founded in 1990 to represent the interests of the non-university sector in dealing with international organisations and especially the European Commission in the field of higher education.

1.3.3 THE LISBON CONVENTION 1997

The desire of Central and East European countries to align their educational systems with developing trans-European norms has been made abundantly clear in the ongoing ratification process of the joint Council of Europe/UNESCO Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region. This was signed by thirty six countries and opened for ratification on April 11th, 1997. Of the first six countries to ratify the agreement and thus allow it to come into force, three (Estonia, Lithuania and Romania) were from Central Europe, two (Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan) were from the former Soviet Union, with only Switzerland representing Western Europe.

The Lisbon convention is designed to encourage student and staff mobility in higher education by facilitating the development of a better system for the recognition of studies, certificates, diplomas and degrees, which a person has obtained in one 'European-region' country and now wants to use in another. As such it represents a potentially important step towards promoting academic mobility, some-

thing which the Council of Europe has long been trying to do. The Convention includes a clear statement of the principles that should govern the examination of qualifications (fair, non discriminatory procedures, conducted within a reasonable time limit according to transparent, coherent and reliable recognition procedures, with a right of appeal) and calls on countries to accept equivalent foreign qualifications “unless a substantial difference can be shown between the general requirements for access” in the two educational systems concerned. Similar provisions are included for the recognition of periods of study abroad. The Convention places a strong emphasis on the importance of information exchanges.

The Lisbon Convention suggests that, alongside the ‘Committee of the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region’ that will be set up under its auspices, the existing Council of Europe/ UNESCO European Network of National Information Centres on academic mobility and recognition (ENIC⁹), covering most European region countries, should become the central cog in the new system. At the same time it also champions another Council of Europe/UNESCO initiative, the Diploma Supplement, that marks the first cooperative project undertaken with the European Commission. The Diploma Supplement aims to provide standardised, independent information on the content, character and level of a holder’s higher education qualifications, as an addition to the original credential, that will make these qualifications more readily understandable and thus facilitate fair recognition.

1.3.4 NORDIC COUNCIL AND EUROPEAN UNION

The Council of Europe and UNESCO are not the only organisations developing initiatives for academic recognition and mobility. The Nordic Council of Ministers has also developed a framework of its own for the recognition of qualifications, within the Nordic countries own common higher education area. The European Union launched its first action programme for educational collaboration in 1974 and has since adopted two important Directives on the cross-recognition of diplomas in the so-called ‘regulated professions’¹⁰ and set up its own Network of National Academic Recognition Information Centres (NARIC), which now cover both the EU member states and the candidate countries. Created in 1984, they operate as part of the Socrates/Erasmus programme. In most countries the same centres work for both NARIC and ENIC.

1.4 CEE MEMBERSHIP OF INTERGOVERNMENTAL EDUCATION BODIES

1.4.1 UNESCO

The countries of Central and Eastern Europe have long attended UNESCO International Educational Conferences, covering higher education¹¹ and other impor-

tant pedagogical topics, and been members of the network of UNESCO organisations working in the educational sector. These revolve around the activities of the International Bureau of Education (IBE), a UNESCO centre for information and research in the field of comparative education; the European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES), a decentralised unit of the UNESCO Secretariat, founded in 1972 and based in Romania; and the International Association of Universities (IAU), a UNESCO-affiliated organisation set up in 1950 to encourage links between universities and colleges throughout the world.

The IAU now has 613 member institutions in some 150 countries and cooperates with a vast network of international, regional and national bodies. Its intention is to present with one unified voice the concerns of the international higher education community with regard to the policies followed by international organisations such as UNESCO or the World Bank. Located in Paris and open to all degree-conferring higher education institutions, its permanent Secretariat, the International Universities Bureau, provides a wide variety of services. The IAU is, though, particularly known for its work of collecting and publishing basic information on higher education institutions world-wide, such as the “World Academic Database”, the “International Handbook of Universities”, and the “World List of Universities”. The Association also publishes the quarterly “Higher Education Policy”, and the monograph series “Issues in Higher Education”. Its International Bibliographic Database on Higher Education (HEDBIB) includes over 23,000 references, dating from 1988, on higher education systems, administration, planning and policy, costs and finances, evaluation of higher education, issues related to staff and students, cooperation, mobility and the equivalency of degrees, curricula, teaching methods and learning processes.

The IBE is a centre for information and comparative research, paying special attention to the renewal of educational curricula, contents, methods and materials, with particular emphasis on human and civic values. Since 1934, it has organised its own regular international conferences, the forty-sixth of which is scheduled for April 2001, with the provisional theme: ‘Learning to live together: the content of education and learning strategies to reinforce the integration of societies of the twenty-first century’. However, it is the European Centre for Higher Education (CEPES), which has the most to do with the process of higher educational renewal in Central and Eastern Europe. Its aim is to promote international co-operation in higher education in UNESCO’s ‘European Region’ (which includes Israel, Turkey, Canada and North America). Since 1992 CEPES has paid specific attention to the way in which the higher educational reforms in Central and Eastern Europe have been designed and implemented, tracking legislative reform, the development of academic quality assurance and accreditation mechanisms, and new developments in institutional management, university autonomy and academic freedom. During this period, CEPES has been involved in a number of operational projects carried out by the European Group for Academic Assessment (EGAA). In particular, it was involved in pilot projects implemented in Romania on academic evaluation and

accreditation procedures. CEPES publishes a quarterly review, 'Higher Education in Europe', short 'CEPES Papers' and longer 'CEPES Studies' on higher education, and a series of Monographs on European Higher Education Systems.

1.4.2 OECD

Unlike the UNESCO network, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have not traditionally taken an active part in OECD activities. However, the Czech Republic joined the organisation in 1995, followed by Hungary and Poland in the following year. In 1990 the OECD set up a special Centre for Cooperation with the European Economies in Transition (since 1998 merged into the Centre for Cooperation with Non-Members) as its focal point for contacts in the region. The OECD runs two major programmes related to higher education. The first of these is the Centre for Educational Research and Innovation (CERI) which is mainly concerned with educational policies and trends. The second is a Programme on Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE), established in 1969 and covering such areas as quality assurance, human resources management, research management, funding, internationalisation, lifelong learning, and the regionalisation and diversification of tertiary education. The IMHE assists institutions, ministries and governments, and non-profit organisations to swap and compare information, experiences and expertise on these issues. IMHE and UNESCO's CRE have also established a joint specialised training seminar for executive heads of universities and run a series of seminars on the best way for higher educational institutions to respond to regional needs.¹² Of the around 170 members from 29 different countries, 11 represent institutions, universities, ministries and NGOs from five Central and Eastern European countries.

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The activities of the European Union through its TEMPUS and other programmes and of the World Bank will be dealt with extensively in the course of this report and so will not be discussed here. It is though important to recognise that it is not only inter-governmental organisations that have a role to play in creating networks for sharing knowledge about educational reform.

1.5 CEE MEMBERSHIP OF INTERNATIONAL NON GOVERNMENTAL EDUCATIONAL BODIES

The extension of membership of international and trans-national non-governmental associations dealing with educational matters to individuals and institutions from the countries of Central and Eastern Europe has also greatly expanded over the last decade. The inclusion of Central and East European country nationals in international conference and symposium discussions about the future development of higher education on both a global and a European level has undoubtedly had a significant impact upon national discussions on educational reform through-

out the region. There is a plethora of such organisations and only a few of the more important ones within each sector will be briefly mentioned below.

1.5.1 THE ASSOCIATION OF EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES

The Association of European Universities (CRE), founded as the “Conférence des Recteurs, Présidents et Vice-Chanceliers des Universités Européennes/European Rectors’ Conference in 1959, is a non-governmental international organisation based in Geneva, which now has a membership encompassing 527 institutions of higher education in forty one European countries. It is a growing organisation with eleven new members joining in 1999. It counts over seventy institutional members from the ten European Union Central and East European candidate countries (20 from Poland; 12 from Romania, 11 each from Hungary and the Czech Republic and 6 from Bulgaria). Among its many activities, its efforts to improve the strategic management of universities, the quality audits for universities, and its commitment to European higher education collaboration, are the most significant. Recently the CRE has been giving increasing attention to the public role of higher educational institutions at the local level (their links with public bodies and economic and social actors).¹³ The CRE promotes networking amongst its members, represents European universities’ interests in policy-making for higher education and research, and works to increase contact between the academic community, governments, industry and the media.

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It holds bi-annual conferences and occasional seminars dealing with important aspects of higher education policy and through its Transatlantic Dialogue programme brings together leaders of European universities and their counterparts in North America. It was the CRE which was responsible for launching the COPERNICUS (Cooperation Programme in Europe for Research on Nature and Industry through Coordinated University Studies) programme in Warsaw in 1988. Designed to promote environmental awareness and education in universities through cooperation activities, its charter has now been signed by half of the CRE membership (including, for example, the Eotvos Lorand University in Budapest and the Jagiellonian University in Krakow). After the 1998 CRE Conference in Utrecht in the Netherlands, COPERNICUS was relaunched as an independent inter-university initiative.

1.5.2 THE EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION FOR INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

The European Association for International Education (EAIE) is another non-governmental, non-profit association, but this time with an individual rather than an institutional membership. Founded in 1989 and based in Amsterdam, it currently has over 1,700 individual members from sixty five countries, ranging from Pro-Rectors for international policy, to international office staff, credential

evaluators, foreign student advisers, study abroad advisers, exchange programme coordinators, and NGO staff involved in international education. Once again, the EAIE creates a network for information exchange, runs a large and well attended annual conference and tries to influence the process of the internationalisation of higher education, especially in Europe. One of the topics under consideration at its 1997 Conference in Barcelona was, interestingly enough, the rebuilding of bridges with the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. The organisation works through sections, which exist for credential evaluators, student advisers, research and industrial liaison officers, etcetera. The EAIE also carries out annual training courses for international officers and has been involved in numerous research projects coordinated by other bodies.

1.5.3 THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITY STUDIES ASSOCIATION

If the first two examples are broad ranging, international NGOs, their effect upon East-West information flows at the higher educational level are supported by a number of more specialised associations. The European Community Studies Association (ECSA), for example, currently groups thirty four national associations (including ones from Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Lithuania, and Poland) for the study of the European Community, representing more than 5,000 professors and researchers. The European Commission has recently helped ECSA to set up ECSA-Net [www.ecsanet.org], a web site carrying not only details about its national associations and their activities, but also a host of other information with relevance to European Union university studies, such as a database of university research on European Integration (Euristote) and a who's who of European Integration Studies. Many of ECSA's members are busy using, gathering and updating the information available on ECSA-Net.

1.5.4 HUMANE AND ESMU

As far as university administrators are concerned one of the newer organisations, supported by the European Commission's DG XXII and the EU's SOCRATES Thematic Networks Programme, is HUMANE with its headquarters at the University of Aberdeen in Scotland. Set up in 1997 its aim is to group all of the heads of university administrations (one member per institution) in Europe in an informal network devoted to professional development and the exchange of best practices. The network concentrates upon gaining members from EU member countries and those most obviously linked to it via schemes such as SOCRATES.

A good example of its activities is the June 1999 Helsinki Seminar on Finance and Funding, discussed against the background of a joint Association of European Universities (CRE) and European Commission report on "European Strategies for Universities", which dealt with such matters as income generation, the allocation

of funds, and above all, the issue of creative spending linked to organisational structures. Participants from Central and Eastern Europe are also granted concessionary rates to attend the seminars presented by the European Centre for Strategic Management of Universities (ESMU), designed to inform participants of developing aspects of European Union higher educational programmes. For example, in late 1998, ESMU organised a seminar to discuss opportunities for responding to EU calls for the development of 'partnerships' with other societal actors outside the university sector (non university higher educational institutions, enterprises, regional authorities etc.) and to thus embed the university within its surrounding 'civil society'. This is a major strategic, cultural and financial challenge to the universities of Central and Eastern Europe too as they try to reinvent themselves in the post-communist era.

1.6 WESTERN EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH INSTITUTES

Alongside the inter-governmental organisations and the NGOs, also stand a number of Western European research institutes which have played a considerable role in spreading information, in both directions, about educational innovations and reforms. Of special interest in this respect are two institutions based in Vienna, which, because of their geographical and historical position, have both done a great deal to encourage a meaningful dialogue between higher educational reformers in on both sides of the old iron curtain.

1.6.1 INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN SCIENCES

The first of these is the Institute for Human Sciences (Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen, IWM) founded in 1982 as a wholly independent institute for advanced study by a group of Eastern and Western European scholars lead by the Polish philosopher Professor Krzysztof Michalski. In 1991, the Institute stepped beyond its existing fellowship and lecture programmes and founded the "Transformation of the National Higher Education and Research Systems of Central Europe" (TERC) project, designed to promote the development of free, open, and democratic civil societies by supporting reform of higher education and research. In the last eight years, TERC has published a series of research and policy studies, sponsored numerous conferences and workshops on regional educational reform, established (with support from the European Union) seven sponsored professorships known as "European Chairs" at universities throughout Central and Eastern Europe, and, in cooperation with Hamburg's Körber Foundation, awarded a financially attractive, annual "Hannah Arendt Prize" to support innovative and exceptional educational reform efforts at Central European universities and research institutions.

1.6.2 INSTITUTE FOR COMPARATIVE EDUCATION RESEARCH

The second is the Institute for Comparative Education Research (Institut für vergleichende Bildungs und Hochschulforschung ICER), established in 1994 with the support of the Austrian Ministry of Science, Research and the Arts. ICER does research on the higher educational and vocational training systems in Albania, Austria, the Baltic States, Belarus, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Macedonia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Ukraine with the aim of increasing the transparency of the legal, administrative and academic structures as a basis for increasing the compatibility, and therefore the mobility, between universities and other institutions of higher education in the different countries of the region. Through its various networking activities, the Institute endeavours to bring together researchers and practitioners from both East and West to discuss the ongoing reform process and to plot common strategies in vital areas such as accreditation. It also carries out its own studies of locally important subjects such as the declining status of the region's professoriate, in this case in cooperation with the Danube Rectors Conference.¹⁴

1.7 AMERICAN INITIATIVES IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

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To close this short survey of formal and informal higher educational assistance, information exchange and cooperation networks, that have already, in a small way, begun to integrate the countries of Central and Eastern Europe into the international higher education debate, it is important to recognise the contribution made by initiatives originating in the United States of America. These fall into two clear, but interrelated parts. The first are actual projects being carried out in cooperation with higher educational institutions and governments in the region and the second are meetings and organisations formed to exchange information. In both instances, the activities are often underwritten by American charitable foundations. Leaving aside the Soros Foundation, which will be dealt with separately at a later stage of this report, about 100 of the 7,000 active foundations in the USA have been seriously involved in providing grants for higher educational reform projects in Central and Eastern Europe.¹⁵

1.7.1 FOUNDATIONS

One of the major donors has been the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, which, alongside its funding of new tertiary level programmes in economics, business and management in educational institutions throughout the region, has done much to help higher educational institutions to become more market-orientated and to develop computing resources and properly integrated and catalogued research libraries. The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation was an early supporter of the Centre for Economic Research and Graduate Education, at Charles University in Prague.

It has given unstinting support to American universities to further their co-operation programmes throughout the region. It was also involved in two groundbreaking initiatives in the early 1990's designed to create a more receptive climate for private business amongst the Hungarian general public. The first of these was a twenty-episode Hungarian television series on the basics of business education and the second a video cassette based teaching series on the same subject that was distributed to Hungarian secondary schools, work places, and city and county libraries.

1.7.2 SALZBURG SEMINAR

In the second category, two typical activities can be singled out. The first is the Salzburg Seminar, which has operated in the Austrian city as a US educational non-profit organisation conducting sessions on topics of international importance for almost half a century. In 1997 it launched its 'Project to Assist the Higher Education Reform Process in the NIS and Central and Eastern Europe' (the University programme), which it described as a "multi-year series of conferences and site visits, aiming to create a nexus for information and reform efforts related to higher education in Eastern and Central Europe and the Newly Independent States encompassing university presidents, rectors, chancellors, administrators and representatives from the ministries of education from the region and USA, Canada and Western Europe to address issues of governance, administration, structure, finances, and management."

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Generously funded by the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the University project has launched an adventurous programme of symposiums and conferences, which in 1997 and 1998 brought 200 participants from thirty countries together for nine sessions to assess progress in specific areas of higher educational reform. The gatherings were predominantly a dialogue between North American and Central and Eastern European higher educationalists, who alternated in making plenary presentations, with a sprinkling of Western Europeans in attendance.¹⁶ In 1998 an assessment was made of what had so far been achieved in the fields of university management and finance; academic structure and governance; meeting the needs of students; introducing modern technology; and developing the universities' role in civil society. In 1999 the focus switched to the effects that globalisation would have on the region's universities and curricula, with special reference to these same areas.

1.7.3 ALLIANCE OF UNIVERSITIES FOR DEMOCRACY

The focus of the Alliance of Universities for Democracy (AUDEM) based in Knoxville, Tennessee is on the role that higher education can play in promoting democratic institutions, economic development including technology transfer,

decentralised decision making, human health, sustainable habitation of the earth, and common moral and social values. Founded in 1990, on the initiative of representatives from the University of Sofia, and the University of Economic Sciences in Budapest, the Alliance today has more than one hundred university members, a quarter from the United States, seventeen from Poland, twelve from Romania, eleven each from Hungary and the Czech Republic, eight from Slovakia, five from Bulgaria and one each from Albania, Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Since 1991, the Alliance has held an annual conference in one of the region's university cities and provides a forum for discussion and stimulates and supports exchanges between faculty, administrators and community leaders interested in higher education in three broad areas:

- 1 University and Society – dealing with values and motivations in democracies and the role of higher education in the regional, national and local community.
- 2 Infrastructural Reform – at the national level (legal, regulatory or financial reform) and at the level of the higher education institution (assessment and accreditation; information access, telecommunications and technology), and
- 3 Curriculum Reform – dealing with problems and innovations in curricula in such diverse disciplines as philosophy and applied ethics, engineering, business, sociology, information and library sciences, basic and life sciences, medicine and journalism.

1.7.4 ARTES LIBERALES

An example of the spin offs that can come from holding joint conferences of the kind sponsored by the Alliance can be seen in the creation of 'Artes Liberales', a regional association grouping professors from Central Europe, the Baltic States, Ukraine and Bulgaria with the aim of promoting liberal education and democratic values, founded in Prague in January 1997. Its genesis was a Conference held three months before in Budapest, sponsored by the New York based Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation's Educational Leadership Program. The Conference entitled "What Does Liberal Education Offer Civil Society?" brought together 60 'educational leaders' from Austria, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia and Ukraine and twenty of their counterparts from North American liberal arts colleges to discuss how liberal education in an undergraduate curriculum offers support for the development and renewal of civil society.

Many of the Central and East European participants were already involved in projects at their home universities to introduce interdisciplinary aspects into the curriculum, but they were generally unaware of each other's activities. The organisation's first steering committee included the heads of the Society for Higher Learning in Bratislava; the Centre for Studies in the Classical Tradition in Warsaw; the Institute of Educational Sciences in Bucharest; the Invisible College in Buda-

pest; the University of Kiev-Mohyla Academy in Kiev; the Latvian Academy of Culture in Riga; the Estonian Humanities Institute in Tallinn; the Institute of Fundamental Learning in Prague; the Bulgarian-American Commission for Educational Exchange in Sofia; and Klaipeda University, Lithuania. The Christian A. Johnson Endeavor Foundation has continued to give the association and its journal 'Kritika & Kontext' its support.

The first Artes Liberales Conference 'Liberal Education and our Societies', took place in Budapest in October 1998, attended by 100 university representatives from fifteen countries. Its closing statement declared that the role of education in the region had changed "rom political and ideological control into a process of raising self-assured, free individuals who are able to cope with the challenges of a rapidly evolving environment." In order to meet this challenge it called for the introduction of more interdisciplinary courses and trans-disciplinary programmes; more and better teacher training, a closer integration of teaching and research, the introduction of an academic credit system to allow students a freer choice of courses; increased teacher and student mobility and exchanges; the exploration of new models of international education and a better balance between the quality of education and access to it.

This statement reflects the founding aims of the associations, which were:

- a "to encourage in our colleges and universities concrete experiments in teaching and learning that break the mould of premature and excessive specialisation.
- b to promote exchanges and cooperation on programmes of liberal education and democratic leadership among scholars and institutions in post-communist countries as well as with American scholars and institutions.
- c to assist in the spread of new programs of liberal education that themselves avoid the dangers of political opportunism and militant nationalism.
- d to advocate that opportunities be offered for students, as part of their education for leadership, to take individual responsibility for designing their own curricula."

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1.8 CONCLUSIONS

It is very clear that the goal of accession to the European Union has and will continue to have a great impact upon the policies and the priorities of educational reformers in Central and Eastern Europe. Let us take Latvia as a random example. The independent advisory Council of Higher Education, in its 'National Concept' for the years 2000-2010, approved by the government in 1998, clearly linked higher educational reform to the development of the values of 'an open and democratic society', whilst the Ministry of Education and Science has set up a special division for European Integration. In practice, this has meant that progress has already been made in harmonising the curricula for training in the regulated professions with the common standards of European Union associations. Dutch

legislation, passed in 1993, has been adapted as the basis of Latvia's developing system for the mutual recognition of diplomas and qualifications. Two non-governmental institutions, the Higher Education Evaluation Centre and the Academic Information Centre have been established as counterparts for a variety of European Union and Council of Europe programmes such as ENIC, NARIC and ERASMUS. In addition, the country's educational statistics have been redesigned to follow the OECD pattern, making the national Latvian Classification of Education system compatible with the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) system. At the same time Latvian teachers' and lecturers' trade unions meet with their counterparts from across Europe to discuss common problems and forge common responses to government policies.

Something similar is happening in all of the countries in the region and yet such listings still essentially miss the point. Important though they are, such steps remain purely technical and tell us little about the nature of the changes that are being undertaken at the national level. Slovakia, too, declared its intention of creating an open and flexible higher educational system in 1992 and yet only now, eight years later, is real progress in this direction beginning to be made. Romania's attempts to increase the provision of multi-lingual higher education to accommodate its Hungarian-speaking minority have been stymied by continuing dissension within the governing, reformist coalition. Thus, rather than the mere observance of technical criteria or the possession of a seat at the international educational discussion table, the more central question, and the one that will stand at the centre of this study, is to judge the spirit in which educational reform is being conducted. Are the Central and Eastern European countries actually developing systems of higher education that reflect the demands of open democratic societies?

NOTES

- 1 Regular Report from the Commission on Progress towards Accession by each of the candidate countries (October 13, 1999).
- 2 The Amsterdam Treaty itself now states that: “the Union is founded on the principles of liberty, democracy, respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms and the rule of law.”
- 3 *Government Programme for a Civic Hungary* [www.meh.hu/egyeb/modprog/angol/7.htm].
- 4 The Council of Europe’s Higher Education and Research Committee (CC-HER), an intergovernmental committee of experts under the Committee of Ministers and the Council for Cultural Co-operation, is responsible for activities on higher education. It works within the framework of the European Cultural Convention, under which the member states of the Council are joined by several non-member states in cooperation on education, culture, youth and sport.
- 5 Joint Declaration on the Harmonisation of the Architecture of the European Higher Education System (25th May 1998).
- 6 ECTS is based on a common credit unit and grading scale. ECTS credit units (with a value of between one and sixty) are allocated to courses to reflect the quantity of work each course requires in relation to the total quantity of work required to complete a full year of academic study at an institution, that is, lectures, practical work, seminars, etc. Sixty (60) ECTS credits represent the overall workload of one academic year of study.
- 7 Bulgaria and Romania had already informed the French authorities the previous year that they would unilaterally adhere to the principles of the Sorbonne Declaration in their own on-going higher educational reform initiatives. Hungary, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Croatia had also made it known that they would also be willing to accept these principles.
- 8 Whilst welcoming the general idea of a ‘Europe of Knowledge’, they questioned whether it could be achieved without greater public expenditure and feared that it might be interpreted as a means to limit access to higher education. Finally, they complained that students had not been consulted in the drafting of either the Sorbonne or Bologna Declarations.
- 9 The ENIC Network, established by decision of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe on 9 June 1994 and the UNESCO Regional Committee for Europe on 18 June 1994.
- 10 Council Directive 89/48/EEC on a general system for the recognition of higher education diplomas awarded on the completion of professional education and training of at least three year’s duration and Council Directive 92/51/EEC which refers to the recognition of professional education and training at short cycle higher education and secondary level.
- 11 The last UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education was held in Paris in 1998.
- 12 The OECD publishes its own journal *‘Higher Education Management’* and occasional *‘Reviews of National Policies for Education’* (Poland 1996; Czech Republic 1996).

- ¹³ In 1998, the CRE, the European Commission and the European Round-table of Industrialists produced a comparison of the situation at twenty universities in different types of regions (peripheral, 'concentration' and economic revival regions).
- ¹⁴ In the Netherlands, although neither are specialised on Central and Eastern Europe to the extent that these two Viennese institutes are, the CHEPS (Centre for Higher Education Policy Studies) at the University of Twente and the NUFFIC (Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education) are the main focus for contacts and information about Central and Eastern European education systems.
- ¹⁵ In 1990, US foundations granted approximately \$200 million to Central and Eastern Europe, about three percent of the \$7.08 billion total foundation giving.
- ¹⁶ In 1997 representatives from the following Central and East European Universities made plenary session presentations: Wraclow University in Poland, Comenius Univerisy in Slovakia, Tartu University in Estonia; Jan Palacky University in the Czech Republic, Babes-Bolyai University in Romania, Janus Pannonius University in Hungary, University of Warsaw and the Warsaw University of Economics in Poland, the State University of Latvia and Charles University in the Czech Republic.

2 THE UNENDING PROLOGUE - NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL AGENDAS FOR HIGHER EDUCATIONAL REFORM

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Despite the growing network of contacts and signs of the emergence of educational regional associations, mentioned in the last chapter, a decade after the “Fall of the Wall”, higher education throughout Central and Eastern Europe is still in crisis. Despite a constant flow of government declarations, the reform process, which began with high hopes for a quick turnaround, has proven to be slow and difficult. Of course, if we look at the experiences of Western Europe over the last thirty years, we must recognise immediately that introducing change into universities is by nature a gradual process, but there is something more than this in the current problems besetting higher education in Central and Eastern Europe. What confronts reformers here, is not one single crisis, but two interrelated, simultaneous, but in some ways contradictory, crises.

2.2 TWO ASPECTS OF HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM

One crisis is particular, the direct result of four decades of communist rule in the country concerned. Here, the problems to be faced revolve around such questions as freeing the universities from over-centralised government control, guaranteeing academic freedom and modernising curricula and teaching methodologies. The steps taken, although broadly similar throughout the region are conditioned by specific national experiences and policy choices. They are, though, all posited on the desire to once again pick up on the region’s educational traditions. Charles University in Prague, for instance, was founded 650 years ago; Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, was founded in 1364, the Lajos Kossuth University in Debrecen, Hungary, traces its roots back to the establishment of a College of Divinity there in 1538 and Tartu University, in Estonia’s second city, was established in 1632.

The second crisis, though, shows little respect for tradition. It is an international crisis that threatens to overload higher education with new economic, social and cultural demands, at precisely the moment when governments throughout the world are trying to reduce their expenditures and role in the tertiary sector. This second crisis calls for a total upward reassessment of the numbers who should be admitted into higher education, the ages at which people should expect to be able take higher education programmes, the types of institutions that should be set up, the way in which the sector should be financed and the role which governments should play within it etcetera. It was the problems associated with this process that led the World Bank to declare a world wide crisis in higher education in 1995.

It is worth pausing briefly to consider the extent of this worldwide crisis. In 1960, world enrolment in higher education was only 13 million, in 1970 it was already 28 million, in 1980 the total stood at 51 million and rose to 82 million in 1995, an overall sixfold increase in student enrolments worldwide. There is every reason to predict that the current trend will continue. In the developed countries, gross enrolment ratios (the proportions of new entrant students among the corresponding age group) in higher education for the 18-25 year old age group reached almost 60 percent in 1995. The intention in the USA is that two years of tertiary-level college education will soon be more or less universal. Enrolment rates for girls, in developed countries, now exceed those for boys (in 1985, girls accounted for 39.2 percent of enrolments, in 1995, 63.3 percent). This explosion has been accompanied by an equally spectacular drop in government spending on higher education in Europe, which fell, over the same period, in Western Europe from 36.4 percent of GNP per capita to 32.9 percent and in the Countries in Transition from 26.5 percent of per capita GNP to 21.7 percent.

What is of concern to us here is the way in which these two crises affect the role which the higher educational sector in the region can play in helping to develop a civil and civic society, as a firm anchor for the democratic, liberal, market economies that have emerged in the aftermath of 1989. It has been suggested that the first process of reform is geared to the ideals of the Council of Europe, whilst the second takes its inspiration from the World Bank and the IMF. The first stresses the public good of higher education and is concerned with soft issues. Using an output and method orientated approach, it champions the ideal of higher education as a socialising bastion of the liberal arts. The second approach is more concerned with higher education as a private good and is concerned with hard issues. Using a resource and input orientated approach, it champions cost effective, work-orientated education, designed not to meet an abstract societal need, but the individual human desire for a good job.

Whilst the distinctions drawn here are rather over-schematic, it is clear that the second approach, reflecting the current orthodoxy about the need to introduce the market into areas previously left to the public sector, is calling into question the traditional role of tertiary education. It is no longer enough to see it as a transmitter of culture, or a trainer of young minds. It is now to be seen as a national economic growth accelerator and an augmentor of national human capital. Indeed, the higher educational sector will henceforth have to justify its claim for public funds on the basis of the 'value', not just of its traditional pure research output, but increasingly of its mass production of graduates with economically useful knowledge.¹

2.3 LIBERAL EDUCATION VERSUS CAREER TRAINING

Of course the array of institutions that make up the higher educational sector² – colleges, teachers training institutes, polytechnics, specialised vocational colleges and universities – already, to a certain extent, meet this criteria. Science teaching and scientific research, for example, which have always swallowed up the majority of the university budget, have always been justified by the contribution that its graduates and researchers make to the growth of national wealth, well being and knowledge. What is different now is the scale of what is being suggested by the term ‘mass production’. We are no longer talking about a small educated elite, but about a mass educational system in which most school leavers will eventually enter some form of higher education.

It is in the Arts and Humanities that the pressure to produce ‘useful’ knowledge will increasingly call into question the universities’ traditional role as somewhat elitist, culture carriers. Naturally there will still be a place for the emergence of a number of national intellectual champions, be they theoretical physicists, historians, practical engineers, philosophers or novelists. What is under pressure, though, is the belief that the higher educational sector should provide ‘liberal education for its own sake’, as a societal good. The pressure in the Arts and Humanities has switched from preparing students for life to preparing them for a career.

The increasing growth of student numbers is already transforming higher education world wide. The demand is for vocational education writ large, personified by the explosion of courses in hotel management, tourist management and every other kind of management imaginable. If national economies are to adapt to a service orientated world, lots of young people will need several years of tertiary level education so that they can prosper in an increasingly complex and technologically advanced society. Higher education is increasingly being seen as a pathway to prosperity for the individual, an investment in individual success.

From such a perspective, universities are not autonomous institutions any more, but service providers, which need to adapt themselves to the demands of the market and the consumer. Higher education is not a national good to be provided almost free of charge by government, but a personal good which should be paid for by the individual. Higher educational institutions are not ivory towers, but knowledge producers offering a competitive service, which must be judged on their ability to react to and meet market demands for different kinds of knowledge. There is a place in this economic sector for the Ferraris and Mercedes of higher education, but also for the Peugeots and Fords.

2.4 THE GLOBALISATION OF COMPETITION

It is precisely this kind of market differentiation which is being produced by the increasing level of globalisation in the higher educational sector. It was the threat posed to the European Union countries by this globalisation, and a fear that Western Europe was no longer competitive in the world higher educational market, which was one of the impulses behind the Sorbonne and Bologna Declarations and the desire to create more harmony and clarity within and between these countries' higher educational systems. The numbers of students who go outside their own countries for higher education has been growing rapidly, from one million in 1985 to one and a half million in 1995. In 1995, about thirty percent of these students were enrolled in colleges and universities in the United States, eleven percent in France, ten percent in Germany, and nine percent in the United Kingdom. Traditionally, historical and cultural links have had an impact upon where student went abroad to study, but in recent years the United States has clearly begun to outperform Europe.

This competition is set to increase. Not only is the flow of European students to the United States now greater than that of Americans to Europe, but more and more American universities are setting up branch campuses in Europe. They are accompanied by a new sector of mainly American-based trans-national education providers, often not affiliated to any established American University, which are setting up networks of colleges across Europe, offering American-style, English language education in a variety of fields, although mainly in business and the humanities, at commercial rates. Yet another wave of competition, this time based upon internet virtual universities would seem to be on its way. These new competitors attract not only a proportion of the non-European international students, but increasing numbers of Europeans too. A whole new sector of higher education has emerged that stands outside established national systems, offering three to four year Bachelor and one to two year Master degrees, normally accredited outside Europe, but generally recognised on the labour market. This phenomenon has also had the side effect of enabling students from European countries with long-cycle degree programmes to get qualifications in a shorter time or for graduates of the non-university sector to enter a master's programme from which they would have been excluded in their home country.

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2.5 CONCLUSION

University reformers in Central and Eastern Europe, as they try to escape from the corrosive effects of communism, have found that they are not aiming at a static target but at a moving 'unending prologue' to reform as they struggle to modernise their higher educational structures. Hard though the process of cleansing the universities from communist influence has been, the vision of recreating a free academic community served to unite the many former dissident intellectuals who

spearheaded it. Now, however, before they have even achieved their first goal, they are confronted by new demands, that call into question their cherished traditions and beliefs. Demands which, it should be added, have been causing controversy in the traditional universities of Western Europe for almost 30 years now.

One thing is clear, any hopes about the possibility of rescuing anything from this dream must be filtered through the harsh reality of limited resources and exploding demands. Yet, as we will see below, in the post-communist reality, the higher educational sector has a vital and important role to play in spreading the knowledge required to create and sustain a civil and civic society. If this society cannot be nurtured from the resources of the countries themselves, it will be important for the long term stability of the region, and of the expanded European Union, that outside assistance is provided to see the process through. A failure to do so will run the risk of recreating the 'deserted democratic temple' of the inter-war years, when, as Mark Mazower in his history of Europe's twentieth century, 'Dark Continent', explains, the crisis of democracy in the 1930's was not the result of "an excess of democratism in the constitution but rather a lack of democratic values among the public."³

NOTES

- ¹ Special Supplement on Universities - *The Economist* (4/10/1997).
- ² Higher education was defined as “programmes of study, training or training for research at the post-secondary level provided by universities or other educational establishments that are approved as institutions of higher education by the competent state authorities” in the Recommendation on the Recognition of Studies and Qualifications on Higher Education adopted by the UNESCO General Conference at its 27th session (November 1993).
- ³ Mark Mazower: *Dark Continent* (Penguin Press, London 1998) p.20.

3 EDUCATION FOR DEMOCRATIC CITIZENSHIP

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The development of democratic institutions and societies has been one of the main challenges facing Central and Eastern Europe since 1989 and the European Union has made success in this area a key criterion for accession. As has been proved so often in the past, it is far easier to change institutions and structures than it is to change patterns of thought and behaviour, ingrained over previous decades. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe have discovered that a true democracy involves more than free elections and elected parliaments and that a truly free market means more than private ownership and price liberalisation. A democratic free market system of government must, to be successful, allow ordinary people to affect the decisions that shape their everyday lives.

However, the legacy of the communist period is a non-participatory citizenry used to acting as apathetic servants of the state. The system simply did not permit the development of multiple, independent sources of authority. Instead of drawing citizens into the political process and allowing them to take independent initiatives, the communist system nurtured atomised and alienated popular attitudes. In the post-communist world, a sense of 'society' is still relatively weak. The broad range of community-based activities and the robust democratic political culture that should stand as its foundation, are lacking. Ordinary people still find it hard to see themselves as active participants in political and social life. Although communism has gone, most citizens still believe that the state should take responsibility in areas of life which elsewhere would be the domain of voluntary organisations and that political parties, of whatever hue, have little need for their involvement. They remain outside, and often discontented, observers.

3.2 THE CHALLENGE OF DEMOCRACY

Some doubts have been raised about whether the preconditions for a truly participatory democracy can ever be expected to be present in post-communist societies. Indeed, a decade after the fall of communism, the public has little confidence in either the honesty of politicians or its ability to influence national or even local politics. Even in Estonia, where great strides have undoubtedly been made in building working democratic institutions, only twenty two percent of Estonians and fourteen percent of non-Estonians believe that they can do something to stop local government from acting against the interests of the public. The percentages are almost halved when the same question is posed about the activities of the national government. The situation is far worse in a country like Albania, where the almost complete absence of a collective sense of responsibility undermines all attempts to create and sustain democratic institutions.

Throughout the region, people who go to public offices, and even post offices, are still treated as supplicants, requesting a favour, rather than empowered citizens with a right to service. As a direct result of this, there is a sense, in many countries, that daily life is becoming mired in petty and not so petty corruption, but little sense that anything can be done about it. A Bulgarian survey in early 1998 showed that forty one percent of respondents would feel happy about successfully offering an official a bribe, whilst only seven percent would feel ashamed.¹ Even in the 'fast track' countries a judicious kilo of coffee can still do wonders in the hospital waiting room or the tax office.

Throughout the region, the financial well being of the few is matched by the continuing impoverishment (actual as well as relative) of the many, as old certainties are swept away. Those with money, a generation still brought up under communism, have little sense of social conscience or social solidarity. Public attitudes towards wealth creation mix cynicism, jealousy and resentment. Those who have prospered in the new conditions are all too often seen as being somehow corrupt. In this society a host of crackpot theories circulate freely and often without contradiction. The free market place of ideas is not filtered through firm beliefs and attitudes. One Czech writer exclaimed in frustration that there was no such thing as science and alternative science, only science and non-science,² but throughout the region alternative science has taken on a life of its own, unchecked by popular counter argument. Of specific concern is the problem of racism.

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The former Slovak Prime Minister Vladimir Meciar, in a country where just over fourteen percent of the population come from national minorities, once described the Gypsy/Roma community in his country as 'mental retards'. In a 1994 survey, seven out of ten Czechs questioned admitted to having negative views about the Romany minority.³ In a July 1998 Czech poll twenty nine percent of those asked agreed that Roma who committed criminal offences should be punished more severely than other criminals. In 1999, the authorities in the Czech city of Usti Nad Labem, built a fifteen foot high wall as a "noise and hygiene barrier" to cut off a Romany apartment bloc from a surrounding Czech neighbourhood. twenty percent of Slovenian students are reported as preferring to have no contact with Serbs, immigrants from the south, Roma and homosexuals. Latvia and Estonia have a reputation for discriminatory treatment of their Russian ethnic minorities. In the early 1990's, the ethnic Russians, comprising more than half of Latvia's population and almost a third of Estonia's, were effectively placed outside the political process of the two states.

Much has been done to try to address these problems on a formal level. The European Union, raising questions about the status of human rights and the rule of law, excluded Slovakia from its list of countries on the 'fast track' towards EU membership. Since the defeat of the Meciar government in the elections of late 1998, the new government has taken steps to address foreign concerns. The US Congress Helsinki Committee has consistently criticised the Czech Republic for its failure to

seriously address the Roma issue and has called for more educational programmes to be set up to increase awareness of human rights in general. In the June 1998 Czech parliamentary elections, the extreme right-wing Republican Party, known for its racist anti-Romany rhetoric failed to cross the five percent threshold needed to maintain its position in parliamentary representation for the first time since 1990. The wall in Usti Nad Labem was eventually removed. The Organisation of Security and Cooperation's (OSCE) High Commissioner on National Minorities has helped to make the position of the Hungarian minority in Romania and Slovakia more palatable and has harassed the Baltic countries into continually adapting their language and citizenship laws. A successful referendum vote on a new Citizenship Law in October 1998 brought Latvia into full compliance with OSCE standards and during the following year Estonia fulfilled the final two (of 30) OSCE recommendations when its new citizenship law came into effect.

However right and proper these actions and desirable their results have been, what we are talking about here is outside pressure on national governments by the international community to address areas of concern. What has not been directly addressed are ways of changing the public attitudes in the countries concerned that either support discriminatory policies in the first place or, as is more generally the case, feel that there is little that one can do to change them.

3.3 CIVIL/CIVIC SOCIETY AND NGOS IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

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Throughout Central and Eastern Europe an array of human rights organisations are already doing extensive monitoring, research and advocacy work. If we take Albania as an example, we can identify the activities of the Albanian Helsinki Committee, which has counterparts in all the ten candidate countries. Here, as elsewhere, the Committee's opinions are increasingly taken seriously by the central government and its agencies. Alongside it work other organisations, including the Albanian Human Rights Group, the Albanian Human Rights Documentation Centre, the Society for Democratic Culture, and the Albanian Institute for Contemporary Studies. In Romania, as elsewhere, several single-issue groups, such as the Young Generation of Roma and the Romany orientated Centre for Crisis Intervention and Study, complement the activities of the umbrella and multi-issue groups.

In Bulgaria, the Sofia based International Centre for Minority Studies and Intercultural Relations has produced a stream of studies on interethnic relations and intercultural relations, cultural differentiation, and ethnic and religious diversity throughout South East Europe, with the express purpose of encouraging the preservation, development and integration of minorities and ethnic groups in multi-ethnic societies. In Hungary, the Czech Republic and Slovakia citizens groups have

been created to help the Roma with housing loans, literacy classes and summer camps for children.⁴ In some countries, national Parliaments finance human rights organisations, (for example the Romanian Institute for Human Rights), in others trade unions and political parties maintain their own sections to monitor human rights issues. What is still lacking, though, is the voluntary involvement of a critical mass of ordinary citizens in these activities.

However, the work of all of these organisations is hampered by a lack of funds and equipment. It is not to belittle their very valuable work to point out that their memberships, though committed, are small, and that many of them can only survive with the help of foreign donations. In Bulgaria, according to one recent survey, many ordinary people feel that human rights organisations, championing the rights of unpopular groups such as the Roma, are ‘spoiling’ those whose rights they advocate and undermining public order, rather than exposing unwarranted public prejudice and discrimination.

To a certain extent, what is at issue is the creation of what has been termed a ‘civil society’. A dense ‘network of civil engagement’, fostered by ‘civil associations’, which, through their ability to create the mutual trust and generalised reciprocity needed for effective cooperation amongst their members and to mobilise them on behalf of public causes, provide the bedrock for true participatory democracy.⁵ However, from the perspective of this report, a somewhat wider definition of what constitutes a ‘civil society’ will be used than that adopted by de Tocqueville and his present day successors.

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The existence of formal and informal citizens’ groups and NGOs are, undoubtedly, one important precondition for the proper functioning of a democratic, market-orientated state. However, many other factors are also necessary if a participatory democracy is to develop. These can loosely be defined as constituting ‘civic society’, the political and socio-economic aspects of citizenship. This encompasses an array of political rather than societal institutions, such as political parties representing diverse opinion and positions; a free and independent media; trade unions and employers associations; and the establishment of a ‘democratic discourse’ within the political sphere, which marginalises the politics of hate on both the left and the right. Together, civil and civic society constitute what has also been termed the ‘open society’ and in practice they are so intertwined that it is almost impossible to set them apart.⁶

In Estonia, where communism was swept away amidst an upsurge of national cultural activism, participation in civil associations still seems high at forty three percent of Estonians (and thirty four percent of non-Estonians). However, the vast majority of the countries roughly 4,000 associations and foundations are involved in ‘inward looking’ activities geared to health and leisure, self improvement and culture. The share of civil associations championing political and social interests, reflects an increasingly demobilised society where political activism, as expressed

in attendance at political rallies has, according to one survey, declined from twenty five percent of Estonians in 1991 to three percent in 1996 (sixteen percent to two percent for non-Estonians). The pattern is the same across the region, where social activism has increasingly become concentrated on one issue campaigns championing the discontent of a specific group, such as tenants, taxpayers, pensioners etcetera.

In Bulgaria, where there were 4,600 registered associations and foundations in February 1997 only about 1,500 were actually active. Although mainly concentrated in Sofia, the pro-active policy of donor agencies, as in other countries in the region, has resulted in considerable growth in their numbers outside the capital. In 1996, the 10,000 non-profit foundations in Slovakia were said to employ 3,500 paid workers and 381,000 volunteers. Last year it was estimated that there were about 3,000 environmental NGOs operating in the fifteen countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Two thirds of the total were to be found in four countries (Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, and Slovakia). About three-quarters of the regional total were judged to be in an unstable, poor or very poor financial state, with half of the NGOs identified having annual budgets of less than \$1,000 per year. The pattern seems rather similar for the NGO sector as a whole. In Hungary, there is considerable variation in the size and funding of active NGOs. In 1997 one third of the country's 38,000 non-profit foundations and associations operated with a minimal budget (HUF 50,000), whilst a smaller number (eleven percent) accounted for eighty nine percent of the sector's total budget (approximately HUF 200 million).

In all countries, most socially orientated NGOs are either operational project-implementing organisations or, as with the Open Society Fund, the Civil Society Development Foundation, and the Regional Environmental Centre in Bulgaria, resident grant-making organisations, usually set up to manage and distribute foreign private or public funds. Despite the very real efforts made by big donors such as the Soros Foundation to decentralise their decision-making systems and to set up independent national structures, this has sometimes created a suspicion of 'clientism', in which agendas are set not by local actors but by outside donors. In Bulgaria, under the former post-communist Socialist Party government, a national campaign was conducted against many foundations on the grounds that they represented foreign interests and posed a threat to national security. Even in Estonia, where the national government is very responsive to NGO concerns, many local government agencies still refuse to take them seriously as partners. The lack of a significant national corporate and individual donor base is only made worse by such attitudes. This is reinforced by a continuing scepticism about the importance of the non-profit sector, which stems partly from distrust of the 'mandatory voluntarism' common under communist rule, and partly from a post communist 'get rich quick' attitude that leaves little room for a social conscience.

To be effective in the long term, civil associations and NGOs will have to reduce their dependence on external financing and build a strong base of public support. This though is a long-term project, which will not quickly be fully realised. One problem has been a hesitancy on the part of a number of governments in the region to pass legislation which would lead to the emergence of a truly independent non-profit sector. Indeed, political parties have sometimes given the impression that such a development would actually obstruct their plans. Promoting a new legislative framework has been on the NGO agenda in Bulgaria for the last five years. Currently there are few incentives to stimulate donations or charitable incentives by local businesses and individuals. It is expected that the new and more NGO-friendly government will take measures to deal with this problem in the near future. In Hungary, where a 1996 law permits citizens to donate one percent of their income tax to the church or non-profit agency of their choice, the majority of the money raised went to schools or animal welfare groups.

This move towards allowing a proportion of donations made by businesses and other legal entities to non-profit associations to be written off against tax, is being repeated across the region, although the rates are often still too low. Recently there has also been a growing trend towards giving the non-profit sector greater leeway when it comes to engaging in profitable economic activities. Unfortunately, a lot of the legislation governing the activities of foundations and associations exists only in outline. Large parts of the tax code are open to different interpretations where it exists at all and it is often surprisingly hard to discover what changes have been made in tax and other accountancy procedures. The welter of small regulations that have to be observed pose a problem even for commercial organisations and are certainly too much for the non-profit sector.

3.4 PREPARING CITIZENS FOR DEMOCRACY

What is needed is to find some way to kick-start a far reaching change in ordinary citizen's attitudes, habits and values so that they will recognise the importance of civic engagement and take their rightful place as active guarantors of accountable, representative and participatory democracy. Their political activity must become based on a surrounding civil or civic culture, which makes them see themselves as responsible citizens, capable of taking part in independent individual and group activity. To achieve this end a major educational initiative will be required.

The fundamental questions to be answered in considering such an approach are how best can a society develop its citizens' knowledge of how to use democratic procedures to defend their interests and views and how exactly does any society champion the give and take that underpins a functional parliamentary democracy? There is a big step between the proclamation of such goals as educating people to have mutual understanding and tolerance for minorities and the actual implementation of concrete proposals that reach this aim. Clearly this is not just a matter for

the educational system. In most democratic societies, people become aware of their rights as citizens through the media, political parties, civil organisations and the society that surrounds them.

In 1997, at the start of its own project to encourage more governmental attention to 'Education for Democratic Citizenship', the Council of Europe said that what was needed was to teach "young people and adults how to exercise their rights and responsibilities in a concerted and interactive manner...in order to enhance their role as parents, teachers, voters, members of a community, consumers of social services, decision-makers or members of society."⁷ Activities of these kinds can be divided into those designed to be part of the national educational system of the country concerned and those which are designed more as societal mobilisation and continuing education activities. The first are more complex because they require the support of national Ministries of Education and the existence of trained teachers and supporting materials to carry them out. The second, whilst easier to organise, tend to 'preach to the converted' and, lacking continued reinforcement and follow up, to have a more limited long-term effect. Our main concern here will be to pin-point areas where either group of activities has an impact upon the higher educational sector.

The Council of Europe, itself, pointed to the possibility of creating 'partnerships' to encourage this kind of education. Governments and their Ministries of Education could, it suggested, encourage 'partnerships' with a number of other societal actors as part of a 'lifelong learning' approach to democratic education. For example, employers could be involved in training their own employees to take part in Works Councils; trade unions could train their members to take up union functions that touched on democratic representation; political parties could play a role in educating the electorate about their democratic rights and duties; religious bodies could play a role in creating an awareness of ethical values and human rights and non-governmental organisations could offer public education in their own specific area of concern.

A number of international agencies are active in this field. For instance, since 1996 the EU has bankrolled the Romanian Foundation for the Development of a Civil Society, which promotes projects on civic education, the protection of the environment, consumers protection, human rights, minorities issues, gender studies, youth problems, and the development of local government. In Slovenia, in 1993-94, European Union funds were used to help set up a programme entitled 'Education for Democracy' at the Adult Education Institute, designed to help adults orientate themselves to the new democratic realities.

The European Union's PHARE/TACIS Initiative for Democracy and Human Rights Programme,⁸ launched in 1992 with a total budget of some 20-25 million ECU per year, is dedicated to supporting projects which can make people more aware of their rights, either as minorities, members of non-profit organisations, or as ordi-

nary citizens dealing with parliament or local authorities. Working through non-governmental organisations of various kinds, the Democracy Programme has backed a series of training and technical assistance initiatives. Indeed in Romania, it is one of the biggest aid programmes now running, backing more than 30 projects every year. Beside it work a number of other donors, such as the Soros Foundation, which also help to finance a large array of educational activities designed to support democratic citizenship and civic initiative, such as summer schools, conferences and courses devoted to human rights issues or the problems of minorities, and the publication of basic books dealing with issues of civil society.

The result is an array of activities across the region, many of which involve university professors as lecturers and organisers. The Institute for Study on the Foundations of Democracy, in Warsaw, founded as a non-profit study group by staff members from the Institute of Sociology at the University in Warsaw in 1995, by producing such research studies as 'Polish Youth and the Challenges of Democracy' (1996) and 'The Democracy Barometer (1997), shows how the higher educational sector can provide theoretical support for democracy programmes. In the Czech Republic, the Comenius Centre for Education and Democracy, an NGO affiliate of Charles University, which also has its own Human Rights Centre, is more concerned with developing educational programmes in this area, whilst the local Helsinki Committee and its programmes on democracy and civil rights rely heavily on the support of university lecturers.

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Alongside this, activities run by NGOs, such as the Human Rights University Summer School, organised by the Romanian Institute for Human Rights' International (IRDO), allow university students to attend courses relating to democratic rights and principles which are either not part of their chosen university programme, or which, though related to it, have proved hard to integrate into the rather rigid higher educational curricula.⁹ In the Centres of Pluralism network, with its hub at the Warsaw based Institute for Democracy in Eastern Europe (IDEE), the region has the beginnings of its own regional organisation of NGOs involved in democratic education related activities.

However attractive the idea of 'partnerships' is, they are clearly unable, by themselves, to solve the inherited problems of citizenship in Central and Eastern Europe, where such concepts as the mutuality of citizenship and human rights and obligations are not inherent within the societal structure that has grown out of communism. As is the nature of such initiatives, most programmes have concentrated on specific aspects of civic education and it is clear that more will be necessary if the subject is to be fully integrated into the national curriculum. Here, any drive to democratise the political culture and bring a new civic spirit to the fore must, in the short term at least, place considerable stress upon the possibility of mobilising the entire national educational system for the project. This is the best chance that there is for eventually equipping all of a country's citizens with the

basic tools for democratic participation, which can then be developed by the emerging civil/civic society.

3.5 THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOLS

A meeting of European Ministers of Education in Madrid in March 1994, called on schools to adopt an approach to 'education for democratic citizenship' which would start at an early age and "draw fully on the many opportunities offered by school programmes and extra-curricular activities, including contacts with human rights organisations". As a first step, the schools should make themselves "living examples of democratic communities by creating opportunities for dialogue and participation both for pupils and their parents, showing consideration and respect for all their members and rejecting any form of intolerance, especially racism and sexism." In the meantime, a group of Polish professors taking part in an American led project to introduce 'education for democratic citizenship' into schools in the Warsaw region have produced a two semester course on the democratically responsive school, covering such areas as student rights and relations with the local community. In most of Central and Eastern Europe, though, it is questions of intolerance and racism that pose the major threats to the Council of Europe's vision.

3.5.1 ROMA

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In countries such as the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Romania, there is a major problem when it comes to integrating Romany children into mainstream schools. In the Czech Republic, for instance, less than five percent of Romany children complete secondary school, whilst sixty percent of those in 'special schools' for the mentally disabled and socially maladjusted are Roma, although they only make up three percent of the total population.

In each of these countries, independent organs, such as the Romanian Institute of Life Quality, are conducting research on Roma problems. The Council of Europe has been involved in a number of projects to develop in-service training programmes for teachers in Roma communities. The European Union's PHARE/TACIS Democracy Programme, for its part, has supported the restructuring of the five year old pilot Intercultural Dialogue Programme set up by Sofia University's Philosophical Faculty. The aim here is to find better ways to integrate ethnic minority children (Roma, Turks and Pomaks) into the educational system, where, even those who do attend, often do less well than they should because of language and cultural barriers. The core of the project was to train trainers to prepare teachers principally at primary and secondary school levels in techniques to bridge the cultural gaps and modify the teaching process in ways that encourage children to learn. In Hungary, the Soros Foundation and others are supporting the Roma-*universitas*, run by the Roma Civil Rights Foundation, which provides support, in the

form of tutorials, language courses for undergraduate students of Roma origin and offers courses on various Roma related issues to the broader student community.

3.5.2 MINORITY LANGUAGE SCHOOLS

A related problem is the development of minority language education, which only Hungary seems to have generally solved. Estonia and Latvia both have to contend with their Russian-speaking minorities. In Estonia, although much has been done to try to integrate Russian speaking schools into the national educational system, Russian language school leavers rarely have the required level of Estonian to get into national higher educational institutions because of the low level of their Estonian language teaching. In Latvia, the government has decided to phase out its support for minority language elementary schools by 2004. Although all non-Latvian-speaking students in public schools are supposed to learn Latvian and to study a minimum number of subjects in Latvian, there is a shortage of qualified teachers.

In Albania, Greek-language public elementary schools are now common in much of the southern part of the country, as are Macedonian language schools in the border areas between these two states. Although there are no Greek-language high schools, there is a chair of Greek at the University of Gjirokastra. In Bulgaria, voluntary Turkish language classes in public schools, in areas with a significant Turkish population, are funded by the Government. In Slovakia, despite a constitutional guarantee of the right to education in national minority languages, the Meciar years saw constant attempts to chip this away, with the Ministry of Education suggesting that only Slovak nationals, using Slovak, should teach such subjects as history, language and literature in Hungarian language schools. The pressure has been removed by the new post-Meciar government. It has underlined its commitment to the constitution by opening a new Institute for Minority Languages at Presov University, which even boasts two instructors in Ruthenian culture and language.

In the aftermath of recent elections that have brought minority groups into governing coalitions for the first time, Bulgaria, Romania and Slovakia have all restated their commitment to minority-language education. Despite the good intentions, it is, though, unlikely that the cash strapped governments will be able to achieve much in this area without outside financial assistance. The problems that can be encountered are clear from events in Romania.

Here the whole question of minority language school education has remained highly controversial, with some Romanian national figures insisting that, rather than creating racial harmony, such a policy would lead to ethnic segregation and separatism. The 1991 Romanian Constitution guaranteed national minorities the right to education in their mother tongue. However, in 1995, the same year that an

additional 300 places were created for training Hungarian-language secondary school teachers at the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj, the new Education Law included a number of restrictions on unfettered Hungarian-language school teaching. Article 120 of the 1995 law, for instance, decreed that in state-supported ethnic Hungarian schools Romanian history and Romanian geography had to be both taught and examined in Romanian, using the same textbooks in use in Romanian-language schools. This same law also defined the history syllabus as being “the history of the Romanian people” rather than the more ethnically-inclusive “history of Romania.”

After the formation of a coalition government in 1996, which included representatives of a Hungarian political party, an emergency decree was passed (June 1997) amending the 1995 education law and removing these restrictions. Under Romanian law, although the amendment went into immediate effect, it must eventually be voted through by both houses of the parliament. Despite the fact that the governing coalition enjoyed a comfortable majority, members of some coalition parties broke party discipline, and helped to vote down the amendments. The situation has still not been clarified.

3.5.3 SCHOOLS AND SOCIETY

Even whilst recognising that the focus of attention in Central and Eastern Europe must initially be on the schools, it is still important to bear in mind that schools, colleges and universities remain a part of the society that supports them. Whilst the educational sector can help, it cannot by itself be expected to develop democratically minded citizens. Even to develop an agreed curriculum for a subject such as civic education, especially when it covers areas such as minority rights, requires that there is already some general consensus about such issues amongst the political elite. This has not always been the case in countries as varied as Estonia, Slovakia, and Bulgaria.¹⁰ Indeed, only after the recent elections in Bulgaria, in 1997, and Slovakia, the following year, have the new governments given their backing to educational programmes designed to stimulate civic involvement and improve inter-ethnic relations. What children learn at school may be contradicted by their life experience outside school, with the latter often taking precedence. Young adults, who are belittled in government offices, or whose friends adopt racist attitudes will not necessarily take seriously school level courses that encourage intercultural coexistence, toleration and democracy.

The extent to which the school system and other societal actors can together provide an adequate basis in ‘education in democracy’ defines the extent to which such education is required at the tertiary level. If the schools are already doing a good job, then the role of higher educational institutions is mainly to produce specialists in both the sciences and the arts, even if some vestiges of a liberal arts education are slotted in to civilise the mass of future scientists, managers and

accountants. In such a system enough of those who have studied politics, sociology, law, history and literature, will find jobs in the media, teaching, the civil service or the non-governmental sector to ensure that the values of a free society are kept alive and debated in the public arena.

This though does not exclude the higher educational sector from responsibilities in this area. The school systems in Central and Eastern Europe are swamped with problems. There are tendencies towards premature and over-narrow vocational teaching and over-regulated curricula, both of which leave little room for the introduction of new subjects. In addition to this, schools are starved of funds and there is a lack of suitable textbooks and other instructional materials. Although the World Bank has, for instance, provided a \$50 million loan to help the Romanian Ministry of Education and its Institute of Education Sciences carry out a 5-year project to raise the quality of basic and secondary education and improve education financing and management,¹¹ Romania, like the other countries in the region, is currently far from able to easily provide the kind of mass civics education that is required. Civics teachers with specialist training are extremely rare and teaching methods traditionally stress memorising facts, rather than engaging in the democratic dialogue envisaged by the Madrid 1994 meeting of European Ministers of Education. In several of these areas, the higher educational sector can play a significant supportive role.

3.5.4 DEVELOPING NATIONAL SCHOOL CIVICS CURRICULA

All the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have included education for citizenship in their national curricula, either as component parts of a variety of existing courses from history and economics to social and political science, or as a separate subject with a variety of different titles. Some countries such as Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, and the Czech Republic have opted for a mixed solution, combining both approaches at different levels. In Hungary, the new national basic curriculum (classes I-X) replaces traditional school subjects by ten 'cultural areas' one of which, 'Man and Society', is specifically concerned with education for citizenship, the equivalent subject in Estonia is entitled 'Ethics and Society'. In Albania, for 45 years certainly the most isolated and politically repressed country in Europe, Human Rights education was given a prominent place within the national school curriculum in 1993. Since then, the Ministry of Education through its own Pedagogical Research Institute, has been cooperating with local NGOs and foreign organisations, like the Helsinki Committee of the Netherlands, to develop teaching materials and in-service training programmes. With the help of the Council of Europe, which Albania joined in July 1995, attempts are also being made to incorporate a European aspect into many subjects in the curriculum. Despite considerable effort, though, the impact, in terms of the numbers of schools involved or students taught, is still small.

There is some help available through the Civitas organisation, an international group championing democracy education around the globe. It was set up at an international conference in Prague in 1995 and is supported by the Council of Europe's Directorate of Education, Culture and Sport, the United States Information Agency, the United States Department of Education, the American Federation of Teachers and the Center for Civic Education. Civitas hosts a website (CivNet) for anyone involved in designing, teaching and organising civic education and propagating the values of civil society. It has become a huge clearing house of courses and experiences from throughout the world and a major resource for teaching and other materials. At the same time, Civitas runs the International Civic Education Exchange project, which has a specific programme for civic educators from Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union based around seminars, reciprocal visits and joint research projects with American partners.

In Poland, the Mershon Center at Ohio State University took the lead in one of the pioneering projects 'Education for Democratic Citizenship in Poland' (EDCP), already mentioned above, which started in February 1991 and produced what has become a standard collection of school level readings to support its syllabus. As part of this project, a mixed group of Polish and American social scientists have begun a long-term research programme to track the impact of such programmes.¹² In Lithuania, 'Politics' was made a part of the secondary school curriculum in 1991, but it was not until 1995, after a failed attempt to develop a suitable national textbook for school and teacher use, that an existing American textbook on civic education was adopted. In Hungary, it was experts from Syracuse University who helped to develop curricula and teacher training systems for a similar programme, whilst Romania's own Institute of Educational Sciences in Bucharest, a powerhouse for introducing civic education and human rights education into the school system, which has been involved in almost every initiative designed to introduce civic education into the Romanian school system, developed its own basic civics education text.

This, however, revealed just how controversial such an undertaking could be. Nationalist politicians were offended by a textbook which covered such areas as minority rights, whilst the orthodox church, feared that the introduction of civics education might undermine the status of Christianity as a compulsory school subject. In Bulgaria, in the 1998-99 school year, the basic moral values underlying a civil/civic society were meant to be covered in what was conceived of as an optional "world religions" course, which would avoid endorsing any particular faith. However, there have been complaints that the textbooks prepared for the course have given the Bulgarian Orthodox Church privileged coverage. Even in Slovenia there has been an intense debate about whether or not religious (moral values) education should become part of the core curriculum. The current compromise makes one subject 'civic education and ethics' part of the compulsory syllabus, and

leaves two others, 'religions and ethics' and 'civic culture' as new additions to the list of permissible optional subjects.

3.5.5 HISTORY TEXTBOOKS

Of course, it is not just a matter of introducing new subjects, much still needs to be done to reform old subjects, for example the teaching of 'History'. In many Central and Eastern European countries, most history teaching at schools is still heavily nationalistic. Sometimes this reflects a search for unifying national traditions, as is the case in the Baltic States, Slovakia and to a certain extent Slovenia and sometimes it reflects a deep seated attachment to unifying, but often xenophobic, national traditions of resistance as in Romania and Bulgaria.¹³ As many of the countries in the region are multi-ethnic, an approach to history that glorifies the achievements of majority groups, whilst belittling or distorting those of minority groups can contribute to creating lasting mistrust, as school children carry the prejudices that they have been taught into adult life. In contrast, the development of new texts that give all groups a stake in the national tradition is an important part of fostering a workable civil society.

The Council of Europe has once again been an active forum where such problems can be discussed. Since the fall of communism, there has been a revival in its activities relating to history teaching, much of it inspired by the changes of 1989. The 1994 Council of Europe Symposium on 'History, Democratic Values and Tolerance in Europe', held in Sofia recommended that the following criteria should be applied to history curricula, textbooks and the practices of teachers: do they uphold democratic institutions? do they respect human rights, enshrine tolerance, promote understanding and reflect multiperspectivity? is critical thinking one of their desired outcomes, together with the ability to recognise bias, prejudice and stereotypes? and are such attitudes as open-mindedness, empathy and acceptance of diversity encouraged?¹⁴ The Council has also helped to establish two international NGOs, the International Society for History Didactics; and the European Standing Conference of History Teachers' Associations (EUROCLIO), both of which have a growing membership in Central and Eastern Europe. In the Czech Republic, for instance, teachers set up their own History Teachers' Associations in 1995 as part of the EUROCLIO network.¹⁵

In Romania, the initial solution to the need to introduce new history texts to replace those from the communist period, was, reportedly, to reprint one that had first been published in 1941. Since then, though, a series of initiatives have been launched that have finally produced new colourful and comprehensive textbooks, introduced for the first time in the autumn of 1999. The process of renewal owes much to a number of projects. In 1995-96, the Bucharest based Institute for Educational Sciences ran a project 'Education for Democracy through History Teaching', which developed materials to help history teachers deal with such

controversial subjects as Romania's multi-ethnic past. At the same time, the Nicolae Iorga Institute for History launched a project to investigate the national biases found in history textbooks. These different strands were drawn together in October 1998, when the Project on Ethnic Relations (PER), an American financed NGO¹⁶ that works closely with the Council of Europe, organised a seminar entitled "History Textbooks: Sources of Knowledge or Stereotypes?" in cooperation with the Romanian Ministry for National Education.

The net result of these and other activities has been the new textbooks mentioned above, printed with the financial assistance of a World Bank loan, and a new school history curriculum. Introduced in September 1999, for 4th to 12th grades (10-18 years), this makes an effort to better integrate minority perspectives into the history of the Romanian state and the Romanian national experience into its European background, before culminating, in the final year, in the study of Romanian history since 1850. It is very unlikely that these textbooks will be the final word in the process of creating a more inclusive vision of Romanian history and national identity, but they do mark the first step in the process. As one teacher said, even the worst of the new texts is better than the best of the old ones. Work has now begun on a new history of 'Romania as a State' for use in grades 10, 11, and 12. The biggest immediate problem, unfortunately, is the cost of the new textbooks, which parents themselves must buy for their children.

3.5.6 HIGHER EDUCATION AND HISTORY

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The creation of history textbooks for schools is only really one aspect of a much larger reassessment and demythologisation of the region's national histories. In a country that has not come to terms with its own past, it is far too easy for demagogues of both left and right, to present their countries as 'historical martyrs' brought low by the machinations and conspiracies of others, be they communists or fascists, internal or external enemies, Jews or ethnic minorities. Although the production of new history books does not by itself rob demagogues of their power, it is only by wrestling with the past that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will eventually be able to come to terms with the present.

A thorough and continuing debate about national and regional history is an important part of creating the foundations for a true civil society, in which old prejudices and hatreds are cast away in an attempt to create a new inclusive national consensus. It is the task of history departments in higher educational institutions throughout the region to ensure that this debate is conducted in a serious and scrupulous manner, which does not allow such subjects as the extermination of the Jews in the 1940's to be passed over as being entirely the responsibility of others.¹⁷

In Slovenia, the University of Maribor runs a rather similar research project to that being conducted in Romania mentioned above, investigating the multicultural perspectives of local historiography. At the same time, the country's two pedagogical colleges have included topics on the multi-ethnic and multi-religious history of South East Europe and the twin legacies of the Ottoman and Habsburg Empires in their history teacher training programmes. In the Czech Republic, the problems of developing an agreed interpretation of the communist period have been entrusted to the Institute for Contemporary History at the Academy of Sciences, which was founded in 1990 with the express intention of undertaking interdisciplinary studies of the progress of Czechoslovak (Czech and Slovak) history from 1938 to the present time in an international context. In Romania a new Institute for Contemporary History (IRIR) is due to open in April 2000 with a very similar brief, set up with 800,000 guilders from the Netherlands MATRA programme. This will operate alongside the Centre for Romanian Studies in Iasi, an American and British supported initiative, which has already published an impressive number of books and monographs on aspects of Romanian history and which organises annual international conferences covering areas such as Romania during Second World War (1995) and the First World War (1998).

However, the problems presented in rewriting contemporary history have been made all too clear in Slovakia and Latvia. In Slovakia, European Union funds were used by the Ministry of Education to produce a new book in 1996 entitled 'The History of Slovakia and the Slovaks', written by Milan S. Durica and intended as recommended reading for teachers and students in elementary and high schools. The book was widely criticised by religious groups and the Slovak Academy of Sciences for gross inaccuracies and distortions, particularly in its portrayal of wartime Slovakia and the deportation of Jews and Roma. Despite promises to withdraw it, it remained available in many schools until the defeat of the Meciar government. A somewhat similar problem was dealt with, with rather more panache, by the Latvian government in 1998. Faced with the republication of a Nazi era, anti-Semitic book, 'The Horrible Year', by a politician belonging to Latvia's largest nationalist party, 'For Fatherland and Freedom', the Government criticised its contents, called on the State Prosecutor's Office to investigate whether the book's publication violated the law and, after consulting with members of the Jewish Survivors of Latvia organisation and well-known Latvian historians, established a special historical commission to evaluate the Holocaust and other events of 20th century Latvian history. The University of Latvia established a Judaic Studies Centre in the summer of 1998.

These two examples show how problematic the deeper layers of culture can be in many Central and Eastern Europe countries. If one takes into account the time which it has taken Western European countries to come to terms with their own, often unheroic and sometimes collaborationist involvement in the Holocaust, it is clear that it will take several decades for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe to fully confront and overcome their own dark pasts. No one should expect

that the process will not be without setbacks of the kind mentioned above. Nevertheless a dual process has begun. Historical reappraisal and the creation of a more inclusive national identity will both help to develop and itself be a product of the growth of civil society in the countries in the region.

3.5.7 MATERIALS AND TEACHERS

The problem, of course, is not just one of textbooks. As a 'new subject', education for democratic citizenship is normally taught by teachers with little specialist training, drawn from the social and human sciences, many of whom did their initial training before 1989. In general, they are rather conservative in their approach and used to a hierarchical, rather than participatory, style of teaching. With the slow advance of civics education of this kind into the classroom, a host of national, European and international agencies and NGOs, including the Netherlands Helsinki Committee, have been involved in in-service teacher training projects. In 1997, for instance, the Netherlands Helsinki Committee partly financed the Romanian Institute for Educational Sciences' project 'Human Rights Education in Romanian Schools', which concentrated on in-service teachers' training, in terms of both its content and its style.¹⁸ In Slovakia and the Czech Republic, both divisions of the Partners for Democratic Change NGO have developed curricula, educational materials and training programmes for teachers and primary and secondary school children focusing on conflict management and resolution skills. The Council of Europe has sponsored a series of annual seminars across Central and Eastern Europe, bringing together teachers from Austria, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Slovenia and Romania to examine the links between civic education and media education, to develop teaching materials and to encourage projects within and between the various countries. The Romanian Soros Foundation has sponsored similar meetings between German, American and Romanian civic education teachers.

3.6 THE ROLE OF HIGHER EDUCATION

Such activities are essentially palliatives and holding operations until the official teacher training network begins to turn out significant numbers of new teachers with the required expertise. As we have seen, the higher educational sector, through its research projects and institutes, can have an impact on certain aspects of the development of 'education for democratic citizenship' programmes at the school level, but its major contribution will be made through its role in teacher training. In the majority of countries in Central and Eastern Europe teachers from the primary level up must follow a three to four year training programme at tertiary level teacher training colleges, Pedagogical Universities or at university Pedagogical Faculties, or, if they have already completed their university level education, a special pedagogical course to prepare them for the classroom.

Training new teachers for a new generation growing up in the new political circumstances is a major challenge at a time when even in the more advanced countries, Hungary, Poland, Slovenia and the Czech Republic, teacher training is still rather underdeveloped.

3.6.1 TEACHERS TRAINING

The Pedagogical Faculty at the Comenius University in Bratislava has established a special Department of Ethics and Civic Education, responsible for training primary and secondary school teachers and doing research in these areas. In Tallinn, Estonia, the Pedagogical University offers both pre-service and in-service training of teachers in citizenship education.

The Department of Social Sciences at the Pedagogical University in Hradec Kralove, Czech Republic, specialises in training 'political studies' teachers for elementary schools and technical colleges. Annually it graduates about fifty student teachers from its full-time courses and another twenty from evening classes in the subject.¹⁹ In Prague, Charles University's Pedagogical Faculty has established a special Department for Civic Education alongside its existing Department of Philosophy and Social Sciences. The Higher Economics School, also in Prague, has launched an East European Constitutionalism Project, which organises teacher's training programmes and textbooks for future secondary school teachers of civic education. In nearby Olomouc, at the Palacy University, the Philosophical Faculty has set up a Centre for Education in Constitutionalism, within its Department of Political Science and European Studies. This is responsible both for training secondary school teachers in civic education and also for developing a national network of educational centres for in-service training in the same area.

The process is not yet so advanced in Albania where for the last two years the 'Luigj Gurakuqi' University of Elbasan has been working with the Norre Nissum College of Education in Denmark, as part of a DANIDA project, to introduce new courses on citizenship education into pre-service teacher training. In a parallel activity, the European Union's TEMPUS programme is supporting one project, involving five Albanian universities, covering much the same topic as DANIDA, and a second project, involving six Albanian institutions and the Ministry of Education, looking into the feasibility of restructuring the whole teacher training system at the University of Fan Noli of Korça.

In Poland, once again with TEMPUS help, the Higher Education School of Pedagogy in Krakow has added a 'European' specialisation to its Masters programme in History. In Hungary, social scientists from the Research Institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences have helped the Teacher Training College in Szombathely to upgrade its old social science programmes and develop a new programme for European Studies. In both of the above cases, the 'European'

dimension was introduced as one way of meeting the overall challenge for a greater emphasis on 'democratic citizenship' throughout the curriculum.

In Hungary, the extension of the network for the in-service retraining of teachers is a major goal of the government's modernisation plan. An amendment passed to the 1996 Education Act requires that all teachers starting their studies in 1998 should pass regular continuing professional development examinations. The Hungarian government has also recognised, as part of its strategy for revitalising adult education, that specific skills are needed to teach civic education courses. Consequently, it has supported the universities in Debrecen and Pecs in their efforts to develop courses for adult educators and for cultural and continuing education management. This is possibly the only such initiative in this area that has so far been launched in the region.

3.6.2 CIVICS PROGRAMMES IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Only a very limited number of Central and Eastern Europe's higher educational institutions, departments, lecturers and students have actually been involved in these attempts to introduce civic education into the national school curriculum. Nevertheless, this does not in any way reduce the need for students in higher education to be prepared to take up their role as democratically involved citizens. Students, in fact, appear currently to be as apathetic and indifferent towards political and social issues as the rest of the population. Reports from the Czech Republic, the three Baltic states and Slovenia, all suggest that the vast majority of students in higher education see their studies as no more than a pragmatic path towards a good job and lots of money. In the Czech Republic, established political parties have been forbidden by law from being active at universities and few students seem to desire it otherwise.

The stress at the higher education level has been more on introducing 'European' orientations into existing subject areas, rather than upon setting up completely new courses on civic education topics. The normal pattern is for a Faculty of Law, for instance, to modify its curriculum to include more courses in such areas as the judicial aspects of the protection of human rights and in this way indirectly promote courses that have a civil/civic education aspect. In Romania, the introduction of courses dealing with political systems in the twentieth century (especially in the new faculties and at the National Schools for Politics) has meant that several programmes now deal specifically with issues relating to minorities and civil rights. In Poland, the Department of International Studies of Lodz University, has, with the assistance of the European Union's TEMPUS programme, introduced modules on 'Public Speaking and Presentations' and 'Mass Media and Civil Society' into its curriculum, and the list could be extended indefinitely. In the final part of this present study some of the major innovations that have been made in curriculum design of Social Studies and Arts/Humanities programmes will be listed.

3.7 CONCLUSIONS

Although much has changed in the former communist bloc over the last ten years, society has still not recovered from the atomisation that was the key to dictatorship. Something identifiable as a civic and civil culture has begun to emerge, but it is still fragile and not yet self-sustaining. Although a network of NGOs has appeared, few could survive without outside assistance. In general, people still shy away from getting involved and there is still no bedrock of community based activities supporting the superstructure of democratic national parties and national elections. It is significant that in some countries it is the old Communist Parties, whether reformed or not, that still appear to have the largest networks of grass-roots support. Very few people actually want a return to the past, but many are cynical and disappointed in the results of change. Ordinary citizens remain all too often bystanders, critical of the motives of others, but too inward looking to involve themselves in the process of social democratisation.

Lurking under the stones of popular culture, there is much to give rise to concern. Few countries in the region have really tried to confront either their communist or pre-communist pasts. Freed from the forced certainties of communism, popular attitudes are receptive to an array of distortions and lies about the past and the present. Romanticising the past and placing responsibility for historic crimes on outsiders makes it doubly difficult to create inclusive political cultures in the present, which will embrace national minorities.

In a such a situation there is a clear need for basic school level educational programmes designed to kick start civic engagement and to inculcate democratic values into the coming generation. Despite the problems involved in setting up such 'democracy education', it is now beginning to become a normal part of the school curriculum throughout the region. Higher education has a role to play in developing such school-based programmes. It is higher education that trains the teachers and it is higher education that helps to develop the knowledge needed for drawing up curricula and writing new textbooks. Aspects of civic education will also be integrated into higher educational programmes. However, higher educational institutions also have a role to play in creating and spreading national cultural norms. This is epitomised most simply in the basic idea that discussion should be ethical and free, subject to rebuttal and criticism, and open to persuasion. Such values should permeate the entire higher education curricula and should be held up as an example to society at large.

The role that higher education should play in the development of a vibrant civil and civic society is therefore much wider than a mere listing of the kinds of courses that are on offer for students and the research that is being done, although this is certainly one aspect of what should be considered. The whole process of higher educational reform makes the sector itself a microcosm of developing civil society. Higher education must transform itself to meet the demands of the 'knowledge

society' and mass access to higher education. It must develop a national wiring diagram, which clearly defines the roles of the different institutions that make up the sector and the alternative educational paths that can be followed. It must abandon the ivory tower and become a part of the society that surrounds it. It must itself become democratic and reactive, both in the programmes that it offers and the way in which it reaches its decisions. Universities have been freed from direct state control and have begun to take their place within the growing network of autonomous self-governing organisations. They will be judged both upon the academic knowledge that they impart to their students and the way in which the universities themselves become a microcosm of 'civil' society. The university has a civic mission, and also is a civic mission.

NOTES

- ¹ Fifty percent of the civil servants questioned said they would feel happy (and seven percent would feel ashamed) about taking a bribe.
- ² Miroslav Holub review of Ronald Hofmann: *The Same and Not the Same*, Columbia, 1995 - *London Review of Books* (n.d.).
- ³ *Prognosis* (Prague, 15-28th December 1994).
- ⁴ *The Economist* (11/ix/1999).
- ⁵ Robert D. Putnam: *Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital*, *Journal of Democracy* (No.6, January 1995) pp. 65-78; and *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993).
- ⁶ This view has been contested by the Cato Institute, for example, which sees a great danger in the politicisation of civil society because it "subordinates individuals to the decisions of other people, thus supplanting civil society's soft infrastructure of voluntary associations and accepted obligations."
- ⁷ It subsumed under this general heading civics education, human rights education, political education, values education, moral education, social education and ethical education.
- ⁸ Operating in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe including former Yugoslavia, the New Independent States of the former Soviet Union, and Mongolia.
- ⁹ Regional Summer universities are run by a variety of organisation stretching from the American financed Democracy and Diversity Seminars organised by the International Cultural Centre in Krakow to the Central European University's extensive summer programme for university lecturers.
- ¹⁰ In Bulgaria, under the previous Government (1995-96) hostility to uncontrolled civic initiatives was such that the Ministry of Education even banned school-related programmes carried out by NGOs. Even today some school directors and teachers do not like the idea of cooperating with NGO civic education programs.
- ¹¹ The loan finances textbooks and supplementary materials, equipment, computer hardware and software, technical assistance, external and local training, preparation of studies, and non-salary operating costs.
- ¹² Richard C. Remy: *Teaching Democracy in East Central Europe: The Case of Poland and the EDCP* (August 1994) [www.ed.gov/databases/ERIC-Digests/ed377120.htm].
- ¹³ A.Ecker and A.Pühringer: First Comments on the National Reports as Regards the Didactic Potential of the Projects Described - *Southeast European Educational Initiatives and Cooperations for Peace, Mutual Understanding, Tolerance, and Democracy*. [www.gewi.kfunigraz.ac.at/csbc].
- ¹⁴ Poland, Lithuania, Belarus and Ukraine are reportedly working together to draft new history textbooks.

- ¹⁵ Founded in 1995 with 300 members from both primary and secondary schools.
- ¹⁶ PER is supported by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, with additional funding from the Starr Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation, the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation, and the Council of Europe.
- ¹⁷ On this subject see Michael Shafir: Radical Politics in East-Central Europe (Part III: X-Raying Post communist 'Radical Minds' D) Conspiracy Theories and Anti-Semitism - *RFE/RL* (Vol. 2 No. 2 26/1/2000).
- ¹⁸ Laura & Carol Capita: Romania: Romania Country Report -in- Southeast European Educational Initiatives and Cooperations for Peace, Mutual Understanding, Tolerance, and Democracy [www.gewi.kfunigraz.ac.at/csbc/romania.html].
- ¹⁹ The syllabus of the Pedagogical Faculty, J. E. Purkyne University, covers: Man and politics; The concept of politics; Political science; Political science methods; The political system; The state, its position and functions; Political parties and party systems; Public organisations (interest groups) and political pressure groups, political behaviour; History of political doctrines, ideology and its place in history; Political cultures and political values; Democracy and the parliamentary system; Governmental foreign policy.

4 REFORMING THE STRUCTURE OF THE HIGHER EDUCATION SECTOR

4.1 INTRODUCTION

Under Communism, the whole educational system was rigidly centralised, hierarchical, bureaucratic and closely controlled by the party and state administrations. This control covered all areas of school and university life from staffing to the curriculum. Senior university academics were all members in good standing of the ruling communist party, political conformity rather than academic prowess defined professorial promotion, and ideological training was an integral part of all university courses.

Higher educational institutions often had very narrow specialisations, such as, for example, the University of Transportation in Czechoslovakia, and graduates were almost guaranteed a job for life in their 'chosen' vocation. Horizontal relationships between faculties and departments were not encouraged. Higher educational institutions and their constituent parts were rather part of a vertical power structure, in which they were little more than transmission belts for ready made decisions. They were designed to be almost completely teaching institutions, with important research carried out by institutes of the national academies of science.

Following ten to twelve years of primary education, students followed a centrally-approved set of courses throughout their four- to six-years of undergraduate study. The emphasis was upon factual, encyclopaedic knowledge, primarily in the natural sciences. Memorisation, based upon learning and authoritarian teaching methods, left no room for an approach based upon problem-solving and individual decision-making. The erosive effects of this ideological straight-jacket were most obvious in the humanities and the social sciences, in such subjects as history, philosophy, law, psychology, and sociology. Although teaching in these areas was of a generally low quality, the educational system often produced excellent results in technical subjects and mathematics. In some areas scientific expertise was of a very high order. It was in applications rather than theory that the system broke down.¹

Over the last decade, throughout the region, the curricula have been purged of Marxist-Leninist ideology. The social sciences have been revived and attempts have been made to overcome many of the other problems inherited from the past. It seems as if almost every institution of higher education in Central and Eastern Europe has energetically redefined its role and begun to implement a drastic reform of its academic programmes and structures. In some countries, such as Estonia, a national debate has been going on about the future direction of education policy. This has involved the President, whose Academic Council has come up with a comprehensive educational plan, 'Learning Estonia', the Riigikogu (Parliament), which organised a wide ranging debate on education policy in May

1998, and the public (students, teachers, school headmasters, parents, employers and employees, politicians and others) organised in the third sector Education Forum, which has been holding annual public discussions on topical educational issues since 1995.

In practice, of course, the changes have often been less profound, with elements of the old system carried over almost unchanged into the new one. Nevertheless, when assessing the reform process, it is important to recognise what has actually been achieved thus far and what the starting point of the reform process was. At the same time we should not forget that the countries of Western Europe are still struggling with some of the same issues. France and England, for instance, seem quite prepared to accept that some universities in their systems should be recognised as being of a higher quality than others, something that would be much more difficult for Germany and the Netherlands to do. Nevertheless, England, unlike the United States, still insists that its university salaries should remain fixed to a central government scale. France, for its part, maintains a system which allows the almost free access of all high school graduates into, at least, the first year of university studies, even though this is a major drain on its resources in the higher educational sector. At the same time, though, it also supports the *Grandes Ecoles*, which are amongst the most selective institutions in European higher education.

4.2 GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURES ON HIGHER EDUCATION

4.2.1 THE HISTORICAL LEGACY

Real though the achievements have been, the reform process in higher education in Central and Eastern Europe is taking place against a background of historical under-financing and present economic crisis and budget restraint. Under communism, such sectors as health and education, and especially higher education, were deemed less important than production. The result is a pattern of under-developed libraries and technical facilities and poorly paid faculties. At the same time, the budgeting system was highly inefficient. Western style accounting structures hardly existed and money was allocated to the higher educational sector on the basis of custom and often of favours. Consequently, higher educational institutions were not concerned with efficiency, profitability, or even balancing the books, and happily overspent where and when they could. The result of this was that in Hungary in 1993 the government was spending a sum equivalent to eighty six percent of per capita GDP on every student in higher education, compared to an average of forty five percent for the OECD countries, and thirty percent for Germany.

Rising enrolment and falling expenditures per student have added overcrowded and increasingly dilapidated buildings to the litany of problems. Outlays from the state budget, still the only real source of funding for higher education, are now

insufficient to support existing activities, never mind starting and sustaining new initiatives in such areas as civic education. The state often cannot afford to supply schools and universities with even the most elementary equipment and teaching tools.

4.2.2 FALLING REAL FUNDING

The Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia, saw its state funding drop from 271.4 million crowns in 1993 to 185.6 million crowns in 1997, whilst its enrolment increased from 22,000 to 25,000 students. A recent study of the funding patterns at the University of Economic Sciences in Budapest revealed that between 1990 and 1996 its real purchasing power in areas other than wages fell by about thirty five percent. Public spending on education in Poland has dropped by a fifth in real terms since 1989 and Romania has only been able to maintain its constitutionally guaranteed expenditure on education of four percent of GNP by taking out external loans.² The challenge that Albania faces in trying to bring its higher educational system up to EU standards is immense, and yet it can devote no more than 0.5 percent of GDP to the task. Bulgaria, where the whole educational system almost came to a halt in February 1997 can only devote 0.8 percent of GDP to higher education.³ Only in Slovenia does annual expenditure on higher education come even close to OECD GDP averages and nearly matches the proportional expenditure of other small European countries such as Austria and Switzerland. Eighty percent of Slovenia's higher education budget is used to support institutions and twenty percent to financially support students.

In the present, almost every national educational system in the region is confronted with immense demands and few resources. Most unofficial audits suggest that many universities teeter on the edge of bankruptcy. The easy going accounting systems of the past are being replaced by western-style result orientated systems in which day-to-day budgetary control is devolved to the individual educational institution, requiring high and consistent standards of financial reporting. The problem is that in many institutions the lines of authority are still confused and the dividing lines between academic and administrative authority undefined. Accustomed to taking directions from a central ministry, many university administrators lack the skills necessary to deal with the management problems and policy issues that are now their responsibility.⁴ The problem is exacerbated by the fact that at most Central and East European universities book-keeping, accounting and budgeting systems still leave much to be desired, whilst the rules regarding taxes, reporting procedures, standards and authorities change often and are not always clear.

4.3 THE EUROPEAN UNION, THE WORLD BANK AND HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM

Despite these constraints, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have managed to do a great deal to transform the legislative structure of their higher educational systems by themselves, relying on outsiders for little more than expert advice. However, once the accent turned to implementation, foreign assistance has become increasingly important in financing the administrative reorganisation needed to remove one of the major bottlenecks slowing the momentum of the whole reform process. The role of the European Union's TEMPUS programme in this sphere has been very important. Set up in 1990, as part of the comprehensive PHARE programme, it covers everything from staff and student mobility, through curriculum and teaching material development to the purchase of essential equipment. By the time that the World Bank approved its first major \$50 million loan in the higher educational sector, to Romania in September 1996, it was clear that some of these initial priorities had changed. Apart from responding to emergency situations, there was now a clear need to help Ministries of Education to restructure their activities to respond to the demands of the more decentralised educational structures that had emerged as a result of legislative reform and to ensure that the decentralised structures themselves were able to carry out the financial, planning and management tasks with which they had been entrusted.

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4.3.1 THE EUROPEAN UNION'S PHARE/TEMPUS PROGRAMME

The PHARE programme is the main channel for the European Union's financial, economic and technical and social assistance to the countries of Central and Eastern Europe. Originally allocated Euro 4.2 billion for the 1990-1994 period, the PHARE budget was increased to Euro 6.7 billion for the 1995-1999 period. During the accession period, this means that the PHARE programme as a whole will have about 1,500 million ECU a year to spend on reinforcing administrative and judicial capacities in all sectors and on investments linked to the adoption of the 'acquis' in areas not covered by agricultural instruments or structural [environment and transport] instruments.

PHARE/TEMPUS is the part of this overall programme devoted to higher education and training. Between 1990, when the programme started, and 1995, when the number of eligible countries had climbed from an original three to eleven (the ten candidate countries plus Albania), the annual budget rose 400 percent, eventually totalling 519.1 million ECU for the period as a whole. With this money, some 11,000 projects were completed; equipment worth 168 million ECU was purchased and installed at higher educational institutions; 60,868 staff and 27,294 students were given mobility grants to visit educational institutions in the European Union; at least 1,500 curricula and ten times as many courses were created or updated; about 500 institutions were founded or restructured, roughly 2,000 new books

were published and 3,000 sets of lecture notes written. It is obviously important for the European Union, as it embarks on final accession talks with the candidate countries, that it should ensure that they are able to properly participate in its educational programmes and this will require a continued stress upon institution building and management policy skills.

4.3.2 WORLD BANK LOANS

It was not until 1996 that the World Bank agreed to implement its first higher educational project in Central and Eastern Europe. At that time, it had a lending portfolio of 1.4 billion US dollars in the transition countries of Europe and Central Asia (ECA) as a whole. This included twenty two lending operations, of which nine (\$574 million) had been approved by the Board of Executive Directors and were being implemented and thirteen (\$825 million) at various stages of development prior to Board approval. Of the nine under implementation, two (in Romania and Hungary) focused on higher education, two on employment and training; two on emergency reconstruction, and three on primary and secondary education.

In Romania, the World Bank's \$50 million loan for higher education reform is being used to help the Romanian government develop and run better procedures for financing and managing higher education and research; to ensure that the newly formed higher education councils and individual institutions are able to function properly in the new decentralised system; to support the expansion of undergraduate and continuing education programmes in areas of high student and labour market demand, by developing new postgraduate programmes and research training in high demand fields; and to provide better access to higher education for talented but needy students.

In Hungary, a \$150 million loan, forming "the initial phase (two to three years) of a long-term (six to ten year) programme" for a comprehensive reform of higher education, has been divided into a number of sub-projects in such areas as encouraging the development of private higher educational institutions, upgrading information technology networks; and developing a viable system of tuition fees combined with a student loan programme. Its major aim is to strengthen the entire administrative infrastructure in higher education and to encourage existing over-specialised higher educational institutions to amalgamate into larger multi-faculty colleges and universities and thus save costs.

4.4 LAWS ON HIGHER EDUCATION

All the Central and Eastern European countries have by now passed Laws guaranteeing academic freedom, granting autonomy to their universities and defining the role that the government will play within the system. Even Moldova is now

considering such a step. In Poland, where all of the country's post-communist governments have stressed the importance of education and training for the country's general strategy of integrating into western structures, a comprehensive higher education law was among the first enacted by the newly elected Polish Parliament in September 1990. Since then, the universities have been seen as independent, self-governing units, dependent on the state only where money is concerned and cooperating with the Ministry of National Education, through the General Council of Higher Education, the elected representative body of all higher schools, with wide constitutional and advisory rights. Although other countries have not adopted quite such a hands-off approach as the Poles, throughout the region national Rectors' Conferences and College Directors' Conferences have emerged, alongside subject orientated associations as the 'third sector' counterpart for Ministries of Education in discussions of future educational policy. In most countries too, the Ministry of Education has set up autonomous Evaluation and Accreditation Committees and Institutes for Educational Policy and Research.

Several countries, having rapidly freed the university system from state control, have passed follow up laws to both fine-tune the new system, to bring it more into line with developing EU norms, and to officially recognise developments that have run ahead of official legislation. Thus, in Bulgaria, where academic autonomy had been granted in 1990, a more comprehensive law was passed in December 1995, which recognised and drew up regulations for non-state/private colleges and universities, many of which had already been set up even without official sanction. By the end of the 1990's a country such as Latvia had passed a network of laws covering all aspects of primary and secondary, vocational and tertiary education, providing a firm legislative framework for the total overhaul of communist-era structures.

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4.4.1 COUNCIL OF EUROPE LEGISLATIVE REFORM PROGRAMME

The Council of Europe has again been active as a source of expert advice and assistance during the drafting of these new laws through its Legislative Reform Programme (LRP), established in 1992, by the Higher Education and Research Committee (CC-HER). Specially directed at the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, the LRP has arranged advisory missions, multi-country workshops and meetings on a number of pressing issues of higher education reform. As with all the activities of the Council though, the sums involved are not particularly large. In 1994, for instance, the total LRP annual budget was only two and a half million French francs and it was only slightly higher the following year. Nevertheless, the LRP has advised Albania, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Hungary, Slovakia and Moldova on the drafting of their Higher Education Laws and has worked with Albania, the three Baltic states and Poland on the development of systems for quality assurance in higher education.

4.4.2 ACADEMIC FREEDOM AND AUTONOMY

Only in Slovakia and Albania have concerns been expressed about the government's commitment to academic freedom and autonomy. In Slovakia, where higher education is still controlled under a 1996 amendment to the 1990 Czechoslovak Law on Higher Education, critics claim that the government has too much discretionary power over the administration and funding of universities. What is clear is that it certainly made use of every bit of leverage that it had over the higher educational sector in the late Meciar years. Most academics were convinced that during 1996 and 1997, the Slovak government purposely favoured some institutions and punished others which were felt to oppose the regime. The new government is currently reviewing the need for further reform. In Albania, where the 1994 Law on Higher Education provided for a large degree of institutional autonomy and academic freedom, the Socialist/reformed communist government, which emerged from the unrest of the summer of 1996, fired all university rectors and a number of professors and department heads, claiming that they were unqualified, incompetent appointees of the previous government. Those sacked claimed that their dismissals were nothing more than a settling of old political scores. With these two exceptions, however, the US State Department's Human Rights Reports, have found no reason to question the existence of academic freedom in the region.

4.4.3 THE ROMANIAN EDUCATION LAWS

In Romania, the July 1995 Education Law broadly speaking brought the whole Romanian educational system into line with common EU standards. However, although there have been no reports of breaches of academic freedom, there was, from the first, a clear tension within the law between the competing demands of a civic and an ethnic definition of nationality. On the one hand, the 1995 law recognised the right of persons belonging to national minorities to be taught in their mother-tongue and encouraged the proportional representation of national minority teachers on school management boards. On the other hand, it qualified these rights, specifying for instance that specialised training, including that for public administration, should only be conducted in Romanian and making it difficult for school leavers to take higher education entrance examinations in a language other than Romanian. In 1997, the emergency decree on education, already mentioned in the section of school history textbooks, removed these and other restrictions, but only at the cost of stirring up an anti-Hungarian backlash in Parliament which has not as yet ratified the changes.

4.5 UNIVERSITY STRUCTURE

Today, the educational structure is diverse across the region. So diverse, in fact, that the Latvian Ministry of Education has prepared a paper dividing its thirty one higher educational institutions into three very unofficial groups. In the first place come the traditional well-established institutions (Universities, Academies, Higher Educational Institutions, Higher Schools and Institutes). In a second group are a collection of recently established state-founded and state-financed institutions, which, although perhaps not yet having a proper statute or official accreditation, are still “unofficially recognised” by the State. In a third group are private institutions that have a license to begin higher educational activities, under the terms of the 1991 Education Act. Most of these were only granted licences in 1993 and in most cases their diplomas are still not accredited and the State cannot assume responsibility for the quality of their education. Outside this, there are a smaller, but unspecified, number of private institutions, that have no license but which continue to operate outside the legislative framework.

The Czech Republic has twenty three ‘state/public’ civilian universities and no recognised private higher educational institutions at all, whilst Poland has ninety nine public/state higher educational institutions (thirty six of which have university status) and 140 non-state higher educational institutions. Estonia has six state/public and six private universities alongside nine state/public higher educational institutes and twelve private higher educational institutions. Romania has sixty three higher educational institutions made up of state universities, a few private universities and a group of new university colleges designed to provide shorter and more practically orientated higher education.

This bare listing is inadequate for capturing the pace and extent of change. In the Czech Republic, for instance, the number of university faculties almost doubled from 69 to 112 between 1989 and 1998. Simultaneously, a process of regionalisation was underway. Although over sixty percent of all students still attend institutions in Prague and Brno, the country’s traditional centres of higher education, a number of new regional universities (e.g. the University of West Bohemia in Plzen, the University of South Bohemia in Ceske Budejovice, and J.E.Purkeyne University in Usti nad Labem) have been set up since 1989 often on the basis of existing higher educational colleges and faculties (usually, but not always, pedagogical ones).

In 1997 the Slovak government established four new universities. The first of these was the University of Presov, formed by splitting the four faculties of the P.J.Safarik University in Eastern Slovakia, which were in the area’s second largest city Presov, from the rest of the university in the largest city Kosice. Later in the year, two new universities and a fine arts academy were set up, at a cost of \$ 8.7 million, in the existing university cities of Trnava, Trencin, and Banka Bystrica respectively. As in Presov, this was not a popular move, especially as the budgets of

the existing universities were cut at the same time. It was suggested that the government was launching a covert campaign to close down universities that it considered 'disloyal' by setting up better funded rivals. Indeed, whilst the existing university in Trnava got funding of \$1.35 million per year, the new "Christian" university in Trnava received \$1.8 million.

4.5.1 A HUNGARIAN-LANGUAGE UNIVERSITY IN ROMANIA?

In Romania, a long standing problem connected with the status of the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj has still to be finally settled. Originally a Hungarian-language university, during the last thirty years before the fall of communism in late 1989 it became an increasingly Romanian dominated institution. Since 1990, there have been continuing discussions about whether to split the university into two academically and administratively separate units, one Hungarian and one Romanian; whether to develop it as a united multicultural university with Romanian, Hungarian and German sections; or whether to establish a new and purely Hungarian-language university somewhere else in Transylvania. The final decision, like so much else that touches on the historic division between ethnic Hungarians and Romanians, has been avoided for fear that any decision will be unacceptable to large sectors of parliament. In November 1999, the Hungarian Foreign Ministry State Secretary and the chairman of the Hungarian Democratic Federation of Romania (UDMR), a member party in Romania's ruling coalition, announced that an \$8 million Hungarian state subsidy for the education of ethnic Hungarians in Romania would be used to set up a private Hungarian university in Transylvania. This, though, will not be the end of the story, because the UDMR has not dropped its demand that a Hungarian-language state university should still be financed from the Romanian budget.

4.5.2 UNIVERSITY REGIONALISATION

Notwithstanding the negative aspects of Slovak university expansion and the specific problems of opening a Hungarian-language university in Romania, the need for such a process of university decentralisation /regionalisation is apparent throughout Central and Eastern Europe. In Moldova, twenty two of the country's twenty four universities are situated in the capital city and in Latvia thirteen of eighteen state institutions of higher education are in Riga. In all countries a decentralisation of the political and administrative systems is seen as an integral part of post-communist democratisation and an important part of this process will be the creation of autonomous local universities as centres for regional development. At present, statistics from as far afield as Lithuania, Slovenia and Moldova, show that the more rural a region, the lower its student-participation rate in higher education is. In Poland, the percentage of students enrolled in universities coming from small towns and villages recently dropped to an unprecedented two percent.

An attempt was made to address this problem in Bulgaria in the 1980's when a network of subsidiaries of established universities was set up in provincial towns and cities. Eighteen different cities or towns throughout the country now boast higher educational institutions or their subsidiaries. However, whilst this de-centralisation has given greater access to higher education to young people living outside traditional university centres, this has been at the expense of standards. In some cases, in order to stimulate enrolment, lower admission policies have been applied and it has not proven easy to attract well-qualified lecturers. The situation can be so grave that lecturers from the 'mother' universities [in such cities as Sofia, Plovdiv and Varna] are forced to make trips to their regional subsidiaries to teach the courses. Even a big state university like Veliko Turnovo University relies on many professors from Sofia University.

4.6 RESEARCH AND THE HIGHER EDUCATIONAL SECTOR

4.6.1 UNIVERSITIES AND ACADEMIES OF SCIENCE

As part of the 'sovietisation' of the higher educational sector in the early 1950's, universities in Central and Eastern Europe became predominantly teaching institutions, with research being concentrated in autonomous institutes operating under the Academy of Sciences. Both the academies and the institutes connected to them operated under Communist Party control. In Albania, where much of the old system still survives despite the closure or privatisation of around a dozen research institutions, the Research Centre of the Academy of Science still controls twelve institutions with almost 700 employees. This is in addition to an array of research institutions under different government ministries, some of which are now self-financing. Here, as elsewhere, it has become clear that much of the applied research being done has little relevance to the new economic and political realities, that the proliferation of single area institutes has held back cutting-edge interdisciplinary research and that the maintenance of these separate structures is often administratively, financially and academically indefensible.

Throughout the region, the old monopoly control of research programmes undertaken at scientific institutes and to a lesser extent at higher educational institutions, which the Party exercised through the Academy of Sciences, has been broken. In its place a variety of forms of cooperation between universities and research institutions has developed, ranging from integration and association to the setting up of joint faculties, research groups, and research projects, etcetera. In Lithuania, the aim is to reintegrate as many of the twenty nine, mainly pure or applied science orientated, research institutes back into the universities as possible. In other countries, though, especially in humanities/arts fields, such as politics and sociology, where the higher educational sector has found it hard to keep up with growing student demand, Academy institutes have used their existing pre-eminence in post-graduate research to set up their own educational programmes.

4.6.2 NEW FORMS OF COOPERATION

In Warsaw, the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Polish Academy of Sciences, by setting up the Graduate School of Social Research (GSSR)⁵ in 1992, has created what has become one of the foremost post-graduate social science institutes in Central and Eastern Europe, attracting an international student body to its four year Ph.D. programmes taught in both Polish and English. In 1997, in a variation on this strategy, a group of researchers from the Academy's Institute of Political Studies established the 'Collegium Civitas', as an independent College accredited by the Ministry of Education, offering post-graduate degree programmes in sociology and international relations, and political science to what it hopes will be society's future elite. In Budapest, in a similar move, the Research Institute for Linguistics of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences offers an international Theoretical Linguistics Programme at the graduate level taught in English for the study of linguistics in the region.

In Prague, the Institute of Sociology at the Academy of Sciences has been involved in a project revolving around the establishment of a social science data archive, constructed within the framework of the Council for European Social Science Data Archives (CESSDA) and the International Federation of Data Organisations (IFDO). The Institute itself was responsible for setting up the data archive and for analysing trends in the areas of 'social injustice', 'social policy', and 'political attitudes'; whilst the Faculty of Social Studies at the Masaryk University of Brno was responsible for analysing demographic developments, selected social problems and the transformation of political institutions; the Faculty of National Economy at the University of Economics in Prague was responsible for analysing development in the national economy, the labour market and employment; and the Centre of Educational Policy at the Pedagogical Faculty of Charles University, was responsible for analysing developments within the educational system.

The way in which the field of sociology has opened out since the fall of communism can be clearly seen in Bulgaria. Here, there are now a plethora of private and public institutes and bureaus involved in public opinion surveys, once considered almost a state secret and the preserve of the now more than thirty year old Institute of Sociology of the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences.⁶ The work of its 100 staff members must now compete for attention and financing with that being done by more commercially orientated organisations such as Vitosha Research, a commercial unit of the Centre for the Study of Democracy, responsible for surveys of popular attitudes to corruption, mentioned in the last chapter, market surveys for foreign companies and public opinion polls. A third part of this triangle is the work of such institutions as the Centre for Social Practices at the New Bulgarian University, itself only founded in the early 1990's, which conducts its own sociological surveys on such subjects as the way in which citizens interact with state institutions (1996) and the prevalence of informal avenues within this relationship.

4.6.3 UNIVERSITY ENLARGEMENT

In a parallel process, the overspecialisation of the soviet era is also being reversed as separate teaching institutions are absorbed into one university. One side effect of this process should be that the stark separation of 'the arts and humanities' from 'science and technical subjects' that occurred during the Soviet era is also being reduced. In Estonia, Tallinn and Tartu Universities have become the magnets for an enlarged university structure that will hopefully be more financially and organisationally coherent than the previous mosaic of institutions was. In 1993 the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, Poland, was able to celebrate the beginning of its 630th academic year, as a 'whole' university once again, after it reabsorbed the Collegium Medicum (School of Medicine), which had been made independent in 1950. Such mergers are, understandably, not always popular, at least with one of the parties concerned. Thus the plans for Gdansk University to absorb the Academy of Medicine in Lublin was rejected in the mid 1990's. In Bulgaria, the Ministry of Education has made it clear that it intends to use its new powers to accredit institutions as well as programmes to force through such mergers and to close entire institutions or programmes.

4.6.4 THE HUNGARIAN 'UNIVERSITAS'

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The most far reaching attempt to reconstruct the higher educational landscape in this way and create more cost effective managerial and organisational structures is taking place in Hungary. First mooted in the 1993 Law on Higher Education, the process has been given a new impetus in the aftermath of the granting of a World Bank loan for higher educational reform in 1998. The strategy being followed has two aspects. The first will encourage higher educational institutions of the same type in the same region or city to pool resources and facilities to create multidisciplinary universities, with a wider range of faculties and disciplines and a greater diversity of courses. The second aspect will encourage institutions of higher education with different training profiles to form alliances. The intention is that eventually the state higher educational sector will consist of no more than ten to twelve large integrated universities and some smaller regional integrated college centres.

The greatest progress in creating a 'universitas' has been made in Szeged, where plans to combine the university, teachers training college, medical school, conservatory and an agricultural and food industry college into one institution are well advanced. The combined institution intends to offer an array of new continuing professional educational courses and second degree re-training courses for teachers and to compete commercially with other local private providers of education and training. If the experiment succeeds, the Szeged Universitas will become an example of one of the key aims of Hungarian education policy. On the one hand it can play a role in enhancing higher education's overall contribution to

regional development and, on the other, by generating more income from its own activities it can prepare itself for the time when it can be freed from government tutelage and allowed to function as an autonomous public foundation.

4.6.5 PRIVATE RESEARCH AND UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

This process of reintegration and revival in tertiary educational teaching and research is, of course, contradicted in Central and Eastern Europe, as it is elsewhere in the world, by two countervailing parallel processes. On the one hand, there is the growth of privately funded cutting edge research being done outside the universities. On the other, is the combined effect of the massive growth in student numbers and the stagnation in lecturer numbers, which pushes universities away from research towards a concentration on teaching. If the universities do not manage to develop their own independent research capacities, this will be to the detriment of both their own renewal and their role in a democratic society, for, in an increasingly competitive global economy, knowledge is a critical resource.

At the same time, efforts are also underway to encourage university staff to spend more time on applied and interdisciplinary research of a kind that would be more reactive to the demands of the market system and more compatible with the requirements of democracy. The main problems, here, are that there are hardly any funds available to encourage and support research projects, that university lecturers are already hard pressed in meeting their teaching requirements and that salaries are too low to attract suitable staff with proven research abilities.

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The situation with economics research in the Baltic States provides a good example of the problems involved. A general lack of resources (especially professional journals) is exacerbated by a lack of research skills among Baltic economics lecturers to produce what some fear will be a major bottleneck slowing down the higher educational reform process in this subject area. The extent of the problem was made clear when the Baltic Journal of Economics was launched. Many of the articles submitted by Baltic university staff were rejected because their quality was not felt to be up to international standards.

4.7 UNIVERSITY DEGREES

Since 1990, there has been a region-wide move towards establishing a 'short cycle' degree system, which has put the region far ahead of the European norm. Thus, instead of the first degree being awarded after five years of study at Master's level, the trend now is to break this down into a three to four year Bachelor degree, and a one to two year Master degree, followed by a two to three year Ph.D. The intention is to produce less specialised graduates who can get a job after their bachelors and hopefully prove more adaptable to changing labour market conditions than their

'long cycle' predecessors. In a few Central and Eastern European countries, a higher doctoral 'habilitation' degree has been retained as a final stepping stone towards a full university professorship. Such steps have actually put the applicant countries ahead of the Western Europeans. Here, although this will change over the next ten years in line with the Bologna Declaration, the average time that it takes a student to get their first degree still averages five years, varying from 3.5 years in the United Kingdom to 6.3 years in Denmark.

In the Czech Republic and Slovakia, although the three tier educational system does exist, the three year Bachelor's level [Bakalář – Bc] programme has still not been fully accepted either by the academic community or by the public as a proper stopping point for academic studies. Most, if not all, graduate entry careers require a Masters level qualification.⁷ For their part, Slovenia and Hungary have bucked the trend towards adopting EU preferred norms and their universities still retain a 'long-cycle' first degree structure leading to what is defined as the equivalent of a Master's degree. However, as in the Czech Republic and Slovakia, some universities have established 'Anglo-Saxon' style, stand-alone, Master of Arts [MA] programmes, which are considered to be at a higher level still.

Despite the very real progress that has been made in introducing the new degree structures, the process has not been trouble free. In a country like Bulgaria, where there has been a concerted attempt to adapt to the preferred EU two-tier degree structure, the distinction between the Bachelor and Masters levels is still far from clear. It was only in the academic year 1998-99 that distinct master's level programmes were organised in all applicable subjects. In some faculties this could only be done by repackaging the old degree curricula and making the courses offered as options at the Bachelor level compulsory courses at the masters level, so that in reality the separation between the stages of university study are not as clear as they might appear on paper. This undercuts the whole idea of developing a succession of clearly defined degrees, with their own curricula, based not upon the number of courses studied but upon the increasing academic challenge of the programmes themselves. It is, though, hard to know how this problem will be resolved until funding begins to match such adventurous policy initiatives.

At the same time Ph.D studies are also in crisis, with very few students seeing any purpose in continuing to the postgraduate stage and with very little funding available for those who do. In many areas in the social sciences, there is already a considerable deficit in research expertise and its continuation will eventually have repercussions as societies will make choices on the basis of an inadequate understanding of the underlying processes at work. At the same time, there is very little co-operation between universities and the outside world and little sense that, even in the social sciences, research agendas should relate to societal as well as purely academic needs and priorities. In the new entrepreneurial age social partnerships will have to be developed that encourage the transfer of knowledge and innovative

ideas back and forth between higher education research institutions and society at large.

4.8 NUMBERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

President Clinton recently said that two years of tertiary education of some sort should become as common for Americans as the completion of secondary school already is, and the rest of the world cannot afford to be far behind. In the information age decisions need to be made not at the top, but at the lowest suitable level. As the value attached to a tertiary level qualification by employers continues to rise, so non-traditional groups will also become involved in this expansion, demanding the chance to upgrade their qualifications through degree and non-degree programmes.

In 1989, the higher educational sector throughout Central and Eastern Europe was elitist, with small, highly specialised institutions, granting degrees according to their own national systems, with little relation to OECD or even Western European norms and averages. Because of its soviet orientation, higher education missed out on the process of expansion, which has resulted, for example, in more than a third of school leavers now going on to tertiary level education in the United Kingdom, in a process that, between 1980 and 1995, saw the number of men on degree courses doubled and the number of women quadrupled. This is reflected in the fact that in Slovenia in 1996 only twelve percent of people in the 25 to 64 age group had a higher education qualification compared to a 1995 OECD average of twenty one percent.

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Even though the actual number of 17-24 year olds is set to fall in some Central and Eastern European countries, such as Hungary and the Czech Republic, by the end of the 1990s, the demand for tertiary level education will continue to increase. The upward curve is driven by the demands of an upwardly mobile (or at least upwardly aspiring) population and by the needs of an increasingly competitive and technologically sophisticated economy.

The rewards of a university education certainly seem to offer a good return upon the years of study. In 1995, when Czech unemployment rates stood at 2.9 percent only 0.5 percent of this total had completed higher education. In 1993 in the Czech private sector those with a higher education earned fifty percent more than those who had only attended basic school and in the foreign owned private sector the differential was over seventy five percent. In Hungary today, where current unemployment rates stand at the much higher figure of twelve percent, the same pattern is still observable. The rate of unemployment amongst unskilled workers is seventeen percent, amongst workers with a secondary education twelve percent, and for those with higher education only two percent.

It is already clear that because the region's universities do not have the capacity to admit all qualified applicants, many of those rejected in one year will reapply in subsequent years. Furthermore, as young people increasingly recognise the career and monetary value of higher education, so the number of older applicants is also rising. Thus in the 1993-94 academic year in Estonia more than one-fifth of full-time students were aged 25 or older.

4.8.1 ADMISSION REQUIREMENTS

In theory at least all holders of secondary education diplomas are eligible for admission to institutions of higher education, but in many cases access is regulated by examinations, quotas and other hurdles. Sometimes qualifications for admission may vary between different institutions in one country and even between different faculties of the same institution. In Bulgaria and Romania, the Ministry of Education still sets quotas for individual subjects at each university, whilst in Slovakia each institution makes its own decisions concerning the number of students they admit. In Hungary critics complain that too many institutions put too much emphasis on theoretical knowledge, whilst some of the answers to the more esoteric questions posed in Prague's Charles University general knowledge test have passed into national folklore. In Latvia and Estonia, knowledge of the Latvian and Estonian language is assessed when the language of instruction in secondary education was not Latvian.

4.8.2 RISING ENROLMENTS

In 1991, in the Czech Republic, the number of students per 100,000 inhabitants was approximately 1,100, compared with similar figures for Poland of 1,427; for the UK of 2,170; for France of 2,996; for Spain of 3,007 and for the EU as a whole an average of 2,400. Today there are over 170,000 students studying at higher educational institutions and roughly twenty five percent of all eighteen year olds enter the first year of higher education. The total number of students has increased forty six percent since 1989. At the same time, Czech institutions of higher education are still unable to accept about fifty percent of those whose qualifications would theoretically entitle them to higher education. Even though Romania has considerably expanded student numbers, by 1995/96, it had only exceeded the Czech figure for 1991 thanks to the contribution of the new private educational sector.⁸

Over the last decade, Hungary's aggregate full-time student population has doubled from 64,000 to more than 140,000. This figure, though, still only represents sixteen percent of the 18-to-22 age group and, as in the Czech Republic, as many eligible students are rejected as accepted. With the help of a World Bank Loan, the government hopes to increase the proportion of regular students

(including those participating in post-secondary training at institutions of higher education) to one-third of the relevant age group by the turn of the century and thereafter exceed it.

In Bulgaria, the number of university students increased by 90,076 between 1990 and 1995, reaching 223,260 during the 1995/96 academic year. In Slovakia, the share of young people enrolled at higher education institutions increased gradually from around fifteen percent in the eighties to 21.8 percent in 1995, whilst in Lithuania, twenty five percent of 20-24 year-olds were following professional or tertiary level courses in 1996/97. In Latvia, total student enrolment in state institutions in the academic year 1997/98 was 57,423 (up from 33,665 in 1994) accounting for thirty three percent of those in the 19-23 age group or 2.2 percent of the total population of Latvia and the figures were set to rise further with 18,900 students having completed their first year of studies at the eighteen state institutions of higher education (compared with 6,996 students there in 1993). At the same time a further 6,781 students (10.5 percent of the overall total) were studying in the fifteen private/non-state institutions of higher education. Despite the considerable increase the figures were still lower than those in the Nordic states where percentage of the population studying was between 2.4 percent and 3.9 percent.

4.8.3 EFFECTS OF RISING ENROLMENTS

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One, perhaps unexpected, side effect of the growing demand for higher education amongst school leavers, has been a precipitous decline in the number of school children attending vocational or technical secondary schools. The trend is clear throughout the region, with the situation in Bulgaria being fairly typical. Here, the move of children from technical to non-technical secondary schools is explained by the fact that the non-technical schools more thoroughly cover general educational subjects, questions on which form an important part of most university level institutions' entrance examinations.

As numbers have risen, so have drop-out rates and this has sometimes caused major concern amongst academics and educational bureaucrats. However, there is also a recognition that this is an integral, though perhaps unfortunate, part of the region's escape from the rigidities of central planning towards personal responsibility and choice. As President Havel observed in his 'Dream for Czechoslovakia' in 1992:

"The universities will not select students; everyone will have access to education. But all students must, at the same time, reckon with the fact that they may not pass muster, and even if they do, and finish their studies, their lives after that will be chiefly in their own hands"⁹

The greater freedom of access to higher education is also having a marked affect

on gender inequalities. In Estonia, for example, 50.4 percent of young women have completed some form of higher education (18.9 percent with university education), compared with a figure for men of 33.5 percent (12.4 percent with university education). In Slovenia, whilst higher education participation rates amongst the 19 to 23 year olds had reached twenty five percent in 1996, this represented thirty one percent of women and twenty percent of men. However, in both countries the income levels of women with higher education is lower than for their male counterparts

4.9 DISTRIBUTION BETWEEN SUBJECTS

As the numbers in higher education have increased, so the distribution between subjects has changed. New popular subjects and specialisations have emerged such as trade and business administration, tourism and hotel management, information technology etcetera, and applications to old, but now completely reorganised subjects in the social sciences, such as political science, modern languages, and economics, have risen sharply. Although some national governments still set intake quotas for some subjects, the market has increasingly begun to dictate the shape of university faculties. The problem is, however, that there are often just not enough trained university lecturers to staff the expanding departments, whilst, at the same time, there is a surplus in those areas that are becoming less attractive.

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Throughout much of Central and Eastern Europe, 'Science' has lost its prestige status. In Poland, science faculties are finding it hard to maintain their enrolment and a drift away from 'hard' subjects such as science and engineering is becoming evident across the region. Skoda Volkswagen in the Czech Republic, for example, says that the biggest limiting factor on expansion is now a shortage of qualified recruits. It already employs 1,000, mainly Polish, foreign workers because it cannot find enough Czechs. Whilst this problem is not so bad in areas where wages are high, it is becoming critical in the medium sized company sector and is most acute in the unglamorous world of run-of-the-mill business services.¹⁰

Overall, a new balance needs to be created between science and the arts, and even within these two general categories between practical, applied subjects and more theoretical subjects. For example, there is probably a general need to reduce the number of departments devoted to agriculture, but even those that remain must put more stress on such areas as the European Union, environmental protection and regional development, in so far as they have an impact on agricultural practices and policies.

Although the pattern is slightly different from country to country, especially with regard to medical studies, the situation in Albania is fairly representative. Here the most sought after faculties of economics, law, medicine and social science have not

been able to keep up with demand. Interest in the applied sciences, has declined sharply. For every position available in 1994/95, twelve prospective students applied to study law, seven to study history and languages, and six to study medicine and social science. Regional universities reported an average of nearly three students applying for every available place.

It is worth bearing in mind though that some of the increased interest in the social sciences and humanities might be a temporary reaction to the distortions of communism. In the United States between 1966 and 1993 the number of Ph.D.'s awarded in the humanities (literally literature, language, philosophy, music and art) fell as a percentage of all Ph.D.'s from 13.8 percent to 9.1 percent. For BA's in the same period the figure dropped from 20.7 percent to 12.7 percent. What seems to have happened is that with the opening up of higher education to students whose economic and social circumstances would previously have made it impossible for them to graduate, interest in vocational fields such as business, economics, engineering and most recently computer programming grew. At the same time the average age of students has risen and older students tend to pursue subjects that have practical value in finding a job.

A way, therefore, must be found both to provide more higher educational places and to make the higher educational system more responsive and flexible in dealing with changing demands. At the same time, these changes must be made in a way that does not require a substantial increase in national expenditure on higher education. For this to happen the existing system needs to be reassessed and new types of institutional structures developed. Mass higher education should not be reduced purely to pushing more and more students through existing university structures. Such a policy is bound to fail. What is needed is to develop a differentiated higher educational system, combining elite and accessible types of education with private and state initiatives and low cost and high cost solutions.¹¹

In the Ministries of Education in Central and Eastern Europe, as for much of the rest of the world, there is hesitation about relaxing state control over higher education and seeing part of it commercialised. There is also a lack of agreement about exactly what types of institutions need to be developed by either the state or the private sector. Some experts within the region's national Ministries of Education are still convinced that they should cut university level entry by pushing more students into vocational high schools. And even amongst those who are convinced of the need to expand the tertiary sector, there is a palpable mistrust of new international trends, even on the part of otherwise committed administrators. At one of the region's Ministries of Education, the author was told that the major problem in higher education was the expansion in demand for 'unproductive' courses in such areas as management studies, and that government policy should be directed towards training students for specific 'productive' jobs. This hesitation is made worse in a situation where shrinking real budgets are the norm. It is not surprising that any talk of expanding or creating a non-university higher educational sector,

should create mass opposition from existing institutions, who fear that any change will only soak up a proportion of the already scarce state educational resources.

4.10 HIGHER VOCATIONAL EDUCATION

Most Western European experts, in contrast, generally agree that the higher educational sector will have to diversify and create a variety of innovative institutional structures if it is to meet the 'lifelong learning' challenge of the twenty-first century. Amongst European Union countries this process has been underway for almost thirty years now in the wake of Germany's decision to introduce a distinct group of 'Fachhochschulen', with their own goals and mission, alongside the universities in the early 1970's. This lead has been followed by Austria, Belgium, Finland and the Netherlands as non-university tertiary-level colleges have become increasingly important parts of national educational systems. Indeed in the Netherlands there are now more students enrolled in 'Hogescholen' than in the traditional universities.

In Central and Eastern Europe, the idea of training students for specific jobs or careers in tertiary level institutions is nothing new in pharmacy, the performing arts, social work, teaching, dentistry, and veterinarian science, etcetera, and special institutions for this purpose exist throughout the region. The problem has been in finding a consensus about how best to establish a more flexible system of higher level vocational education in other areas, which would be responsive to the rapid economic and societal changes that the area is going through. Before 1989, most of this professional training stood outside the tertiary sector and, in almost all cases was over-specialised and over-g geared to heavy industry, with little or no attention being paid to service industries and the information economy. The situation seems to have changed little at the lower levels, with the World Bank reporting in 1997 that two-thirds of students in vocational secondary schools in Poland were still learning skills that were too narrow to be transferred from one industry to another.¹²

At the tertiary level a start has been made, but has often, as in Hungary, been held back by long standing controversies, dating back to before the fall of communism, about the respective standing of vocational/professional colleges and polytechnics and universities and the subsequent possibilities for transferring between them. In Hungary today, practice-orientated three to four year higher educational Colleges (Foiskola) have been established alongside the universities. However, their graduates receive what is considered to be the equivalent of an international Bachelor's degree, whilst, as we have seen above, the first degree for a university graduate is considered to be the equivalent of an international Master's degree. Due perhaps to the survival of common 'productionist' attitudes, forged during the communist era, most of the countries in the region still lay considerable stress upon the dif-

ferences between academic and theory orientated university training and practical career orientated non-university tertiary-level training.

The country that has, thus far, had the most trouble in diversifying its educational system is the Czech Republic. An attempt to create post-secondary, vocationally orientated, colleges here in the early 1990s, with studies lasting seven/eight semesters including one/two semesters of vocational experience, eventually foundered due to a lack of consistent Ministry of Education backing and suspicions about the quality of the courses on offer. The new institutions, which were upgraded secondary level vocational schools, were left in a limbo in a higher educational system still otherwise made up exclusively of universities or university level colleges. The Czech Republic's 1998 Law on Higher Education has again signalled a drive towards diversification in this sector, with the announcement of possibilities for creating state, or even private, tertiary level vocational colleges. It is, though, unclear how far the Ministry will actually go in promoting the new institutions, whether any existing vocational school could meet the rather stringent accreditation targets and whether there is enough local or international interest to finance a private college in this sector.

Whilst the Czech Republic hesitates, the differences between the university and the non-university higher education sectors in Western European countries have actually been becoming less. The non-university sector has increasingly made its existing curricula more academically orientated and strayed into theoretical fields. The universities, for their part, have become more involved in professionally oriented training, opening courses in areas such as business studies and public administration. In the United Kingdom, the result has been that the flagship sector of non-university tertiary-level education, the polytechnics, were given university status in 1991. Whilst most other EU countries have not felt the need to go as far as this, they have begun to tear down the fences that once separated professional/vocational colleges from universities. This has led to increasing contacts and co-operation between the two parallel sectors, including increasing possibilities for transferring in one direction or the other. In Italy, where a new non-university sector (integrated technical higher education) is being planned, bridges between it and the university sector are already being sketched in.

Although still hesitant, the beginnings of a similar process can also be identified in a few Central and Eastern European countries. In Slovenia, for example, the December 1993 Higher Education Act transformed the existing two year technical/vocational colleges into professional higher educational institutions (*Visoke Skole*) offering three to four year study programmes, leading to a higher (professional) diploma.¹³ Graduates of professional higher educational institutions can normally enter the third year of university studies, although they might, as in Denmark and Belgium, have to take a few additional courses to bridge any gaps in their knowledge. As in Latvia, two years later, the Slovenian university sector itself was also allowed to set up its own programmes leading to higher professional diplomas.

At the same time as it has upgraded professional/vocational education by creating the Foiskola sector, Hungary, by a 1996 Amendment to the Law on Higher Education, has also taken steps to revive the two-year post-school vocational diploma system that had been a major component of the communist era system, but which had floundered as higher educational possibilities began to multiply through the 1990's. The Amendment established the two-year 'higher accredited vocational/technical school diplomas' as a third tertiary-level qualification, alongside the college and university degrees mentioned above. Such programmes can be taught either at tertiary or vocational secondary level and thus form a connection between the two. Students who have earned a two-year vocational diploma become eligible for university entry and some of their credits may count towards their degree programme. Bulgaria and Romania have also established possibilities for students to complete two-year diploma qualifications at a university or other higher educational institution, but in these cases the status of their diploma credits within an emerging system of lifelong learning credit accumulation have not been so clearly worked out.

Hungary seems in this case to have followed the lead set by such European Union countries such as Denmark, Finland and Portugal in integrating shorter post-secondary school diplomas into its national degree structure. In contrast, the system that has so far been developed in Romania and Bulgaria has more in common with the British and French pattern of sub-degree training, which is still not properly integrated into an emerging pattern of lifelong learning.

4.11 PRIVATE UNIVERSITIES AND HIGHER EDUCATION COLLEGES

As we have seen, every country in Central and Eastern Europe has now passed Higher Education laws which allow for the emergence of private, fee paying universities and colleges of higher education. In Poland, the basis for the emergence of such a sector had already been laid by the September 1990 Higher Education Act, but this step was delayed in the Czech Republic until the autumn of 1998. By then, the Hungarian government's 1997 White Paper on Higher Education had already gone beyond just making a non-state tertiary education sector possible and now assigned it an important role in the national strategy to expand student enrolments and to react more quickly to changing demands for courses.¹⁴

In response, with the exception of the Czech Republic, there has been a quick growth of the private sector across the region. It is in this sector that some of the most innovative changes have been made in national educational systems since 1989. As we have seen above, shrinking budgets have meant that state financed institutions have found it exceptionally difficult to respond in an adequate way to the increasing demand for programmes in new areas, such as management, business, and computer science. It is here that the private sector has been able to make its mark. The fact that these sectors offer higher than average starting

salaries has encouraged students to enrol, despite lingering public attitudes of suspicion towards 'buying' education.

The most expensive private colleges, in contrast to the state educational system where fees, where they do exist, normally do not cover the full cost of tuition, make monthly charges that are well above the average monthly national salary, although there are often scholarship programmes available, designed to allow at least some poorer but gifted students to attend. In Hungary, under the 1996 Personal Income Tax Code, students or parents were allowed to deduct a sum equal to 30 percent of the amount state institutions charged as tuition from their taxable incomes, irrespective of whether that tuition was paid to private or state institutions.

Although some colleges are undoubtedly a 'last resort' for those who have failed to gain admittance to a state university, some colleges and private universities have carved out a considerable reputation for themselves in specific areas. Overall, the quality of the education seems reasonably high, and certainly comparable with the average teaching levels at state universities, and, in general, student-teacher ratios are higher than in the state system.

4.11.1 THE GROWTH OF THE PRIVATE SECTOR

In Poland, there are now 140 non-state/private institutions of higher education with over 250,000 students. Many of these are Business Schools, specialising in such areas as business administration, banking and management, which usually grant a professionally oriented bachelor-level degree. Private higher education has also developed surprisingly quickly in Romania since being legalised in 1990. There are now around 70 non-state/private institutions, most of which have claimed university-level status, accounting for a third of total higher education enrolment. In the Baltic States, the percentage of students (ten percent in Latvia) enrolled in non-state/private colleges is lower than in Romania and most of such colleges have a technical orientation. In Slovenia, in the 1997/98 school year, one of the country's six vocational colleges was private and it attracted seventeen percent of all registered students; three of the country's 40 higher education institutions were also private, but their share of registered students was less than one percent. Even in Moldova, a private sector is emerging with nine private, and two 'mixed' universities, with a total student enrolment of around 4,000 (compared with 54,000 in the public sector).

4.11.2 PHILANTHROPIC UNIVERSITY FOUNDATIONS

It is possible to divide the types of institutions that have emerged from this deregulation of higher education into a number of categories. The first group is made up of institutions like the Central European University (CEU) in Budapest and the

American University in Bulgaria (AUBG), which have been set up as philanthropical institutions, with the express purpose of aiding the process of academic renewal and democratisation in the region. Although both are clearly anchored to the region, admitting mainly Central and Eastern European students, they still remain something of an anomaly. Their programmes are taught in English and do not match the pattern of those offered at local universities. In the case of the CEU, although it enjoys extremely good relations with the Hungarian government, its courses are accredited by outside agencies, such as the British Open University and the Board of Regents of the State of New York, USA. Despite the good work that they do to help other state universities throughout the region, they operate almost in another world in terms of their financial structures and salary scales.

The Central European University (CEU), with its superb library and other facilities was founded in 1991 and is funded exclusively by the financier and philanthropist George Soros. The CEU operates as a western-style liberal arts graduate school, providing scholarships for students from across Central and Eastern Europe. During the 1997-1998 academic year, the CEU enrolled 630 students, an increase of more than 200 over the previous year. Most of these were following one of its eleven MA programmes in Medieval Studies, History, International Law (Comparative Constitutional Law, and International Business Law), Political Science, International Relations, Environmental Sciences and Policy, Economics, European Studies, South East European Studies, Gender and Culture, and Sociology (the latter based in Warsaw and offering two programmes 'Society and Politics' and 'Economy and Society'). Recently it has also begun to develop doctoral programmes in some of these areas and to establish interdisciplinary programmes in such areas as Nationalism Studies and Human Rights. The American University in Bulgaria was also established in 1991 as a joint Bulgarian-American initiative. It is a private, English-language, undergraduate institution offering four-year baccalaureate degrees in applied economics, business administration, computer science, English, history, journalism-mass communications, political science-international relations and South East European studies.

4.11.3 WORLD UNIVERSITIES

In a second category are a group of mainly USA based 'world universities' such as the City University in Slovakia, with its campuses in Bratislava, Trencin and Poprad, which offers an American style curriculum, taught by predominantly American lecturers to fee paying students outside the control of the local educational structures. Although such institutions sometimes raise fears amongst local educational experts of a branded and globalised American take-over of higher education, their main impact at present is to offer the new middle class an opportunity to offer their children a taste of American education at a reduced cost. If the City University represents the top end of this category, there are also a considerable number of much smaller colleges offering western accredited programmes of

varying quality outside the state system to much smaller numbers of students on a full-time, part-time or correspondence basis.

4.11.4 FOREIGN FINANCED UNIVERSITIES

A sub-section of this category of private fee-paying tertiary level institutions are a number of outside funded universities and higher educational colleges which are trying to operate as integral parts of the local educational system. Predominant amongst these is the Concordia International University in Estonia, which operates with US backing and foreign lecturers, but, although teaching in English, offers state recognised Master's level programmes in Business Studies and Bachelor's level programmes in Legal Studies and Media Studies. In Lithuania, the Vytautas Magnus University in Kaunas was re-established in 1989 as a private institution with foreign financial backing and a staff notable for the number of Lithuanian-American professors. Since then, although its development has not been trouble free, it has become a recognised player within the local educational system with a mix of local and foreign lecturers, an important Department of Sociology and Political Science and good international contacts with such institutions as Linköping University in Sweden and the University of Bergen in Norway, emphasising its own emphasis on European and Scandinavian studies.

4.11.5 INDIGENOUS PRIVATE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

A third group consists of institutions of higher education set up by indigenous organisations. In Hungary, for example, the church has set up five universities and around twenty colleges. Whilst most of these are theology colleges, about a third of the church-run institutions offer courses in other areas too. Alongside them are five colleges set up by private foundations. All told, 25,000 students are enrolled in these thirty-odd colleges and universities, equally divided between those run by the church and by secular foundations. Together the non-state sector thus accounts for about twelve percent of total student enrolment in tertiary education. One of the first independent universities to emerge in Estonia was the Institute of Humanities set up in Tallinn in 1988. Today, this Estonian language, fee-paying institution, offers a wide range of undergraduate and graduate level courses in its ten Departments covering History, English and British Studies, Estonian Language and Literature, Philosophy, Germanic Studies, Literary Theory and Semiotics, Oriental Studies, Romance Studies, Social Theory and Theatre. Studies are based on a course credit system, with compulsory language training in English, and French or German, and begin with two semesters of interdisciplinary studies, followed by a major in one specific area. This elitist institution is financed from its tuition fees and from government grants and private sponsorship. However, many other charitable and non-profit educational foundations, attempting to develop

educational possibilities for those less able to pay high fees, are struggling to survive.

The odd-man-out amidst this growth of national non-state educational sectors is the Czech Republic. Only one private higher educational institution exists but it occupies a grey area, licensed to give adult education courses, but granting degrees on the basis of preliminary accreditation from the European Council for Business Education. Running since 1991, the Prague based Anglo-American College, despite its name, was founded by Czechs and operates as a Czech non-profit, charitable foundation. It has over 300 students, most of them Czechs in three schools of study: law, humanities and business. It survives on a shoestring, financed almost solely from tuition fees. All of its courses are given in English. The college, which is organised along the lines of an American liberal arts college, has been lucky because, for the last ten years, Prague has been a magnet for young English speaking academics, willing to work for minimal wages. Its survival, thus far, underlines the thirst amongst young Czechs for educational possibilities that cannot be met by state institutions.

Whether it survives in the wake of the 1998 decision to sanction private higher educational institutions will depend upon its own ability to continue to juggle scarce resources to meet accreditation standards that would challenge a much better financed institution. Of equal importance will be the spirit in which officials set out to apply the new law. As is the case in many Central and Eastern European countries, the 1998 law leaves many areas to be filled in later by civil servants and it is the detail which often results in laws failing to quite achieve their purpose. In the Czech case, it is already clear that the educational bureaucracy is keener to promote higher vocational training than alternative forms of university education. This would suggest that the entry-level requirements for the first will be set rather lower than for the second. What seems unlikely is that a system will be adopted comparable to that in the Baltic States where private institutions are allowed to start programmes that are then evaluated for accreditation on the basis of actual practice. In Latvia, for example, most of the registered private higher educational institutions do not yet offer state accredited academic or professional qualifications.

4.11.6 THE PRIVATE SECTOR IN BULGARIA

Perhaps the most interesting counter-example to the Czech case is that of Bulgaria. Despite the fact that many in the educational establishment seem little more enthusiastic about them than their counterparts in Prague, the private university and college network has expanded rapidly since 1990 and 1991. One reason for this has been the far more unstable political landscape, which has allowed the private sector to take advantage of swings in government policy to such an extent that the private Varna Free University, granted university status by the Socialist Party (ex-

communist) government (1994 -1997), is said to be run, to a great extent, by ex-communist party activists.¹⁵ Private universities and colleges, despite being continually criticised for low standards and for accepting students who, although able to pay, would not have got into state institutions, have grown rapidly. A few of them now have around 5000 students each and entry requirements that are as stringent as any in the state sector.

Private universities do not receive any state support, but they are forced to meet state determined curriculum requirements. However, because they do not depend upon government funds they can also ignore the government fixed student intake quotas for specific subjects, which have so hamstrung attempts to expand popular subjects in the state sector. The best of them have also proved to be very creative, making agreements with foreign universities and programmes, and adding interesting electives to improve government set course requirements.

The New Bulgarian University, established in 1991, was a pioneer in introducing modern social sciences into the Bulgarian university system. Its undergraduate and graduate degree programmes in a wide range of fields, are organised on a credit-based system, with special emphasis being placed upon interdisciplinary courses that can be used to meet requirements in several different majors. It also works with the British Open University to provide an array of continuing education, career change and distance learning programmes. The Burgas Free University perhaps has the highest reputation. It offers programmes in Business, Economics, Law, and Linguistics. As the only humanities and social science orientated university in South East Bulgaria it has also made a significant contribution to the process of educational decentralisation, which has been a favoured government policy.

4.11.7 THE FUTURE OF PRIVATE HIGHER EDUCATION

Private universities and colleges clearly have a bright future throughout the region if they continue to improve their curricula and gain a stable position as an alternative to the state universities. Despite the suspicion still expressed about the non-state sector by the state university establishment, it is clear that the challenge of private education could help to revitalise the traditional university sector and make it more responsive to national and personal demands. The private sector has already demonstrated that it can be innovative in both the subjects that it teaches and the way in which it relates to its students. Furthermore, the private sector offers the best avenue for governments to increase national enrolment in higher education, without the state having to make more funds available.

This should be borne in mind by governments as they express concern, on the one hand, about the take-over of their non-state higher educational systems by outside (mainly American) educational entrepreneurial foundations, and, on the other

hand, about the ability of indigenous private educational foundations to maintain long-term sustainability on the basis of tuition funds alone, without substantial direct and/or indirect public subsidisation.¹⁶ Some private educational institutions do indeed collapse because they have misread the market situation. Others are occasionally riven by dissension and split into competing institutions. This happened both at the Prague based Anglo-American College in 1994 and at Lithuania's Vytautas Magnus University even more recently. Educational civil servants will have to come to terms with such events, seeing them as a natural process of selection, rather than a testimony to the futility of starting on the road to private education in the first place.

As educational institutions are increasingly transformed into autonomous organisations operating within civil society, the question of fund raising and national government encouragement of charitable donations by individuals and companies becomes ever more important. Although George Soros has proven that private philanthropy is still alive in higher education, it would be sensible to conclude that this pattern will not soon be repeated. What will happen, and is already happening, is that international university foundations, such as the City University, or affiliates of established, mainly American universities, will establish themselves where market conditions are advantageous and offer internationally accepted English language degree programmes, which have little bearing on national curriculum norms. In a few instances, foreign educational investors will also be prepared to sink funds into setting up modern private universities, which adhere to a greater or lesser extent to national curriculum rules. However, the majority of initiatives to set up non-state higher educational institutions which fit into the existing educational structures will come from under-financed, local educational foundations.

If these foundations are to flourish, the governments of the region must be prepared to grant them some leeway in meeting stringent accreditation conditions, but most importantly must encourage local businesses and individuals to sponsor these colleges to a greater extent than at present. The main stumbling bloc is that in almost all Central and Eastern European countries higher education sponsorship entitles the giver to only a limited tax deduction.

4.12 ELITISM AND MASS EDUCATION

Although the creation of a non-state higher educational sector is an important step in matching declining resources with increasing demand, a series of mainly private initiatives have also been launched to help to ensure that higher education, whilst being available to as many school leavers as possible, does not forsake its role as the breeding ground for the region's future intellectual elite.

4.12.1 THE INVISIBLE COLLEGE, BUDAPEST

The first initiative in this direction was the founding of the Budapest based Invisible College in 1992. The College, run by a non-profit charitable foundation, has no building, no library, and no full time faculty of its own. Its aim is to help nurture Hungary's future academic and professional elite by recruiting first and second year undergraduates in the Humanities, Social Sciences, Theology, Law, Economics and Business and offering them a supplementary programme of compulsory and optional courses and tailor-made, individual tutorials, taken alongside their university studies.

There are compulsory courses on Academic Writing, the Art of Reasoning, Rhetoric, Computer Skills etcetera and special courses in such areas as Political Theory, Political Philosophy, Constitutional Law, Introduction to Natural Sciences, Foreign and Security Policy etcetera. The individual tutors, who meet their students on a weekly basis, are leading academic or professional experts in their field. Competition for the 70-80 places is fierce. Those accepted get a monthly stipend and help in applying for graduate programmes in Hungary and abroad. The certificates which the Invisible College awards have no official standing, but rest on the reputation of the College, which was awarded the Hannah Arendt prize in 1997.¹⁷

Using the Budapest Invisible College as its example, the Soros Foundation's Higher Education Support Programme (HESP) has begun to back the setting up of a network of similar colleges across the region. All of them provide scholarships to allow gifted undergraduate students to follow supplementary academic programmes and tutorials, with the ultimate aim of developing a new meritocratic academic and professional elite. The network so far includes the Collegium Invisible in Warsaw (1995), the Society of Higher Learning in Bratislava, Slovakia (1996); and the Invisible College in Vilnius, Lithuania (1997), together with similar colleges in Belgrade, Chisinau, Bishkek and Saint Petersburg.

4.12.2 THE NEW EUROPE COLLEGE, BUCHAREST

A similar initiative, funded by several German and Swiss Foundations, the Confederation of Switzerland and, since 1996, HESP, but this time directed towards postgraduates and young academics, won the New Europe Prize in 1993 and the Hannah Arendt Award in 1998. This is the Bucharest based New Europe College, set up with the help of the Institute of Advanced Studies in Berlin. As one of its activities designed to nurture the country's new elite, it awards ten scholarships on an annual basis to young Romanian scholars, to enable them to pursue their research interests at the college (with a one-month foreign study trip included) in an inter-disciplinary environment with access to modern technical research aids. The

young fellows discuss their findings at weekly seminars, which are also open to graduate students, academics and researchers from outside the College.

In an attempt to, once again, extend the concept to other countries and settings, the HESP has begun to sponsor Central and Eastern European students who take part in other similar kinds of activities, such as the two-week seminars on semiotics and linguistics held for international students and professors at the Vilem Mathesius Centre within the Faculty of Philosophy of Charles University in Prague.

4.12.3 ACADEMIA ISTROPOLITANA NOVA, BRATISLAVA

With much the same intention, HESP has also begun to contribute to the running of the Bratislava based Academia Istropolitana Nova and to offer scholarships to students from across the region who attend its course. Academia Istropolitana Nova is an independent higher educational institution, founded in 1996, when it seceded from the state institution Academia Istropolitana 'Old' because of political and educational disagreements. Its stated aim is to support the emergence of a democratic market economy based on private property rights and freedom of contact by promoting liberal postgraduate education in a variety of professional fields.

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Supported by an impressive array of foreign foundations¹⁸ in addition to the HESP, the Academy offers one year, full time, multidisciplinary, graduate level courses in Applied Economics, Architectural Conservation Studies, Environmental Planning and Management, Public Administration, and European Studies and has just launched a new Journalism programme. Its target group in these activities is future teachers, young social scientists, lawyers, journalists, politicians and civil servants. Alongside these activities it also runs an array of specialised short-term seminars and English and professional communication programmes. Lectures are given by leading Slovak and foreign experts most of whom come from partner universities and research institutions. In the 1997/98 academic year, the academy enrolled 84 students from 14 countries.

4.12.4 THE COLLEGE OF EUROPE, WARSAW

Another higher educational initiative that brings together future leaders from across the region is the College of Europe at Natolin near Warsaw. This is a Polish version of the famous College of Europe in Bruges, which began its formal operations in 1994. It functions outside the national university system, supported by the Polish government, the European Commission, and other European states. Its mission is to prepare young people from all parts of Europe (half from EU member states and half from Central and East European countries) for membership of an enlarged European Union. The programme offers a choice of five specialisations in

Public Administration, Economics, Law, EU Pre-accession, and EU Systems. Up to sixty students (graduates in law, economics, history or social sciences, no more than thirty years old and fluent in English and French) are recruited annually from nearly thirty countries.

4.12.5 COLLEGIUM BUDAPEST

At the top of the tree of elitism, one would have to place the Collegium Budapest, Institute for Advanced Study. This is the counterpart to a number of elite research organisations of a similar kind, which exist in Western Europe. Its specific brief is to invite outstanding international scholars from both East and West and from all disciplines to come to Budapest for a specific period and contribute to a research programme based upon a specified annual theme. At any one time, the Collegium, besides its four resident scholars, is filled with around forty five fellows and guests. Annual themes, although often revolving around contemporary topics, are varied. In 1993/94 the research topic was ‘The Transition from a Planned to a Market Economy’, but three years later the focus had completely changed to ‘Frontiers, Spaces and Identities in Medieval and Modern Europe.’ Apart from weekly seminars, which are held to discuss the work being done by the fellows, the Collegium also organises international workshops and conferences. The Collegium was founded and is sponsored by: the Governments of Hungary, Austria, Switzerland, and France; the Federal Länder of Berlin and Baden-Württemberg; the Fritz Thyssen Foundation, the Landis and Gyr Cultural Foundation/Switzerland, the Bank of Sweden Tercentenary Foundation, the Donor’s Association for the Promotion of Sciences and Humanities in Germany and others.

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Whilst these initiatives cannot by themselves be expected to solve the problem of nurturing a truly high standard of higher education throughout Central and Eastern Europe, they do provide stop gap support to a limited number of students and act as a beacon to those trying to upgrade the region’s higher educational system so that it can eventually compete with the best educational institutions in Western Europe and America.

4.13 INCOME FROM OTHER SOURCES

A long term solution to the crisis besetting higher education in Central and Eastern Europe will depend upon finding alternative sources of finance. In the present economic climate, state higher educational institutions cannot expect their government allocations to rise. It has been suggested that the higher educational sector should do more to form ‘partnerships’ with industry at the local and national level in order to reap rewards from its intellectual capital by selling its research and consultancy capabilities. Recent changes in the laws governing higher educa-

tion have actually cleared many of the barriers that had previously ruled this step out.

However, despite the very real crisis in higher education level research in Central and Eastern Europe mentioned above, such partnerships are unlikely to be a panacea. Even in a country such as Poland, where theoretical scientific research is often at a high level and where much has been done over the last decade to re-structure national research capabilities, the relations between industry and the research community are still not strong. It is possible that over time, the situation will improve, but in the short term, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe will remain dependent on countries outside the region for technology cooperation. Part of this assistance should be the transfer of the technical knowledge of how to manage and organise research in a modern market economy.

4.13.1 CONSULTANCY

A number of Central and Eastern European higher educational institutions have actually set up consultancy companies on the 'Arts' side. Thus, for example, the Faculty Of Social Sciences of Ljubljana University in Slovenia has set up its own registered non-profit consultancy unit, the European Institute for Communication and Culture (EURICOM), to conduct research in the field of communication and culture (with special reference to the relationship of the mass media to issues of democracy and democratisation) on the basis of project work. In Latvia officially approved training centres have been set up at Riga Technical University, Latvian University, Daugavpils Pedagogical Institute, Liepaya Pedagogical High School, Rezekne Higher School, and the Jelgava Academy of Agriculture, which bid for contracts to put on courses for the Latvian School of Public Administration to train civil servants, but the extent of these activities will probably always remain extremely limited.

Even here, though, there is a certain tension caused by the fact that many university lecturers already moonlight for commercial training centres as a way of providing themselves with a living wage and are not keen to give these activities up in order to increase not their own but university income.

4.13.2 INDUSTRY-HIGHER EDUCATION PARTNERSHIPS

In the mid 1990's, the Estonian Ministry of Education started to champion 'partnerships' as a way of increasing the internal efficiency of the higher educational system. The belief was that the prospect of new entrepreneurial possibilities would be enough to overcome the inherent bias in favour of the status quo amongst the majority of higher educational staff and lecturers and open the way for a modernisation and strengthening of university management structures.

However, there was concern within the higher educational sector that ‘partnerships’ should not be seen as some easy solution to the crisis in higher education financing. Estonia, had little experience of dealing with the ethical and ownership aspects of such research projects and it was feared that the agenda would be increasingly set by narrow economic interests who would concentrate on achieving their own short term aims at the expense of the higher educational institutions’ moral and civic missions. Today, these are still valid concerns for, in practice, partnerships go beyond such easy areas as environmental and pollution control into areas where not balancing the budget, but ethics should determine the extent of higher education’s involvement. All of the countries in Central and Eastern Europe will need to develop their own clear Codes of Practice for Research and Codes of Ethics before embarking on any extensive industry partnerships.

Even if such Codes are drawn up and initiatives are eventually taken in this direction, it will, unfortunately, still be a long time before such activities have anything but an ephemeral impact upon university finances. In the Netherlands, after a concerted attempt in the 1990’s to increase the number of paid research projects that universities undertook for third parties, total income in this category collected by all Dutch universities in both the ‘Sciences’ and the ‘Arts’, rose from one milliard to one and a half milliard guilders. This was a considerable achievement, but still only peanuts in terms of the total research budget of the university sector. It is also worthwhile remembering that even in the United States, that bastion of private education, most tertiary level colleges and universities still depend upon public funds.

4.14 TUITION FEES

It is abundantly clear that Central and Eastern European countries are not rich enough to subsidise free and high quality higher education for a growing number of students, regardless of their own means. However, the idea that, despite the move towards market mechanisms elsewhere in society, access to higher education is a public right, to which all must have equal access, remains a deeply embedded popular belief across the region. Indeed it is enshrined in a number of national constitutions, including that of Poland, which calls for higher education ‘without payment’. Nevertheless, granted the increasing pressure on university finances, the option of charging students a fee for their studies has been much discussed, often combined with some form of student grant, loan or scholarship system to ensure that fees do not become a barrier to poor, but academically promising students. The problem is how to develop a fair and socially acceptable system.¹⁹ A system, furthermore, that fits in with the developing situation in both the region and the European Union, for, although at present regional student mobility is limited, once countries join the EU and the restrictions stopping the free movement of students are removed, it may be financially more attractive for some students to go to countries with no tuition fees than to remain in countries with fees.

4.14.1 THE SLOVENIAN EXAMPLE

The complexity of finding a solution can be seen in the current situation in Slovenia. Although the country manages to fund twenty percent of its higher educational budget from non-public sources, a figure that is higher than the OECD average, it does so almost by accident, as a result of forcing increasing numbers of young people to attend university as full fee paying part-time students. The expense involved in maintaining the old system can also be judged from the Slovenian case. Here, the institutional tuition fee for undergraduate full-time higher education, estimated at \$3,200 per student per year in 1995, is entirely funded by the state. In addition to this the state also pays an average fifty percent of annual living expenses, estimated at \$4000 per student per year in 1995, for the thirty nine percent of students who receive a direct scholarship. Even in the case of non scholarship recipients, the state still estimates that it pays nine percent to forty five percent of annual living expenses in the form of indirect subsidies to students (meals, accommodation, transport allowances and tax breaks) and parents (child allowance, tax deductions, health insurance, etcetera). Expenditure on an average regular student in the first half of the 1990s ranged from \$4,300 to \$4,900 per year. Overall the taxpayer paid an estimated fifty eight percent of total costs per student, enterprises three percent, and parents and students thirty nine percent.

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The result, at a time of rising application rates and stagnating state subsidies is limited access. Indeed, in Slovenia there are already admission ceilings for a number of subjects. The result is that the numbers wishing to enrol part-time, and thus outside the ceilings, immediately after finishing school, has risen from sixteen percent in 1991 to twenty seven percent in 98.²⁰ The catch is that part-time education is almost entirely self-financed. Indeed until the 1997-98 academic year there were no government fellowships for bright or poor part time students. In this sector tuition fees are high and in the case of young part-time students paid mainly by parents.²¹

4.14.2 THE SITUATION ELSEWHERE IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

In the Czech Republic, despite huge funding problems at Czech universities, Parliament has now twice resisted a government move to introduce a minimal form of tuition fee. The most that could be agreed was a standard 'university admission fee' similar to the DM50 fee levied in Slovenia too. Apart from this, all Czech students who complete their studies within one year of the standard duration continue to study for free. In Latvia, in contrast, 32,880 student (fifty one percent of the total enrolled) were making some kind of payment for their studies in 1997/98. In Hungary, tuition fees were introduced in 1995 (at an average monthly rate of \$15, with one fifth of students getting partial or total waivers for academic or social reasons).²² However, three years later, they were abolished for

full-time first degree students, admitted to fill pre-established enrolment quotas, not least because the 22-25 percent interest rates on student loans had proven untenable and unpopular.

However, such is the pressure on the universities that, in most countries, the burden of tuition that has been removed from one group of students has been placed upon another. In Poland, a loophole has been found in the constitution, which allows tuition to be levied on other than regularly admitted students. The University of Warsaw was reported in 1997 to be earning nearly twelve percent of its annual budget by classifying as many as forty percent of its students as 'evening' or 'extra-mural'. The Polish Rector's Conference is reportedly "lobbying parliament to interpret the new constitution in a way that would legalise tuition". Although the Lithuanian Constitution guarantees free tertiary level education for students who study well, this has been narrowed down to those with an average mark of seven to eight (maximum ten) on their academic record. Two categories of students now pay for their education: external, and 'free listener' students (who do not have high enough grades), and evening and correspondence students. Tuition fees vary between \$125 and \$500 a year, depending on the popularity of the specialisation (doctors and lawyers pay the most).

In Hungary, despite the move away from a universal tuition system, universities, as in Slovenia, are still allowed to levy market-level fees on a wide range of part-time degree programmes, post-graduate and second degree programmes and other training courses. The effects of introducing payments for part-time studies are particularly worrying in view of the fact that this can affect a large array of non-traditional students, who are unlikely to have the funds to meet the rather steep fees.

What will be needed will be to develop systems which combine a unified methodology of calculating school fees for all students, whether they are full or part time; the establishment of a set level (25-30 percent) of tuition costs that should be paid by students; the maintenance of a scholarship system for the poorest students to ensure equality of access; and a system of student loans, at reasonable rates of interest, guaranteed by the state. Besides this, there must also be a guarantee from the state that it will use the extra income thus generated to improve and expand the higher educational system and not just switch its own resources elsewhere, leaving the financial plight of the sector essentially unchanged.

In theory, at least, the drift towards levying tuition fees can be presented as part of a process which will force higher educational institutions to become more responsive to the wishes of their students. However, before any system can be introduced, the public must be convinced that it is part of a comprehensive opening up of the higher educational system to society at large, in a way which will match supply with increasing levels of demand. This involves not just introducing an element of competition into the higher educational market by allowing a private sector to take

root and grow, but also ensuring that the 'consumer' can find lower cost alternatives to elite forms of higher education. The pressure of finances should not be allowed to make the higher educational system forget its public role in civil society as a purveyor of knowledge, not just to those who can pay, but to society as a whole.

4.15 CONCLUSION

Since 1989, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have done much to settle their accounts with the legacy of communism in higher education. The once all-pervading influence of Marxist ideology has been swept aside and a major strategy of curriculum renewal begun. Even where communist era professors and senior administrators have found a niche in the new system, they have, in the main, re-invented themselves for the new era. At the same time, governments, to a slightly greater or lesser degree, have relaxed their control over the day to day activities of higher educational institutions, and have guaranteed academic freedom and institutional autonomy.

All of the candidate countries for EU membership in Central and Eastern Europe have resolutely turned their gaze from East to West. The new laws on education that have been passed during the 1990's have been designed to bring institutional and degree structures into line with the emerging EU norms, defined by the June 1999 Bologna Declaration. This does not mean that there are not still variations based on national idiosyncrasies and traditions, but these are, in fact, probably less than those amongst the member states of the European Union. Enrolment numbers too are coming closer to EU averages, as also are the proportion of women in tertiary education and the drop out rates. In most countries a process of institutional diversification is in full swing, with binary systems, combining universities and professional schools, being created or expanded at the tertiary level. The region is still experiencing an explosion of interest in the social sciences and a rush to new subjects like sociology and politics at the expense of theoretical science.

In practice, of course, the changes are not always as profound as they seem in theory. Several governments have found it hard to completely step away from the day to day affairs of 'their' universities and in a multi-ethnic region, some have found themselves still excluded from an educational system defined by ethnic, rather than civic, definitions of eligibility. The major problem, though, remains massive underfunding affecting the ability of the region's tertiary sector to adapt to new demands and expectations.

The TEMPUS programme, which since 1990 has literally supported thousands of reform projects in higher education, and the World Bank, which has only started giving loans for higher education reform in the last four years have, together, done much to sustain a reform process which otherwise might have faltered. But not all

valuable initiatives have been on a large scale. Individual institutions, such as the Invisible College in Budapest and the New Europe College in Bucharest, have developed relatively low cost and small scale remedies to deal with some of the problems besetting higher education. In many cases, such initiatives have been taken up and applied elsewhere. Even small scale initiatives such as these, however, still tend to require foreign financing to survive. The shoots of a new educational system are visible, but they have often been nurtured with foreign help. They are still fragile and could easily shrivel away as donor interest moves on.

Although still resisted by some countries, the introduction of some form of fees for higher education in the region seems inevitable. The existence of a fee-paying private sector has certainly placed the matter on the agenda. The need will be to introduce systems, which are fair to all students and which are designed with the problems of the poorer students in mind.

NOTES

- ¹ The results of the 1998 Third International Maths and Science Study [TIMSS] in which six of the top fifteen places in international school rankings for both maths and science were taken by East European countries show that this tradition is still being maintained.
- ² In 1995 The EU spent 5.2% of GPD on education: Belgium 5.7%; Denmark 8.0%; Germany 4.8%; Greece 2.9%; Spain 4.9%; France 6.0%; Ireland 4.7%; Luxembourg 4.45; Netherlands 5.2%; Austria 5.6%; Portugal 5.8%; Finland 7.3%; Sweden 7.8% and UK 5.2%.
- ³ 1992 OECD figures show an average expenditure of 1.5% of GPD on higher education in the following countries: Denmark 2%; France 0.9%; Ireland 1.3%; the Netherlands 1.8%; Austria 1.2%; Finland 2.2%; Norway 1.4%, Sweden 1.6%, and Germany 1.0%.
- ⁴ This is an area where the encouragement of informal contacts, such as those already established between the administrations of Prague's Charles University and the University of Amsterdam, using funds made available through the Dutch MATRA project can be extremely beneficial.
- ⁵ Winner of the first Hannah Arendt prize in 1995.
- ⁶ The Institute recently published a book length report entitled '*Social Stratification and Inequality*' (1998) presenting the results of work done by its team of young sociologists.
- ⁷ The same is true of France, where many still believe that the Maîtrise is the first 'real' qualification and not the Licence.
- ⁸ Romania 1995/6: 336,000 students in the national higher education network (public and private) representing 1,107 students per 100,000 inhabitant in state educational institutions and 1,481 students per 100,000 inhabitants in all forms of higher education.
- ⁹ Vaclav Havel: A Dream for Czechoslovakia - *New York Review of Books* (June 25th 1992).
- ¹⁰ Survey Business in Eastern Europe - *The Economist* (22nd November 1997).
- ¹¹ Alan Ryan: The American Way - fixing higher education - *Prospect* (August/September 1999).
- ¹² *The Economist* (20th September, 1997), citing Poland: Reform and Growth on the Road to the EU (World Bank, July 1997).
- ¹³ A similar process took place in Estonia after its 1992 Law.
- ¹⁴ Hungarian Prime Minister's Office: *The "Engine" of Modernisation: Hungary's Intellectual Capital* - Abstract VII [www.meh.hu/egyeb/modprog/angol/7.htm].
- ¹⁵ 3,000 of its 5,000 students are enrolled in its two major programmes for Economics and Management, and Public Administration.
- ¹⁶ An interim report prepared for the International Finance Corporation and the World Bank by a team from the University of Manchester (UK) reported preliminary findings that "there are schools, colleges, and universities in develop-

- ing countries which are profitable (or make a surplus), are financed totally (or almost totally) from student fee income, and which charge modest fees”.
- ¹⁷ Criteria for the prize include a commitment to academic excellence; structural and organisational innovation; interdisciplinary programmes; support for young scholars; sensitivity to societal problems and quality research and/ or instruction.
- ¹⁸ The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, The Ford Foundation, Action Austria-Slovakia and the Friedrich Ebert Foundation.
- ¹⁹ The situation in the European Union is also confused when it comes to tuition fees, with England, but not Scotland charging fees and some countries, such as France and Germany, but not England, imposing an often tax deductible statutory maintenance obligation on the parents of higher education students.
- ²⁰ In the first half of the 1980s, when the share of part-time students was even higher, they were ‘real’ part-time students – older and employed.
- ²¹ *Slovenia* (UNDP Human Development Report 1998).
- ²² Tuition fees raised annual revenue of HUF 7 billion, equivalent to 20 percent of total higher education revenue, or 7.5 percent of higher education expenditure.

5 UNIVERSITY AUTONOMY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

During the communist era higher education was notable for its excessive centralisation and for its lack of horizontal relationships with society at large. Since 1989, as central governments have begun to retreat from the direct 'management' of higher education, local universities and colleges have been granted a large degree of autonomy in charting their own development strategies. As part of this process, they have been called upon to redefine themselves and to welcome a greater degree of public involvement and public accountability. This chapter will deal with the place of autonomous institutions of higher education within 'civil society'.

5.2 HIGHER EDUCATION AUTONOMY AND GOVERNMENT CONTROL

The high degree of central control over universities which existed in Central and Eastern Europe prior to 1989 meant that the achievement of institutional autonomy and the guarantee of academic independence were seen to be the first essential steps towards sweeping away the all-enveloping cobwebs of the communist regime. In Poland the process has gone furthest and today, the General Council of Higher Education, a body elected by the academic community, has taken over wide powers from the government in the day to day coordination of the policies of the larger universities. The government has stepped aside, except when it comes to providing finance and has left the universities to run their own internal affairs under the guidance of the General Council. Today, each university, operating within the general guidelines on staff and curriculum requirements drawn up by the General Council, is completely free to decide its own internal organisation, study regulations, admission requirements and fields of study. Smaller specialised academies and colleges do not have as much leeway and must get approval from the competent Ministry for a wide range of decisions. In Hungary the only slightly less independent Higher Education Scientific Council (HESC), with members from all fields of higher education, fulfils much the same function as the General Council in Poland.¹

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There are identifiable gradations of autonomy across the region, with Romanian university rectors still operating under closer government tutelage when it comes to the allocation of internal funds than their counterparts elsewhere and Bulgarian and Romanian universities having to abide by government set admission quotas in many subject areas. Despite such limitations, the overall extent of autonomy has, everywhere, been greatly extended over the last decade. In many ways the trend to greater autonomy matches similar processes underway in Western Europe too. Here the extent of autonomy also differs from country to country and from subject area to subject area. In the United Kingdom, for instance, universities have total control over the design of their study programmes, whilst in Spain the minimum

requirements for each degree programme, amounting to about one third of the courses, are set at the central level.

5.3 CONTRADICTIONS OF AUTONOMY

In Central and Eastern Europe, the end result of this process of institutional autonomy and decentralisation of control has not been trouble free. In many cases the effect of the new laws was to grant autonomy to the individual faculties rather than the central university authorities and this has often led to the fragmentation of institutions into frequently warring factions.² In Slovenia, coordination and communication within and between the two universities has become increasingly difficult. Even the planning of course content is decided not at the university, but at the faculty or even individual department level. In Latvia, institutional autonomy in curricula matters is responsible for the fact that it has not been possible to establish a single uniform length for degree programmes. Thus the time taken to acquire a 'Bakalaur's' may vary from three years to four and a half years in different institutions. In the Baltic States, there is no tradition of holding regular staff meetings at faculty and departmental level to thrash out contentious issues and reach common agreed positions. The result is that important decisions are often made by a small inner group and, in the absence of a proper interfaculty and inter-university coordination mechanism, decisions made by one autonomous group often contradict those made by another.

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What has become clear is that effective reform is not as simple as loosening or weakening the control of the central ministries. Although government institutions can have a negative effect upon the functioning of higher educational institutions, so too can the lack of coherence that now exists as a result of the reforms of the 1990's. Decisions made by a university or a faculty in pursuit of their own interests, although sometimes different, are not by definition better decisions than those made at government level. They are just as likely to be short-sighted and partisan. Autonomy can all too easily be used to block unpopular but necessary changes.

5.4 HIGHER EDUCATION AND SOCIETY

No one suggests that governments should reassert direct control or limit academic freedom. The absence of one and the presence of the other are taken for granted. The freedom to put forward novel ideas, or criticise ideas without fear of retribution is recognised as being essential.³ However, there is a need to recognise that autonomy is not as absolute a value as academic freedom. What is in question is the extent to which higher educational institutions should be allowed to run their affairs without reference either to those who attend them or those, the taxpayers, who fund them.⁴ This question becomes of paramount importance as universities

are increasingly turned into independent legal public entities able to raise their own funds from economic activities.

The need is to strike a proper balance between complete autonomy and limited government involvement and between autonomy and the public interest, and between both of these relationships and academic freedom and integrity. The best policy seems to be to move most decision-making to the institution, but to also ensure that the public interest, that may sometimes contrast with the interest of the rector, faculty or other politically powerful constituencies, is properly represented in its deliberations.

The 1995-96 "Building Bridges" programme, grouping a collection of higher educational institutions from provincial cities in Hungary, Poland, Slovakia, Ukraine and Romania with a group of community colleges, private liberal arts institutions and regional universities from the American Associated Colleges of the South, stressed the need for Central and Eastern European universities to recognise the importance of the concept of public service, pointing amongst other things to the role of the university in the economic development of the local community and the importance of building a partnership with local community associations.⁵ The higher educational system, from this perspective, is a part of this larger society and not something separate or apart from it.

5.5 HIGHER EDUCATION AND INDUSTRY

This leads us away from the old problem of the relationship between the state and the academy towards a new question defined by the evolving relationship between the university and the larger society that surrounds it. For instance, having won their autonomy from government, higher educational institutions must be prepared to develop horizontal relationships with industry and especially, perhaps, with the new private small and medium sized enterprise sector, which forms such an important part of the new social structure that has emerged since the fall of communism.

In 1989 small and medium enterprises accounted for less than a third of the employment in the Czech Republic and Hungary and the average number of employees in an enterprise stood at around 2,000, compared to a European Union average of only seven. The situation has changed rapidly. In 1997, for instance, there were two million registered enterprises in Poland and more than one million in both the Czech Republic and Hungary. In the Czech Republic 98.5 percent of enterprises in the industrial sector now employ fewer than fifty employees, although larger enterprises still account for eighty percent of production. In Hungary, small and medium enterprises contribute sixty percent of GDP a similar figure to that in Poland, where ninety five percent of the private enterprise sector consists of firms with five employees or fewer. The small and medium sized enterprise

sector produces about half of these countries' GDP and employs more than half of the workforce. In the European Union, 99.8 percent of all enterprises are classified as being of small to medium size and they account for sixty five percent of employment and sixty three percent of production.⁶

Since the end of communism, graduates are no longer almost guaranteed a job in their area of specialisation. Over the last decade the automatic and pre-ordained progression from tertiary education to lifetime employment has been replaced by a dynamic, but free, labour market, characterised by both greater uncertainty and an ever increasing number of career possibilities. In general, though, the higher educational sector in Central and Eastern Europe has made little attempt to adapt to these new realities. Very few colleges and universities have developed any kind of structured career placement services or made any real contacts with the small and medium sized industrial sector that is increasingly becoming the main employer of their graduates. Whilst no one would suggest that the higher educational sector should compromise its freedom of action, there are a number of specific areas where business and education should be brought together at both the national and the local levels. Such contacts are doubly important at a time when, faced with the expansion of student numbers and an increasing tendency to lay more stress upon lifelong learning, higher educational institutions are reviewing their curricula and programmes. TEMPUS, for one, has recognised the need for developing cooperation between the two sectors to ensure that long term educational strategies and planned new programmes are designed with the needs of industry in mind.

5.6 HIGHER EDUCATION AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The process of granting autonomy to higher educational institutions in Central and Eastern Europe has run in parallel with a general process of decentralisation, designed to devolve decision making to the local level. The two processes raise the question of the role of institutions of higher education in strategies of regional development. This same question, but this time from a global perspective, has also been the subject of discussion in a number of international educational forums.

These discussions have assigned regional higher educational institutions a key role in fostering and developing what has been termed a 'local learning economy'. This concept has immediate resonance in Central and Eastern Europe, where the emergence of a private sector, dominated by small to medium sized enterprises, and the transformation of what can be saved from the massive communist era conglomerates into private corporations, depends upon the ability of workers, managers and local governments to adapt quickly to new ways of behaving and to new skill requirements. There are, however, two main blockages that are currently hindering the development of the necessary interaction between the interested local parties – higher educational institutions, employers, trade unions, local and regional governments, etcetera.

The first of these are the continuing problems associated with the whole process of decentralising authority to the local and regional level. Central governments have often abruptly unloaded authority in many areas to local governments, without first ensuring that the necessary administrative support structures or the proper mechanism of governance were in place to support them. There are few properly qualified local administrators and in many cases the division of responsibilities between local, regional and national authorities in the field of education is still far from clear.

This problem is only exacerbated by the current standing of many local institutions of higher education. In the communist era, the most able students and professors were drawn from regional universities to study and teach in the national university, normally located in the capital. The result is that today there is an overconcentration of higher educational institutions in capital cities and a continuing tendency for regional universities and colleges to be thought of as second rate institutions. The problems and costs involved in redressing this imbalance between the centre and the regions is clear from the example of Bulgaria's attempts to set up a network of provincial universities in the 1980's. Unfortunately, at a time when there is hardly enough funding to keep the existing higher educational system functioning, it is unlikely that enough money will be made available to even begin to redress the effects of fifty years of neglect at the local level.

There are, however, some small examples of possible ways to improve the situation. The first is the 'Universitas' experiment in Hungary, which by trying to create integrated multi-institution educational conglomerates at the local level should make the courses and programmes offered more responsive to changing local market demand. Latvia is also taking steps in this same direction. A second is the setting up, in Warsaw ironically enough, of the Institute for European and Local Development (EuroReg) in the early 1990's, with the express purpose of maximising the effect that the European Union's regional policies could play in national development at the regional and local levels, especially in Poland's border regions. TEMPUS, too, has begun to turn its attention to this area. For example, in its priorities for its 1997-98 Romanian programme it specifically mentioned as priority areas the development of linkages between higher educational institutions and their localities by developing continuing education courses suitable for personnel from local enterprises and other organisations, setting up consultancy services for enterprises and developing regional centres for the training of trainers to support the continuing education of secondary school teachers.

5.7 AUTONOMY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

A final factor in the process of reforming higher educational institutions and making them more responsive to society is to ensure that an effective system of 'good governance' is introduced. This will make them real public institutions,

characterised by their technical, organisational and managerial competence, by their social responsibility and by their responsiveness, transparency and openness in dealing with the world outside. Autonomy should be limited not by central government but by public accountability and involvement. This will ensure the quality of the teaching and research; an increased responsiveness to labour market demands and the building of links with society and industry.

In Hungary and the Czech Republic efforts are now underway to widen participation in institutional governance by involving outsiders in university decision making. In Hungary this has been done in a rather ad hoc way by involving representatives from small and medium sized enterprises and the non-profit sector in defining future training and educational needs. For example, the University of Miskolc works with regional development agencies and local labour centres to first identify education and training requirements and then to design programmes to respond to these requirements.

The Czech Republic in its 1998 Law on Higher Education, by making the Universities themselves, rather than the individual faculties, public institutions, has gone slightly further than Hungary in establishing an institutional system for linking the higher educational sector and society. However, the practical effects of this move are as yet unclear. The intention is to encourage the universities to take advantage of their new status by becoming more entrepreneurial and selling their services and developing their own systems of economic management. As part of their change of status, each university will have to publish detailed annual reports on its activities and prepare a long-term programme and strategy.

Adopting a Continental European model of corporate governance, under which the institution is seen as an integral part of the community with an avowed social as well as economic purpose,⁷ the universities will have to establish two separate governing boards as part of their internal structures, with members drawn from outside the university representing local authorities and public interest groups or society. Although the role of the Board of Trustees and the Board of Supervisors is mainly advisory, their establishment reflects an important opening of higher education to broader influences and concerns. The main problem will be to find enough suitable people, who will be prepared to make the Boards into real rather than honorary institutions.

5.8 CONCLUSION

Although the Czech Republic is the first of the Central and Eastern European countries to transform its universities into public institutions with outside Boards at the apex of their system of corporate governance, they will not be the last. Hungary has already announced that it too will take this direction and other countries are not far behind.

The emerging relationship between the higher educational sector and 'society', must however rest upon a clear division of responsibilities. The region's higher educational systems should become increasingly accountable to society for ensuring quality, fairness, tolerance, and the maintenance of academic, administrative and ethical standards. Conversely, however, society and the various stakeholders, public or private, are under an obligation to refrain from, and prevent arbitrary interference in the way educational institutions discharge their various missions. What society may reasonably expect higher education to fulfil is closely tied to committing sufficient resources for such expectations to be met.⁸

NOTES

- 1 Austria, Italy, and Finland have also recently granted greater autonomy to universities and, to a slightly lesser extent, to other institutions of higher education.
- 2 Salzburg Seminar Plenary Convocation Meeting January 22-26, 1997
Managing the Transition to Functional Autonomy.
- 3 Bulgaria, Estonia, Lithuania, Romania, and Slovenia have all guaranteed academic freedom in their constitutions, as also has Belarus!
- 4 D. Bruce Johnstone: *The Financing and Management of Higher Education: A Status Report on Worldwide Reforms* (World Bank Report) [www.gse.buffalo.edu/FAS].
- 5 *Building Bridges between Institutions of Higher Education in the Carpathian Region of East Central Europe and the South-Eastern United States* [www.college.org/thomasreport].
- 6 Masaru Honma: SME Development in the Transition Economies (1998) and Rudy Aernoudt: EU Schemes for SME Financing (1998)-both in- *Financing Newly Emerging Private Enterprises in Transition Economies* (OECD, 1999)
- 7 Kim dae Jung & James D.Wolfensohn: Economic Growth Requires Good Governance - *International Herald Tribune* (26/02/99).
- 8 These issues were discussed during the thematic debate on Autonomy, Social Responsibility and Academic Freedom at the World Conference on Higher Education in Paris, October 1998.

6 PROBLEMS AND INNOVATIONS IN HIGHER EDUCATION

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Although almost nobody questions the importance of higher educational reform in Central and Eastern Europe, it has never managed to hold the spotlight for long – there has always been a host of other more pressing problems. In general, parliaments have seen their role as being merely to pass legislation as quickly as possible and then ignore education until a next round of legislation is needed to regularise the situation as it has developed on the ground. In Poland, after the creation of the Higher Education Council, with wide powers over tertiary level studies, in the 1990 Higher Education Act, government-level discussions about reform slipped into the background.

Higher education has also fallen victim to another common problem that afflicts much of the reform process throughout the region. It is one thing to change the outward, normative framework of higher education and to legislate it into line with international standards, but changes in form do not necessarily lead to changes in behaviour. The implementation of the spirit of the new laws into everyday teaching and research has often lagged far behind or failed completely. In Romania, there is a clear gap between the legislation that has been passed by Parliament and its actual implementation in practice. Not only have important laws been delayed, but already adopted laws have sometimes been re-submitted to the Parliamentary Commissions for Education for improvements. Delaying tactics of this kind have considerable impact in societies still recovering from over half a century of passivity and helplessness.

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6.2 BLOCKAGES ON THE ROAD TO REFORM

6.2.1 MINISTRIES, GOVERNMENTS, AND REFORM

Many Ministries of Education still do not have enough trained experts. When this is combined with the high turnover rate in most government offices, it results in a lack of administrative continuity and a large number of civil servants, who, at any one time, do not know their dossiers properly. In Bulgaria, for instance, the shift backwards and forwards between left and right wing governments has meant that Education Ministry teams have regularly been replaced, by new ones holding almost completely the opposite views about educational reform. With little consensus about what should be done, the tendency for the educational bureaucracy has been to do as little as possible. Bureaucratic inertia and the slow pace of administrative procedures have been reinforced by turf battles between different layers of government (in Lithuania) and a lack of cooperation between government agencies, educational institutions and educational NGOs (in Slovakia).

Some of these issues have recently been addressed by governments in the region. The Czech Republic in its 1998 Law on Higher Education has made the Ministry of Education responsible for developing a comprehensive long-term policy for higher education. In Poland, the government is reassessing its *laissez faire* approach in the light of its National Strategy for Integration into the European Union, whilst the Hungarian 1997 White Paper on Higher Education issued by the previous government and the programme laid out by the incoming government have together set out a coherent five year government development policy. Only time will tell whether the present or future governments in these three countries are prepared to invest enough political capital to achieve these goals.

The situation in Romania and Bulgaria has also begun to change for the better. In Romania, after elections in late 1996, despite the problems that have already been mentioned above, the coalition parties have actually tried to develop specific educational policies that attempt to place educational reform within the national reform process. In Bulgaria, the new government, which came to power in May 1997, has given a renewed impetus to educational reform and steps have been taken to accelerate educational decentralisation, to introduce a credit system into higher education and to develop cooperation between the Ministry of Education and educationally orientated NGOs. In both cases though, there are still considerable doubts about the ability of reform-minded but politically weak governments to push through their policies.

6.2.2 OPPOSITION WITHIN THE UNIVERSITIES

The reform process is also held up within the universities and institutions of higher education themselves. Abolishing many years of practice can be a hard and even humiliating experience. As we discussed at the end of the last chapter, one unexpected result of granting extensive autonomy to the universities and their constituent faculties, which should not have surprised anyone who had read British novels of university life from Kingsley Amis to Malcolm Bradbury, was that the process of change has often been held up by internal jealousies. This was certainly one factor in the decision by the existing faculties at the Czech Technical University in Prague to vote down a proposal for setting up a Faculty of Management, which had already been given Ministry of Education support, apparently for fear of losing students and prestige if the new faculty was set up. As this example shows, collective bodies, as a rule, tend to protect the status quo and are often very slow to embrace change even when it is clearly needed.

At the individual level, many university lecturers and administrators want change in the abstract, but are worried about what the effect of radical internationalisation might be on their own careers. Although by no means closed off to new ideas and foreign influences, many able scholars in the so-called 'middle-aged generation' of university lecturers, see in the existing system, whatever its shortcomings, a guar-

antee of security and stability and fear the impact of outsiders. No one should underestimate the psychological block that needs to be overcome before essentially well-meaning, but disorientated and frightened, people manage to drop their defence mechanisms and make a leap into a future that they fear will offer them nothing.¹

Alongside them, many administrators are still under-trained and fearful of taking on the new responsibilities being thrust upon them as governments throughout the region retreat from direct management to policy steering and quality monitoring. The new forms of higher education financing, based as in Hungary and Latvia, on student enrolment and other pre-set indicators, require a flexibility and grasp of procedures that few possess. And yet there are almost no structured staff development programmes in place designed to prepare administrators for the pressures of autonomous financial planning and the challenges of institutional diversification and internationalisation.

The fears of lecturers and administrators acquire increased significance in societies where, after fifty years of enforced passivity, there are few pressure groups outside the educational system able to present alternative and coherent strategies for change. Estonia is one of the few countries in the region that has managed to launch a societal discussion of education. In a strange combination of communist-era 'productionist' attitudes and contemporary 'get rich quick' attitudes many parents and children are united in seeing higher education in a rather narrow vocation-orientated perspective. Students often resent having to take general courses, including ones that touch on civic education, which they see as an unnecessary intrusion on their search for practical work-orientated knowledge.

Campaigns to resist change, or even the threat of such campaigns, have often succeeded in the short term. However, their long-term effect will ultimately be far more damaging to university traditions than radical reform now. The ability of public universities to 'make do' with larger and larger classes, or part time, low-paid lecturers, or without replacing laboratory equipment or replenishing the library, etcetera allow a government to cut funding without having to come to grips with the real problems.

6.3 THE CHANGING STATUS OF LECTURERS

Under communism, university lecturers were not particularly well paid, but they were generally well respected and the pay differential between them and other professions was insignificant. Today, in an environment of severe budget restraint and expanding enrolments, the demands placed upon university lecturers have greatly increased. In Poland, for example, whilst the number of students at Polish state universities has increased by more than 100 percent, the number of staff employed has risen by only about four percent. At the same time, because of the

declining popularity of 'science' and the growth of new 'arts' disciplines over the last decade, there is often a surplus of faculty expertise and materials in 'old' fields and a shortage of these in 'new' fields. The net result of these developments has been to make many senior lecturers shy away from new initiatives, which they see as only likely to further increase their already over-heavy workloads.

6.3.1 LECTURER'S PAY

Whilst still respected, a lecturer, with a doctorate and a decade's teaching/research experience, will earn less than three hundred us dollars net per month at a Polish state university. This is about the same as his Czech colleague, and up to four times as much as his Bulgarian one. In all cases this is hardly enough to live on. If this trend goes too far, as is the case with Moldova, where very low wages are normally paid long in arrears, morale falls so low that bribes to secure admission to prestigious subjects or to pass state exams are not unknown.²

6.3.2 BRAIN DRAIN

The poor wages and conditions have led to an intensive brain drain from academia. Data from Slovenia suggests that as many as five percent of those with Masters and Ph.D.s have gone to work abroad.³ In general, though, perhaps because of the strict measures against immigration adopted by the member-states of the European Union, the brain drain abroad seems less serious than the pull of business, commerce, law and journalism at home. The Tartu University Faculty of Law fell apart in the early 1990's as professors sought more lucrative employment with private law firms, in Parliament, or with the Constitutional Court of Estonia. Today, it seems to be young social scientists who are increasingly becoming frustrated by the lack of resources and research possibilities. Unsurprisingly, it is the best young academics, with new innovative ideas who are being tempted away to the private sector. This is especially worrying within a university system where individual initiative rather than institutional strength is the key to curriculum and methodological innovation.

6.3.3 DOCTORAL STUDIES

At the same time, very few really clever and ambitious students now even consider taking up a career in university teaching. This is reflected in the small numbers currently following Ph.D. programmes in Central and Eastern European universities, especially in such areas as economics. The existing shortage of qualified university teachers looks set to get worse, especially in provincial universities. In Lithuania the increasingly older age profile amongst university lecturing staff is already giving rise to concern.

6.3.4 LECTURER PROFILE

In such a situation, what is perhaps most surprising is the altruism, ability and dedication of many of those who stay. To survive many of them have to take on second and third jobs to supplement their incomes in a daily test of personal commitment. Many lecturers, for example in Poland, freelance at the new private universities and colleges, thus splitting their loyalties and reducing the time they have available for students at either institution. In the Baltic countries, staff teaching legal subjects normally have parallel commercial employment as lawyers.

Today's lecturers are a mixture of new blood, former dissidents, returning émigrés and left-overs from the communist past. Into this last category, depending on the country, fall associate lecturers, excluded from positions of responsibility before 1989 because of political unreliability, junior lecturers who were working as assistants before the 'changes', and a sprinkling of more senior figures who have adapted to the new situation and avoided the purges. Whilst Central and Eastern Europe does not appear to have an equivalent to the former Professor of Marxism-Leninism and Dean of the Philosophical Faculty at Moscow State University who has re-emerged as an expert in existentialism, personnel renewal seems to have gone further in some countries than in others.

In Bulgaria a number of communist era Professors, many of whom were removed from their leading positions by the 'Panev Law' in 1990, have sometimes managed to re-establish their positions in both the administrative and teaching hierarchies under the Socialist Party (reformed communist) government (1994 – 1997).⁴ In the three Baltic States, because the nationalist movement had already captured the professorate before independence and the collapse of the Soviet Union, there has been a greater degree of continuity between the communist and post-communist eras than, for example, in the Czech Republic.

Whatever their specific background, the majority of today's university lecturers still suffer from the effects of years of minimal access to non-communist scholarship or from exclusion from academia generally.⁵ Although there are world class academics in many areas, the depth of professional expertise is not great. In such a situation, teaching staff with modern ideas are not easy to come by. No one should necessarily assume that the able and the politically compromised are mutually exclusive groups. Some of those who taught in communist times have adapted well to the new demands, whilst some very scholarly ex-dissidents still find it hard to adapt their style of presentation to the needs of a youthful audience. Much the same can be said when it comes to assessing the two groups' administrative abilities. In general, though, it is the younger lecturers or those with some international experience who have most easily adapted the modern interactive teaching methods. Unfortunately, it is precisely these groups who are most likely to be tempted to move to the private sector, as they become frustrated both with in-

stitutional resistance to their reforming zeal and their lack of easy access to up-to-date academic journals and research findings.

6.4 TEACHING METHODOLOGIES FOR A NEW ERA

“Ten years ago, in a Czechoslovak classroom, students sat at desks beneath a large photograph of Gustav Husak, transcribing notes as their teacher dictated a Marxist version of history. In the provinces today, students sit at their desks beneath a less forbidding photograph of Vaclav Havel, transcribing notes as their teacher imparts to them a different version of history.”⁶

So wrote one observer of education reform in Central and Eastern Europe and there is a certain truth in the observation. Whilst the use of western textbooks and materials has increased since 1989, it has proved much more difficult to alter the methodology of teaching and the underlying student/teacher relationship. University education in Central and Eastern Europe remains based upon a hierarchical relationship between professor and student using the kind of rote learning techniques, best suited to getting students to a good basic level in quantitative subjects. Such an approach is completely inadequate for dealing with the challenges confronting a modern higher educational system characterised by increasing numbers of part time and mature students and an extension of distance and other forms of non-traditional learning.

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In the main, students are still expected to be passive learners, listening to their professors lecture, taking notes, and then memorising and regurgitating verbatim the words of their textbooks and lecturers as answers for exams. They write few essays or research papers and rarely ask questions or express their own opinions, and are not really encouraged to do so.⁷ In Bulgaria, for instance, most university teaching still revolves around ‘read’ lectures, supported by seminars in which teaching assistants explain the material covered by the professor in the lecture hall. The examination system consists of oral exams in which students choose two topics from a list given to them in advance, the so-called ‘conspect’. Oral examinations are also the preferred method in the Czech Republic, Estonia and Hungary, although in the latter there has been a noticeable increase in written exams in recent years. From the perspective of this study, the question arises of the extent to which this very traditional form of education holds back the development of enquiring minds and hinders young people becoming active participants in pluralistic discourse.

6.4.1 STAFF DEVELOPMENT

It is clear that what is required is a vigorous policy of lecturing staff development directed at ‘democratising’ the classroom by introducing inter-active teaching/learning techniques, improving lecturing and presentation skills and making

higher education more responsive to changing needs. The problems involved in setting up any such system in Central and Eastern Europe are however many. In the first place there is little money available to create the independent staff development units that are increasingly becoming common in Western European universities. In the second place there is often little local expertise in this area and a lack of understanding on the part of college and university authorities of how important it is. Indeed a survey conducted throughout the region in the autumn of 1997 suggested that introducing formal programmes of lecturer training would be a far more difficult problem than changing the curriculum.⁸

Faculty pay at most higher educational institutions is so small as to make incentives for the extra effort required to change old teaching habits almost non-existent. The pressure of holding down extra jobs, in addition to university lecturing, means that academic staff in the Baltic universities claim to have little time to follow in-service training courses. These basic problems are exacerbated by the pervading culture of the higher educational institutions themselves. Many lecturers feel that they must not even admit to themselves that their teaching techniques could be improved. It is often striking how a presentation on teaching techniques, normally financed by an international donor, fills up with foreign lecturers, whilst the locals cry off by claiming that they do not need such a course or that they have already done one before. The first reply is, unfortunately, rarely true and the second is a testament to a persistent failure to really grasp the reason why such seminars are becoming an increasingly standard part of higher education throughout the world.

6.4.2 STAFF DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES IN EAST AND WEST

Clear policies for staff development are by no means standard at higher educational institutions in all Western European countries, but a clear framework for activities in this area is already being set up by the front running countries in this area, such as Germany, the United Kingdom, or the Netherlands.⁹ In 1989, for example, the United Kingdom's Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principles (CVCP) set up a central national unit, the Universities' and Colleges' Staff Development Agency (UCOSDA), located at the University of Sheffield, to oversee a range of nationally provided staff and educational development courses. This central body is supported by 125 independent staff development units operating within individual universities,¹⁰ which, since 1993/94, have had the possibility of having their programmes accredited under a national scheme run by the Staff and Educational Development Association (SEDA). The recent National Committee of Enquiry into Higher Education (the Dearing Report) has suggested that in addition to these structures, an Institute of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education, for all academic staff, should also be set up.

Most Western European staff development units offer short, normally non-mandatory courses, lasting from one to three days, covering such subjects as “How students learn”; “Lecturing”; “Small group teaching”; “Forms of active learning”, “Students’ assessment and examinations”; and so on. Whilst in most cases the central support services which are expected to provide such courses would still claim that they were underfunded, the numbers taking courses of this kind are increasing throughout the European Union area, as central university authorities stress the importance of the programmes for promotion and advancement. Indeed in the United Kingdom it is possible to accumulate credits for an eventual diploma in lecturing skills.¹¹

There is a large gap between the experiences in Western and in Central and Eastern European countries. Despite the massive need for staff development programmes there has been little pressure either from Ministries of Education or from university senates to set up either national or institution based training structures and programmes. Only Slovenia has tried to buck this trend. The country was fortunate in that the University of Ljubljana had started to introduce non-mandatory academic staff development programmes in 1981, with the aid of Western European partners. These contacts survived the repudiation of communist structures in the early 1990’s and today, with EU-TEMPUS support, both Ljubljana and Maribor universities run lecturer development programmes and proof of pedagogical competence is one of the factors considered in promotion and ‘habilitation’. With this exception, lecturer development programmes have not been made a priority in the region and have normally been presented on an ad hoc basis. A recent survey of more permanent institution-based programmes only produced a few scattered activities of uncertain provenance.¹²

Recently, though, the TEMPUS programme has begun to support programmes designed to help institutions in the region plan, develop, promote and then deliver staff development programmes of various kinds. It is clear that such support is of great importance for preparing lecturers to confront the challenges that they face in democratising their universities and establishing a new relationship with their students. However, granted the other problems that confront higher education throughout the region, it will remain difficult to convince university administrators and Ministry of Education officials that they should greatly increase spending on staff development units and programmes as an immediate priority.

6.5 BOOKS AND TEACHING MATERIALS

One of the biggest problems that the higher educational sector has had to come to terms with during the reform process is its dual legacy of a dearth of teaching materials and poorly equipped libraries. The continuing financial crisis that has beset higher education throughout the 1990’s has meant that very little has been done to address these problems out of central government funds. In Latvia, for

example, although government spending on higher education increased by 26 percent between 1995 and 1998, the price of paper alone rose by 60.8 percent during the same period. As a result in both 1996 and 1997 only 0.2 percent of annual government higher education funding was used for purchasing books and magazines, whilst no teaching aids and equipment were obtained with the help of the state budget at all. Although the government has now committed itself to providing money for new acquisitions, for much of the 1990's, Polish libraries had almost no funds to buy new books. In Romania, where by international standards it could be expected that somewhere between 12,000 to 15,000 new titles would be published every year, the actual figure has been between 4,000 and 6,000 titles throughout the 1990s.

6.5.1 FOREIGN PROJECTS

As we will see in a later Chapter, many international projects designed to upgrade a chosen area of the curriculum have built into them a specific category to cover the expenses of buying new foreign books to support the programme being developed. The EuroFaculty project in the Baltic states, for instance, has opened free-entry study libraries for economics, law and political science at all three national universities, each containing 4000 and 5,000 volumes, supported by on-line computerised catalogues. Initiatives such as these have been supported by a number of other international NGO's. Most notable amongst these is the American based Sabre Foundation, founded in 1969 and dedicated to creating 'free institutions' across the world.

6.5.2 FOREIGN-LANGUAGE BOOK DONATIONS

Since 1986, the Sabre Foundation has donated almost three million new English language books, journals, videocassettes and CD-ROMs, contributed by more than 200 American and British publishers, to schools, higher educational institutions and libraries through its programmes in Belarus, Bosnia and Hercegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Ghana, Grenada, Hungary, India (Tibetan schools project), Kyrgyz Republic, Latvia, Mongolia, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Tanzania, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, the West Bank and Gaza, and Zambia. (Albania and Slovenia, which are outside the programmes have also received books). The normal practice is for an NGO to be established as the national contact point and for it to distribute the books it receives at a fraction of their cost. In the Czech Republic, in 1998, new, hardback American editions of Paul Samuelson's well known Economics textbook were being sold for about three US dollars per copy for use in libraries or as course textbooks. The books available at such distribution points cover everything from business and economics; English language and literature; science and engineering; computer science; medicine, nursing, and health care; law and government; political and social science; to pre-

school, elementary and secondary education textbooks. Sabre also administers a programme for providing libraries with foreign journal subscriptions at reduced cost.

There is obviously a certain lottery element involved in Sabre Foundation book fairs. Institutions cannot order books, but must choose from those that are available and the books on offer are perhaps not always the very latest editions. Nevertheless, there are often multiple copies of standard English language university texts available and the programme has proved invaluable in making scarce, or almost non-existent budgets for purchasing foreign language books, go far further than might have been expected.

The British Council and its French and German equivalents, also run book donation schemes and sometimes maintain their own libraries in Central and Eastern European cities. In a variation on this pattern, the British government's 'Know How Fund' for Central and Eastern Europe ran a special textbook programme in the mid-1990's. The Know How Fund offered cheaper editions of current British university textbooks in a number of important subjects areas such as business and law. Although still expensive by local market standards, these books were sold at considerably below their international price. The advantage here was that the books could be ordered through local book wholesalers as a part of a policy of developing new courses in specific subject areas. Although in English, the books covered by the project had been specifically chosen with the needs of Central and Eastern Europe in mind and so often reflected precisely those subject areas where courses were beginning to be taught, but where there were no suitable local language textbooks available.

6.5.3 NATIONAL-LANGUAGE BOOK PUBLISHING

In Western Europe, there are complaints that although business and management are global disciplines they are still being taught almost exclusively within the national context. Those parts of the syllabus dealing with the internationalisation of business often seem merely 'bolted-on' to the national picture. The reverse is the case in Central and Eastern Europe. Here, most of the materials used to teach business and management are either in foreign languages or translated directly from them and the subject often seems strangely unrelated to the reality of transition economies. So much is this the case that the EuroFaculty has even developed its own policy of offering grants for the development of teaching materials, with a Baltic slant, as supplements to the existing international textbooks.

There is clearly a certain anomaly in the fact that the only textbooks available for some basic university courses should either be in a foreign language or directly translated from one. This is a reflection of both the speed with which Central and Eastern European universities have adapted their curricula in such areas as law,

economics and politics to the new democratic, free market realities and the problems that have afflicted national publishing industries, as they too have tried to make the transition. Even in the best of situations, it would have taken time to write and publish new textbooks for schools and universities, but the reality of the 1990's Central and Eastern European publishing trade was one of almost continuous crisis.

6.5.4 CRISIS IN PUBLISHING

In most countries, the early 1990's saw a publishing boom as once forbidden books were rushed onto the market. However, within a very short time, this boom was replaced by a depression in which the major sellers became not serious books but crime novels and soft pornography, although there was still a place in the market for popular histories such as Alan Bulloch's 'Hitler and Stalin' that was printed in translation across the region. Print runs for prestige books, which in the bigger countries had been somewhere between 100,000 to 200,000 copies in 1990-1991, had fallen to 5,000 copies only a few years later. National book distribution systems have not recovered from the break up of the state monopoly that existed under communism and, at the same time, production costs have risen at a rate of twenty-five to thirty percent annually, so that now they almost match world market standards. In the Czech Republic production costs account for fifty percent of the total cost of a book (compared to ten to twenty percent in the West). The advent of the free market has also meant an end to most of the subsidies that once covered about ninety percent of a book's cost, so that today, whilst incomes have risen only slowly, the cost of books has risen more than five times. Books are cheap in Romania by Western standards, but expensive by Romanian ones.¹³

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Yet, despite the problems, there are still a small number of highly ambitious publishers trying to publish quality books. Their main problem though is a lack of funding. What are needed are subsidies and grants, either at the production stage by sponsoring publishers or at the consumption end by sponsoring libraries to buy books.

6.5.5 ACADEMIC PUBLISHING

In Poland, any publisher of scientific books can apply for a subsidy of up to 50 percent of the total cost of each book, provided its merit is attested to by a panel of independent reviewers. The purpose of this subsidy is to keep prices as low as possible in a market where the print runs of such books seldom exceed 1,500 copies. Hungary too has developed a subsidy system run either through the National Cultural Fund or the Hungarian Book Foundation, but the real help for academic publishing has come through either the World Bank or the TEMPUS programme.

In Romania, as we have seen above, a large loan from the World Bank for educational reform has been partly used to publish new school textbooks. The injection of funds into the publishing industry represented by this loan has already had a stimulating effect on what was a rather moribund industry and similar loans in other countries in the region have had a similar impact. The PHARE/TEMPUS programme, according to its own figures for the years 1990-1995, claims to have supported the publication of 2,000 new books and 3,000 sets of lecture notes. Much of this money has gone to university departments which produce their own readers and short introductions to new subjects, such as political geography, to be sold through faculty level bookstores.

A certain amount has been used, together with funding from a variety of other international sources, to produce small print runs of a variety of academic books. Although it is hard to get an overall picture of the extent of such academic publishing, it is possible to identify a few examples in areas which relate to the subject of this study. Thus the Czech Academy of Sciences' Institute of Sociology has published a series of 50-150 page working papers in English and in Czech covering many aspects of the transformation process, from an 'Analysis of the Changing Relationship between Class and Party in the Czech Republic' between 1992 and 1996 to the 'Building of a Theory of Societal Changes in the Post-Communist European Countries'. A similar publishing programme has grown out of the discussions held at the Collegium Budapest, where almost a dozen Discussion Papers, reflecting the Collegium's chosen areas of study are published annually. Also in Hungary, the European Roma Rights Center in Budapest has managed to publish a number of studies covering the Roma experience in Romania, Austria, Slovakia, the Ukraine and elsewhere. The problem in all of these cases is that the print runs are small and distribution difficult. One innovative way of trying to overcome these problems is to publish on the internet. One such internet journal, *Intermarium*, which has high quality academic articles covering Central and Eastern European post-war history and politics, has been set up as a joint venture between the Institute of Political Studies of the Polish Academy of Sciences and Columbia University's Institute on East Central Europe.

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It is clear that academic publishing in Central and Eastern Europe is still in crisis. Neither the government nor the population has sufficient funds to support a market, which even in the best of times would be scarcely profitable. Poland, for example, which has a number of good local academic publishers and the largest book market in the region, imports large numbers of foreign academic books and exports only very few. Print runs are low and subsidies vital.

6.5.6 OPEN SOCIETY CENTER FOR PUBLISHING DEVELOPMENT

As in so many other areas, the Soros Foundation, has also been active in the book market. In 1996, it created the Budapest-based Center for Publishing Development

to encourage the publication of academic books judged to have relevance to the creation of an open society. In 1997, the Center spent around \$2.7 million on translating and publishing academic books, providing loans for publishers and creating support networks for distribution. The centrepiece of these activities is the Translation Project, which supports the translation of important academic books into Central and Eastern European languages. By the end of 1999, 1,248 translations had been supported, 357 of which had been published. For example, Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*, Walter Benjamin's *Illuminationen* and Eric Hobsbawm's *Nations and Nationalism since 1780* had been translated into eight languages and Norbert Elias' *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation*, Michel Foucault's *Surveiller et punir*, Friedrich von Hayek's *The Fatal Conceit*, Robert Nisbet's *Conservatism* and Robert Nozick's *Anarchy, State and Utopia* into six. A new pilot initiative within the Translations Project has recently been started, involving the sponsoring of translations of sixteen books on lesbian and gay issues into Bulgarian, Czech, Hungarian, Slovak and Slovenian. A second parallel project is 'East Translates East' which has so far produced 121 translations (and fourteen publications) of mainly literary books from one Central and Eastern European language into another.

At the same time, individual national Soros foundations are also involved in developing their own publishing schemes, often with the support of the Centre for Publishing Development. In Romania, for instance, the series 'Concepts in the Social Sciences' published by Du Style Publishers (a member of Universal Publishing Group) is sponsored within the Central European University Translation Project. The series includes more than twenty titles covering such areas as Democracy (A. Arblaster), Freedom (Zygmunt Bauman), Liberalism (John Gray) and Race and Ethnicity (J. Rex). In Lithuania, in 1992, the local Open Society Fund began to publish a series of translations in the social sciences and humanities 'Books of an Open Society'. One hundred titles have now been published in several categories (classics, guidelines for business, 20th century texts etc.) and close to another hundred are under preparation. The total print run of the 100 books published so far is 326 000 copies. They have been translated from eleven languages, and are being published by twenty two different publishers. This year a new category will be introduced concentrating on books in the social sciences and humanities written by local Lithuanian authors.

6.5.7 THE FUND FOR CENTRAL AND EAST EUROPEAN BOOK PROJECTS (CEEBP)

A similar project with a rather larger brief but less funding, is the Amsterdam based Fund for Central and East European Book Projects (CEEBP), founded in 1992 and operating under the auspices of the European Cultural Foundation.¹⁴ Its stated aim is to encourage "the free flow of thought and information across borders by providing grants and subsidies to publishers in Central and Eastern Europe for the publication of high-quality periodicals and books in the field of literature and the

humanities, primarily for translations involving the languages of Central and Eastern Europe and especially for scholarly works that are also of interest to a wider intellectual readership.” It also provides small subsidies to an array of academic and literary journals. On a smaller scale it also supports the translation and publication of literary and scholarly works from Central and East European languages into Western languages.

Within this framework the CEEBP gives subsidies to over sixty journals in Central and Eastern Europe, amongst which are ‘Aetes’, a Hungarian historical journal; ‘Baltos lankos’, a Lithuanian journal on humanities and social science, ‘Beszelo’, a Hungarian political and cultural monthly; ‘Izbor/Iztok Iztok’, a Bulgarian magazine of political analysis; ‘Nová přítomnost/The New Presence’, a Czech and English cultural-political monthly; and ‘Sfera Politicii’, a Romanian monthly of political analysis and debate. Between 1993 and 1997 CEEBP spent NLG 205,120 supporting the publication of thirty seven different translations of important books, including the Polish language publication of Timothy Garton Ash’s *In Europe’s Name. Germany and the Divided Continent*; the Hungarian language publication of Karl Mannheim’s *Ideologie und Utopie*; the Czech language publication of Rudolf Vrba’s *The Conspiracy of the 20th Century*; and the Slovak language publication of John Rawls’ *Political Liberalism*.

6.6 INNOVATIVE STRATEGIES

Quite apart from the problem of publishing books and providing materials to support the new curricula and courses being introduced at institutions of higher education across the region, there is a general recognition that something must be done to address both the problem of lecturer’s wages and the problem of teaching methodologies. All three are clearly major long-term challenges, which have so far only elicited a number of innovative, but limited short term panaceas.

The Ministries of Education in Poland and Hungary are trying to develop more flexible wage systems to reward institutional loyalty and individual achievements, whilst even in Albania the government has tried to find additional funds to try to keep university professors from leaving the profession. Whatever has been done so far has not proved sufficient and foreign donors and foundations shy away from supporting what they fear will become unwieldy, uncontrollable and long-term salary subsidy schemes. A number of initiatives have, though, been launched both to encourage young lecturers to stay in university teaching and to improve teaching methodologies. All of them are small scale, but they do contain some parts of a solution.

6.6.1 THE NEW EUROPE COLLEGE, BUCHAREST

One strategy for addressing the 'brain drain' of young scholars in the humanities and social sciences has been developed by Romania's New Europe College. This is the small, independent, non-profit institution mentioned in the chapter four in connection with elite post-graduate education, set up in 1994, by the country's Minister of Foreign Affairs, with considerable foreign financial backing. At any one time, the New Europe College grants ten three year scholarships to young lecturers who have just returned from studies abroad to work in a university or research institute, with care being taken to ensure that the awards are spread across the country. The scholarships finance an annual month long research trip abroad, and provide some funds to buy foreign scholarly books and to keep in touch with international academic developments and institutions.

6.6.2 THE CIVIC EDUCATION PROJECT

The Civic Education Project (CEP), a non-profit educational organisation, founded in 1991 and funded mainly by the Higher Education Support Program (HESP) of the Open Society Institute¹⁵ has been doing something rather similar, but on a regional basis. Its Eastern Scholars Programme, initiated in 1995, once again tries to encourage young academics to stay in higher education, by providing up to two years of financial and institutional assistance. In 1997-98, fifty such scholarships were awarded.

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The CEP is also active in trying to improve teaching methodologies. In late 1996, the Romanian branch of the CEP started its own Teaching Development Project designed to encourage young Romanian lecturers to adopt modern teaching techniques. Last year seven young academics were involved in this project. This is actually only a small part of more general regional CEP efforts in this area, which revolve around an annual spring workshop in Budapest on Active Learning Strategies in Higher Education, which is open to faculty from throughout the region. In all, around 1,400 lecturers take part in Soros organisation initiatives for faculty and curriculum development. The CEP also offers help to other local initiatives. For instance, in the Czech and Slovak Republics, CEP members take part in the Novicius junior faculty development project, run by the Jan Hus Educational Foundation, which has now been running for more than four years and is designed to improve lecturing and presentation techniques in humanities and law subjects.

6.6.3 EUROFACULTY

The Baltic country based EuroFaculty has also been active in these areas and its experiences tend to support the idea that the best way to encourage the modernisation of teaching methods is by concentrating upon the new generation of higher

education lecturers. Set up, as part of a Danish-German initiative in 1993 and now funded by the Danish, Finnish, German, Norwegian and Swedish governments and the European Union's PHARE/TEMPUS programme, its mission is to promote the sustainable reform of law, economics, public administration and political science teaching at the three major Baltic nation universities up to and including Masters level.

At first, it was thought that the organising of a demonstration series of intensive and compact courses, running alongside the existing curriculum, but taught by foreign (western) lecturers, in all of the target subjects, would be enough to transform teaching methodologies and curricula. It soon became apparent, however, that this kind of reform by osmosis was not going to work. Students were not attracted to courses that were not really part of their programmes and local lecturers, seeing this as one more ad hoc and short-term foreign initiative, did not feel involved in or committed to the project

As a result the EuroFaculty has been transformed into a permanent part of the three universities' structure, whereby, in 1998-99, a predominantly foreign faculty directly taught twenty economic courses, seventeen law courses and fifteen public administration/political science courses in English as a part of or alongside the existing university programme. As part of its mission, the EuroFaculty has run a series of programmes to retrain Baltic university staff. However, by their own appraisal, such retraining has had only limited success and the pool of those who could be suitably retrained was rather small. EuroFaculty strategy now has switched to the younger generation of academics.

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In 1997, the EuroFaculty set up a Remedial MA Fellowship Programme at Tartu University, Estonia, jointly funded with the Estonian government. The idea is to provide an intensive course for gifted economics graduates to upgrade their knowledge and skills to international standards that they would otherwise fall below. With this support, they are able to transfer onto a Western Ph.D. programme. After receiving their doctorates, the students are contractually obliged to return to Tartu University and teach for a minimum of five years, thus forming the backbone of a new generation of academic staff. A similar programme to support Legal Studies students was started later.

6.7 CURRICULUM REFORM AND THE TEMPUS PROGRAMME

Of all the international aid programmes, the EU's TEMPUS/PHARE programme,¹⁶ which Slovenia was the last country in the region to become eligible for in 1994 (Moldova is not eligible), has proved the most useful in promoting the structured reform of higher education at the department and faculty level throughout Central and Eastern Europe. Through its Joint European Projects (JEP's),¹⁷ and Individual Mobility Grants (IMGs), with their stress on inter-university activities, multi-

country cooperation, and related staff and student mobility, TEMPUS has helped the region's higher educational institutions to establish contacts with Western European academic institutions. TEMPUS addresses the fundamental issues of reform: the development of new curricula for existing courses and the establishment of completely new courses and programmes, the introduction of new teaching and learning methods and the purchase of essential equipment. TEMPUS has also helped to retrain university administrators so that they are more able to run the new reformed universities.

Despite criticism of its cumbersome and bureaucratic procedures, TEMPUS remains very important in the continued development of the higher educational system and in recent years it has begun to switch its attention to issues such as university management and institution building as it helps the higher educational sector adapt its procedures to EU norms and standards. It has done all of this with the clear intent of linking higher educational reform to the overarching strategy for European integration. Within this context, for instance, it is now paying special attention to the need to harmonise curricula and training in the regulated professions in the partner countries with those in the Member states.

6.7.1 TEMPUS AT WORK

For example, the programme has supported the development of post-graduate courses in European Law at the Hungarian university cities of Miskloc, Pecs, Szeged and Budapest. These are designed to ensure that newly graduating lawyers have a firm basis in European Union law and, by continuing education, to allow already practising lawyers to retrain. In 1998, TEMPUS supported a consortium that for the first time united five faculties at Slovenia's two national universities in a common project to develop courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level as part of a joint, uniform programme in European Studies. Bulgaria has taken part in over 150 TEMPUS projects and over twenty Bulgarian universities have taken part in TEMPUS activities in such priority areas as Law, European Studies and European Law, contemporary European languages, and teacher training. In the three Baltic States the stress has been on university management projects and support for commonly set regional educational priorities aimed at facilitating the pre-accession process.

Since joining the TEMPUS programme, Romania's focus has moved from curriculum development in the applied sciences to the social sciences, humanities, and management, with much attention being directed at improving the institutional structure and management of the Romanian higher educational system. Between 1992 and 1995, 861 Albanian teaching and scientific employees were included in TEMPUS sponsored university exchange programmes and more than 230 Albanian students attended six to nine month university courses. Only in Slovakia, because of the political sensitivities stirred up during the Meciar years, has TEMPUS been

much less active in supporting projects involved in stimulating internal university reform. In its place, it has concentrated on course development. Now in the post-Meciar era the priority has swung back to institution building as part of the pre-accession strategy. The aim being to provide European Integration training for Slovak civil servants through continuing education courses provided by Universities.

The pre-accession strategies of the region now stand at the centre of TEMPUS activity. This means a greater concentration upon restructuring study programmes to more nearly match EU norms and establishing more long and short, academic and non-academic programmes concentrating on European Studies. In the Czech Republic this includes institution building and the promotion of new courses in areas of strategic importance, such as public administration and the training of civil servants to deal with EU issues. In Albania and Bulgaria, it also includes the development and improvement of university management practices and the establishment of a university self-assessment quality control system.

6.8 GEORGE SOROS AND THE OPEN SOCIETY FOUNDATION

A quite different kind of programme, but one which has also become a major player in the field of higher education reform in Central and Eastern Europe is that which takes place under the umbrella of the Open Society Foundation, funded by George Soros, the Hungarian-American financier and philanthropist. George Soros, through his foundation, finances an array of different local and regional agencies, all of which, in their different ways, are dedicated to setting up programmes supportive of 'civil society'. At the national level there are autonomous non-profit Soros Foundations,¹⁸ which have generously supported a wide range of educational initiatives on a national basis, some of which have been mentioned in this study. In order to help the individual national Soros Foundations to develop a coherent policy framework for their different educational activities, an Institute for Educational Policy (IEP) was set up in early 1998, as part of the Budapest based Open Society Institute.

Alongside the national foundations, works the International Higher Education Support Programme (HESP), set up in 1991 to promote the advancement of higher education within the humanities and social sciences throughout the region of Central and Eastern Europe, Central Asia, and the Transcaucasus. HESP has paid particular attention to supporting projects directed at curriculum reform, faculty development, and the development of institutional leadership and managerial capabilities. HESP's 1997 expenditures in pursuit of this goal totalled approximately \$16 million.

The foundations and programmes of the Open Society Foundation provide considerable financing for intra- and inter-regional staff and student mobility. They

provide funding for several regional resource centres, workshops for curriculum and faculty development, mobility and partnership grants and fellowships, courses, and seminars.

Students and scholars from Central and Eastern Europe may also compete for funding for international studies by applying to the Network Scholarship Programmes, which is jointly funded by the United States Information Agency, the British Foreign and Commonwealth Office, the Cambridge Overseas Trust, and a wide range of higher education institutions around the world. The goal is to train future generations of university professors in the humanities and social sciences, to address key professional training needs through fellowships in fields unavailable or underrepresented at home country institutions and to assist outstanding students from a range of backgrounds to pursue their studies in alternative academic or cultural environments. The programme's 1997 expenditures totalled approximately \$11.9 million.

There are, for instance, 100 short-term and 100 long-term Chevening Awards for degree and non-degree study at graduate institutions in the United Kingdom. There are about 100 awards for students from the entire region who have studied at the Central European University to support various kinds of advanced studies. There are twenty full four-year fellowships to pursue an undergraduate degree at the American University in Bulgaria. There are over 70 one-year, Undergraduate Exchange Programme non-degree awards to second-year students pursuing degrees in the social sciences and humanities in their home countries with co-funding provided by the US host universities in the form of full and partial tuition waivers. There are also 100 Soros Supplementary Grants for students throughout the region who, whilst studying within the region are outside of their home countries; and a number of partial scholarships for those wishing to take Ph.D programmes abroad. In all, in 1998, there were about 1,000 awards for candidates from twenty eight countries for advanced studies at universities around the world. The question of intra- and inter-regional student and staff mobility will be the subject of the next chapter, but it is already clear that the Soros network has made a major contribution in this area.

6.9 CONCLUSION

The reform process in higher education faces a series of formidable blockages, besides the overriding question of funding. Not least of these are the defence mechanisms raised by people within the sector, at lecturing, administrative and ministry levels, who, whilst recognising the need for change, fear its effects upon themselves. This individual and institutional resistance and inertia can only be really swept aside if governments decide to invest both political and financial capital in building an irresistible momentum for change. In practice, though, higher education reform has hardly ever been placed at the centre of political

debate, except when it touches on other raw spots in the national psyche. In so far as the public thinks about higher education at all, it is more likely to be in a positive, than a negative light. In Hungary, the fact that the number of people with professional degrees in medicine, law and education is slightly higher than the EU average is a matter of pride. This tends to mask from public perception the underlying crisis, characterised by a brain drain out of academia, the collapse in lecturer status and pay, old fashioned teaching methods and scarce teaching materials.

Nevertheless, despite the unfavourable circumstances much has been achieved, far more perhaps than could have been expected looking at the unfavourable circumstances. Even though there is still sometimes a rather large gap between theory and reality, the direction of the reform process is clear and irreversible. Each step, small though it might be, is designed to make national higher educational norms more 'European'. After almost ten years of doing little more than providing a legislative framework and then basically allowing higher education to reform itself as best it could, governments are beginning to once again turn their attention to developing long term strategies of reform. The increasing availability of World Bank loans in this sector should greatly aid the process of developing better national procedures for financing and managing higher education.

The TEMPUS programme has done much to help the development of new curricula and to build up local expertise in this area by bringing experts from East and West together in its JEP projects. Although a large programme, TEMPUS, because it operates on a small individual project basis, has done a great deal to spread the spirit of renewal across the spectrum of higher educational institutions. This has more than made up for its sometimes complex, cumbersome and slow procedures, which have as much to do with sharing its largesse between Western European countries as with reforming Central and Eastern European higher education.

TEMPUS activities run in parallel with a host of smaller programmes, some of the most notable of which have been mentioned above. Individual projects have developed their own strategies for slowing the brain drain from higher education, encouraging the inflow of new staff and raising the standards of teaching. Many initiatives of this kind are either supported by or adopted on a region-wide basis by the Soros Foundation, which has launched many projects for curriculum and staff development across the region.

All such programmes are valuable, but they rest on potentially shifting sands. The Soros Foundation, for example, has as its aim, not the long-term support of the region's higher educational structures, but the development of 'open societies' throughout the former Communist bloc. This means that all of its own programmes and all the initiatives that it supports are constantly being reassessed in the light of this overarching aim. The Soros Foundation supported Civic Education Project, which up until now has mainly focused its attention on Central and Eastern Europe and the European part of the former Soviet Union, has recently

announced new initiatives in the Caucasus, Central Asia, including Mongolia, and the Far East of the Russian Republic.¹⁹ It is probable that this change in strategy will have a direct affect upon its activities in its more traditional bases of activity. Indeed, as has been mentioned, the Polish CEP activities are also being rationalised with the avowed aim of making them sustainable once the CEP is no longer present in the country. There are clear indications that the focus of Soros Foundation activities will increasingly shift further eastward to those areas where it is judged nascent open societies could most benefit from the organisation's support.

While small projects, backed by foreign governments or foundations, can do much to develop innovative local strategies for dealing with specific problems, it is important that the region's governments recognise that the crisis can only really be solved on a national level if they allocate more funds to higher education.

NOTES

- ¹ Stephen Baskerville: Redeveloping Higher Education in East-Central Europe: Making the Most of Western Assistance - *International Educator* (Vol. 6, No. 4, Summer 1997).
- ² On average, teacher and education staff remuneration represent seventy eight percent of the total cost of education in the European Union.
- ³ COST A2 project “*Europe’s Integration – Labour Force Brain Drain*”, quoted in the Slovenian UNDP Human Development Report for 1998.
- ⁴ The ‘Panev’ Law on the De-Communisation of Science, banned university lecturers and scientific researchers who had occupied Communist Party posts even at the primary party organisation level from being elected to administrative positions and boards. Debate about the law has created lasting tensions.
- ⁵ Stephen Baskerville: Redeveloping Higher Education in East-Central Europe, *op cit.*
- ⁶ Marci Shore: *Prague Post* (22nd-28th February, 1995).
- ⁷ Dr. Daniel Calingaert: *Education for the Transition* (CEP/IWM April 1997).
- ⁸ The survey was carried out by Artes Liberales.
- ⁹ UNESCO has been running a project in this area ‘European Network Staff Development in Higher Education’ (ENSDHE) and, since 1993, CEPES has published annually national reports in this area.
- ¹⁰ All the universities in Finland have such units, as do 16 universities in Germany and 11 in the Netherlands.
- ¹¹ All the information on staff development has been taken from: Dr. Brigitte Berendt: *Academic Staff Development in Europe* (paper presented to the UNESCO World Conference on Higher Education, 1998).
- ¹² Five institutions in Slovakia and eight institutions in the Czech Republic were identified as offering courses.
- ¹³ The Krems Circle: *Publishing in Central and South-Eastern Europe* (Second Report, 1997).
- ¹⁴ Funding has been provided by the European Cultural Foundation, the Prins Bernhard Fonds, the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science and the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs.
- ¹⁵ CEP also receives funding from the Stanley Roth Sr. Charitable Lead Trust, USAID through the Eurasia Foundation, the American Council of Teachers of Russian (ACTR), the Andrew W.Mellon Foundation, and from private donors.
- ¹⁶ Adopted by the Council of Ministers of the European Communities in May 1990 ‘to support the development and renewal of the higher education systems in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, through co-operation with partners in the European Community’.
- ¹⁷ JEPS must involve at least one EU Member State higher education institution, one institution (higher education institution, enterprise or other organisation)

from another EU Member State and one higher education institution from each partner country involved in a project. The Netherlands was involved in twenty nine percent of all Joint European Projects in 1995.

- ¹⁸ The 24 national Soros Foundations and related entities alone spent approximately \$300 million in 1994 - *Building Open Societies: Soros Foundations 1994* (Open Society Institute, New York, 1995).
- ¹⁹ *CEP Newsletter* (Volume 4, Number 2, 1999).

7 MOBILITY AND COOPERATION

7.1 INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of students studying outside their own countries has been on a rising curve since the early 1950's, but has accelerated worldwide in recent decades. UNESCO figures show that ten percent of students from 'Countries in Transition', a definition including all the countries of the former Soviet Union and the old Eastern European Communist bloc, are studying abroad, forty percent of them in the Russian Federation, where they now represent eighty percent of all foreign students.¹

This latter figure disguises the fact that student numbers from the eleven countries at the centre of this study have slowed to a trickle. Indeed, soon after 1989, throughout Central and Eastern Europe the old enforced patterns of student mobility, the apex of which entailed a journey to an elite university or specialised institute in Moscow, faded away as the financial and other structures which supported Eastward and regional mobility collapsed with the demise of the Soviet Empire. Attention switched to new destinations in the West and since 1989 there has been an increasing flow of students and staff following exchange programmes moving in both directions, many supported by the European Union's PHARE-TEMPUS (mentioned earlier) and SOCRATES-ERASMUS (mentioned below) programmes. Indeed fifteen percent of the foreign students now enrolled in Germany come from 'countries in transition'.

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7.2 REGIONAL OUTFLOWS AND REGIONAL CROSS-FLOWS

Unthinkable before 1991, Albanian undergraduates are now studying in large numbers in such countries as Italy, France, Greece, the United States, Poland, Romania and Bulgaria. American university summer schools have opened up in the more picturesque capitals of Central and Eastern Europe and have increasingly tried to recruit some local students to join in. At the lecturer and research level there has also been a great expansion of contacts only constrained by lecturing obligations and financing. Indeed most, if not all, Central and Eastern higher educational institutions still remain dependent on foreign funding for exchanges and scholarships to escape isolation. In the other direction come organised groups through programmes such as the Fulbright and, increasingly, inter-university exchanges.

The other side of the coin is represented by Slovenia, where the number of students from the other former republics of Yugoslavia has declined sharply over the last decade and continues to fall. Multilateral cooperation of the kind encouraged by the European Union's programmes can appear, at first sight to have had a negative effect upon inter-regional cooperation. Romania, for instance,

stresses its theoretical commitment to the Economic Council of the Black Sea's declared desire to promote common educational projects, however, in practice, it looks to the West rather than its neighbours when it comes to educational exchanges and other help in its ongoing reform of the country's educational system.

This western orientation is actually not so surprising when one considers that the ultimate aim of all the countries in the region is integration into the European Union at the earliest possible moment, and that the key to this is to demonstrate a commitment to alignment in as many areas as possible. It is to facilitate this that the European Union has not only set up specific programmes, such as TEMPUS, to encourage the educational reform process in Central and Eastern Europe, but has also allowed the candidate countries to enter its existing staff and student mobility programmes under the SOCRATES-ERASMUS programme, which became operational in 1997/1998. However, there are clear signs that multilateral cooperation does not rule out regionally based academic cooperation and may even be a prelude to it. Both are complementary rather than competitive approaches to the same perceived problem and it would seem likely that the development of one would in turn favour, rather than impede, the growth of the other.

7.3 EUROPEAN UNION STUDENT MOBILITY PROGRAMMES

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Encouraging student and staff mobility across the borders of Europe has been at the centre of attention of European Union educational policy in recent years. The ERASMUS (European Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students), founded in 1987, had by 1993 already supported more than 200,000 student and 15,000 faculty exchanges within the framework of 2,200 Inter-University Co-operation Programmes, in which 14,000 departments of 1300 institutions were involved.

Today, the European Union supports the world's most ambitious, well structured and best funded programme for regional co-operation in higher education. Support for these programmes is bound to continue to increase, especially in view of the European Commission's November 1997 'Towards a Europe of Knowledge' initiative. Increased mobility has in turn raised questions concerning the development of standard Union-wide evaluation and assessment procedures for universities, programmes and research and standard course credit systems which can be easily transferred from one institution to another.

7.3.1 THE EUROPEAN UNION'S SOCRATES PROGRAMME

The most important European Union programme encouraging staff and student mobility between its member states is the SOCRATES (European Community Action Programme for Co-operation in the Field of Education), which was set up in March

1995 as an umbrella to unite and give renewed impetus to the work already being done by existing EU programmes such as ERASMUS, Lingua, ARION² and Eurydice,³ in the areas of higher education, school education and other transverse areas, such as the promotion of linguistic skills, open and distance learning, and information provision.

Part of its funds, which amounted to a total of ECU 850 million for the 1995-1999 period and are set to rise by about sixty percent over the next budgetary period, are used to foster cooperation with international organisations such as UNESCO and the OECD, and with non-member countries such as Malta, Cyprus and the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe.⁴ Not all of this money is really new, some of it has been drawn from the funds already committed to the PHARE/TEMPUS programme.

Socrates is open to educational establishments, students, schoolchildren and teaching staff as well as to teachers', students' and parents' associations. The resources reserved for its higher educational projects (Chapter I ERASMUS) must account for at least fifty five percent of the total SOCRATES budget.⁵ Under the ERASMUS sub-programme universities can get financial assistance to support activities with a European dimension. These include 'institutional contracts' (for exchanges of students and teaching staff, the European course credit transfer system, curriculum and course development, intensive courses, study visits); themed networks; and student mobility grants.⁶ In addition to this, some support is also available under Chapter IV for European projects concerning open and distance education and learning; under Chapter V for the exchange of information through the Eurydice, ARION, and NARIC sub-programmes and for the promotion of the European dimension in adult education.

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The new generation of SOCRATES II Programmes, which started on January 1, 2000 and ends in December 2004 should enable 2.5 million people (1.2 million students, 200,000 teachers, 400,000 young people in training schemes and 660,000 young people under the Youth Programme) to participate in mobility programmes.

7.4 REGIONAL MOBILITY SCHEMES

There are though other forms of academic cooperation and mobility linking Central and Eastern European countries and their surrounding regions, which have developed and operate outside the TEMPUS Individual Mobility Grants and Joint European Projects/Compact and the SOCRATES/ERASMUS programmes. These are important because they have the potential to build up confidence between neighbours and to develop intra-regional contacts alongside the increasing national relationships with the European Union.

At the most simple level is the 'shared classroom' experiment, under which the universities of Graz (Austria) and Maribor (Slovenia) are linked by a bus shuttle twice daily. At a slightly more complex level are the UNESCO Unitwin Chairs, which are financed through UNESCO as focal points for the development of inter-university, trans-national networks, such as that operating in the Baltic universities in the field of environmental education and research. An interesting tri-partite ring of cooperative contacts has been built up within the Czech-Polish-German border region that now falls within the 'Glacensis' Euro-region. Developed by the Department of Social Sciences at the Pedagogical Higher School in Hradec Kralove, in the Czech Republic, this now includes the Czech universities in Pardubice and Olomouc and also the Universities of Wroclaw, Zielona Gora and Zittau and the Evangelical Academy of Görlitz.

7.4.1 COLLEGIUM POLONICUM AND CROSS-BORDER MOBILITY

The most ambitious example of cross border academic mobility and cooperation is the development of a joint German-Polish University, the Collegium Polonicum, in Slubice, Poland, involving the European University Viadrina (EUV), in Frankfurt/Oder and the Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU) in Poznan. Jointly founded in 1991 by agreement between the Ministry of Education of the Polish Republic and the Ministry of Science, Research and Culture of the German Federal State of Brandenburg, the Collegium Polonicum started its first Polish law courses for students from the European University Viadrina in October 1993. In October 1999, it introduced a new study course "Comparative Studies on Central Europe", to be taken either as a one-year certificate course or a two-year Masters programme. Its specially built premises, developed by the AMU, are still not complete, but its library, supported by the Foundation for German-Polish Cooperation, was opened in 1995. Besides the governments of Poland and Brandenburg and this Foundation, the Collegium is also supported by The European Union's PHARE and its Interreg II fund.

The idea behind the Collegium is that it should offer Polish and German language classes and a series of courses that supplement the curricula already being offered by the EUV and AMU. Beyond this the Collegium's role is to promote scientific exchange between Germany and Poland and to study the specific problems of border regions and of cross-cultural communication between Western and Eastern Europe within the context of deepening the idea of a united Europe. Apart from its purely academic function, Collegium Polonicum is expected to play the role of a cultural centre, hosting conferences, seminars and meetings developing Polish-German relations in general and acting as a meeting place where people from both sides of the Oder can visit artistic events, the library and clubs.

As a rule, students enrolled at Collegium Polonicum are first matriculated at either AMU or EUV. Lectures and classes are conducted in Polish, German, English and

French. Current research programmes concentrate on comparative studies of economic, political, legal and cultural problems in border regions; economic, legal and cultural problems of the EU's eastward expansion and the protection and development of the natural environment of the Oder region.

7.4.2 THE 'ADJACENT PROGRAMME' AND REGIONAL MOBILITY

The 'Adjacent Programme' is a regionally based mobility scheme, which operates on an open agenda with priorities but no exclusions, designed to encourage academic exchanges with the Baltic states, adopted by the Nordic Council of Ministers in 1991. Northwest Russia was added to the programme in 1994. The Nordic Council stresses that intra-Nordic cooperation of this kind has the same importance from its perspective as intra-EU cooperation.

Since its inception, the programme has provided some 2,000 individual mobility grants (for teachers, researchers, advanced students and also higher education administrators) as well as institutional support for networking activities to applicants from the Nordic and adjacent areas. Most of the mobility has been from the adjacent areas to Nordic countries, with incentives provided to ensure that those who receive awards keep in touch with, and return to their home country at the end of the grant period, hopefully to spread the information that they have acquired.

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7.4.3 THE CEEPUS PROGRAMME AND INTRA-REGIONAL COOPERATION

The Central European Exchange Program for University Studies (CEEPUS) is a good example of the ways in which some of the inherent structural limitations in the region can be overcome in developing a regional mobility scheme. Proposed by Austria at a Graz November 1992, conference "Education for a New Europe" and starting to operate in 1994-95, CEEPUS is an inter-governmental agreement covering nine countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Hungary, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia, followed by Croatia, the Czech Republic and Romania). Its main purpose has been to develop student mobility between the members of its Central European University Network. This mobility covers courses taken at institutions of higher education, summer courses, excursions and internships; most of what is on offer is taught in English.

One of the noteworthy features of the CEEPUS system is the way in which it has created a fair and equal system for intra-regional mobility which does not depend upon the financial resources of the participating institutions. Exchanges are balanced by counting the number of scholarship months contributed by each host country and this mechanism has helped to stimulate the flow of students from country to country in a way which would have been impossible had a financial

accounting system been adopted. Using the 'currency' of CEEPUS, the total number of 'scholarship months' contributed by participating countries has grown from 725 in 1994-95 to 1,919 for 1997-98. This has been accompanied by a tendency for the contribution made by each member country to equalise.

More recently, CEEPUS has begun to develop thematic exchange networks, covering specific areas of joint concern such as the environment. Its latest strategy has been to try to reach out to its Balkan neighbours, Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia and Serbia-Montenegro and to involve them in cooperative projects under the general heading 'Perception of the Self versus the Other'. The idea is that this project should be run on the same basis of donated scholarship months as other CEEPUS initiatives. The central activity is an oral history project "Tell Us Your Story". Although it is unclear how well the project has ridden out the Kosovo crisis, the events of 1999 have only underlined the need for precisely these kinds of low key confidence building measures involving all of the different ethnic groups who inhabit the area.

CEEPUS does not intend to compete with but to complement the TEMPUS and SOCRATES programmes and it is confronted by similar problems, the most fundamental of which is the development of a commonly recognised and accepted system of credit transfer, accreditation and the transferability of diplomas and degrees.

7.5 THE INTERNAL EFFECTS OF INCREASING REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL MOBILITY

Increasing student mobility, whether at the intra-regional or regional level has had a number of clear repercussions for higher educational institutions in Central and Eastern Europe. It is, in the first place, very clear that the institutional structures underpinning mobility programmes will have to be upgraded and allowed to operate horizontally across individual faculties, if mobility programmes are to be developed in an equitable manner. At the same time, the structure of tertiary level programmes and the control systems being used to determine their quality will have to increasingly match those being used in European Union countries. In all of these areas, the higher educational sector in Central and Eastern Europe has been making a clear attempt to adopt standards which are compatible with the spirit of the Bologna Declaration and the Lisbon Convention. However, progress has clearly been slow in some areas, partly because of the general financial crisis that besets the sector, and partly because new initiatives, especially in creating international offices, sometimes conflict with the plans of existing university and college power centres.

7.5.1 INTERNATIONALISATION OFFICES

One important factor in the development of either national or international mobility programmes is the need to develop a proper structure of International Offices in Central and Eastern European higher education. Up until today, the normal pattern has been for an exchange or mobility programme to be developed by an individual faculty, rather than the university as a whole. The proceeds from such activities, especially those involving American students, have then been used to subsidise the faculty's own activities, often in such mundane areas as photocopying and staff travel expenses, for which there would otherwise be little or no budget. The problem with such an arrangement is that it has tended to create a division between 'rich' and 'poor' faculties, with the separation being decided by customer priorities rather than those of the university itself. In such a structure, and especially at a time of financial restraint, money earned by one faculty is hardly ever used to support activities somewhere else in the institution. There are more than enough priorities close at hand. And yet, this process of cross-subsidisation has been one of the factors that has allowed universities and colleges in other parts of the world to protect important, but 'loss-making' departments from closure, at a time of shrinking budgets.

As in the areas of developing contacts with the small and medium business sectors and committing institutions to play a more active role in local development matters, mentioned in Chapter Five, the setting up of international offices has not really been seen as a priority, by the region's educational institutions. However, as the trend towards greater student mobility increases, so their importance will become ever more apparent. Recognising this, the TEMPUS programme is beginning to pay more attention to supporting cooperative JEP projects designed to transfer knowledge about the operation of International Offices from EU member states to the candidate countries.

A typical example of what will become increasingly common projects in this area, is currently being carried out in Poland. Here, three institutions, the Medical Academy in Gdansk, the Medical Academy in Wroclaw and the Gdynia Maritime University are working to set up their own International Relations Offices, to run their mobility schemes and international contacts. At the heart of the project, and at the heart of similar discussions which will be needed throughout the region's higher educational structures, are three questions. What will be the position of the offices within the university management structures? What links will they have with other administrative organs? and What links will they have with academic departments? The challenge will be to ensure that such internationally oriented offices are not be pushed to the periphery of organisations and made service agencies for the almighty faculties, but that they are firmly established at the centre of their administrative structures, as the key actors in developing international contacts across all sectors of the university or college.

7.5.2 COURSE MODULES AND COURSE CREDITS

In recent years several Western European countries have responded to the challenges of increased student national and international mobility and 'lifelong learning' by developing flexible credit and module based degree programmes. These are, designed to make it easier for students to transfer from one major subject to another within one institution or from one institution to another, without having to start over from scratch. By now, over two thirds of all EU/EEA countries have taken this step (notable exceptions being France, Austria, Belgium/Wallonia and Greece) and most of the systems in use are compatible with the European Credit Transfer System, championed by the European Commission.

In Central and Eastern Europe degree programmes have remained far more rigid and these possibilities are still much more limited. In some faculties students receive little or no instruction in other disciplines except for the one in which they are specialising. Even in those systems where cross-disciplinary contextual courses are part of the curriculum these are normally presented within the faculty itself, even if this means duplicating courses that are already being offered in other faculties. Students are not expected to change their major subject and in such a system there is a hesitancy to give credit for courses done in another faculty, let alone another university or another country. This situation has been made worse by the pervadingly condescending attitudes exhibited by established universities either to their newly founded provincial counterparts and other newly established state institutions of higher education, or to privately funded higher educational institutions in general.⁷ In Poland, for instance, the rigidities of the present system of higher education have made it almost impossible for students to study abroad for one semester or a full academic year without this having a detrimental effect on their progress.

Under pressure from the increasing levels of international mobility over recent years, the situation is, though, beginning to change, albeit slowly and unevenly. In Estonia, a system is already in place allowing students to complete obligatory curriculum requirements at various rates, thus giving them some freedom in designing their own study programmes. In Lithuania, the groundwork has been laid for a mechanism that will allow students to transfer credits from one institution of higher education to another on an agreed basis. In Hungary, the 1993 Law on Higher Education encouraged a process of curriculum modernisation, which means that students can now increasingly choose optional and sometimes even compulsory courses from an array of options. It is the intention that this process will eventually lead to the development of modular based degree programmes, and some individual institutions have already made this step without waiting for the development of a comprehensive national system. Romania, for its part, has declared its intention of adopting the ECTS system wholesale as the basis for fixing both its credit and grading system and the overall workload required for different degrees.

In 1997-98, the Netherlands Organisation for International Cooperation in Higher Education (NUFFIC) led a TEMPUS consortium, including the Hungarian Equivalence and Information Centre, the Lithuanian Centre for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, the Latvian Academic Information Centre and the Czech Centre for Higher Education Studies, which investigated the question of the 'Recognition of Diplomas and Study Credit Points Across Borders'. At the end of its work, the consortium prepared a number of manuals covering such subjects as Credential Evaluation, Mutual Recognition, the European Network of National Information Centres (ENICS) and the Diploma Supplement in an attempt to bring together the best existing European practices and fostering the adoption of credit transfer systems within the framework of ECTS.

By signing the June 1999 Bologna Declaration, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe reaffirmed their intention of looking for a common pan-European solution to the problem of the cross recognition of courses and diplomas, as the basis for greater student and staff mobility throughout the European region. This, as the declaration makes clear, involves developing a common credit based degree system, in which credits from one university can be used to complete a degree at any other university.

7.5.3 QUALITY ASSESSMENT, ACCREDITATION AND EVALUATION

As the countries of Central and Eastern Europe move to diversify their educational systems, by introducing new forms of higher education and encouraging the growth of a private sector, so the question of quality assessment or accreditation and evaluation becomes of ever greater importance from both a national and international perspective. Many new players in the higher educational network have been set up, often in the absence of clear central controls. As the number of students continues to rise in the state sector and expenditures fall or stagnate, there is increasing talk of falling quality and the need to control expansion. Indeed, one Dean of Law told the author of how proud he was that only one in ten applicants were admitted to his faculty and his conviction that all of the new provincial law faculties should be closed down because their standards were not high enough.

Quality, though, is not determined by an institution's being 'public' or 'private', 'long established' or 'new', but is based on whether or not it adheres to certain standards; standards which should be designed not to surreptitiously exclude non-state institutions from higher education, but rather to set minimum and transparent criteria to which all must aspire. It is natural that some higher educational institutions should have higher standards than others, and people generally recognise which are a country's elite institutions and which are not. The point though is to ensure that all institutions, even if their competitive standing is comparatively low, should maintain a certain recognisable standard that marks them out as institutions of higher education and not manufacturers of sham degrees.⁸

The European Commission launched a pilot project on quality assessment in higher education in 1994. Since then, as increasing inter-European student mobility has put the creation of European-wide compatible quality assurance, evaluation and accreditation standards on the agenda, the subject has become a major topic in higher education policy debates. It has though, not yet resulted in an agreed Europe-wide assessment procedure, despite suggestions from the Confederation of National Rector's Conferences that an independent European Network of Quality Evaluation/Quality Management be established to help higher education institutions and evaluation agencies to compare and combine different national assessment methodologies and examples of good practice. At present eleven European Union countries have developed single national systems of evaluation conducted by one or more government or independent evaluation agencies, often combined with quality assurance mechanisms at the individual institution level. The United Kingdom as a major European provider of transnational higher educational qualifications, has also developed a code of good practice, supported by quality control procedures agreed upon by the higher education institutions and the national Quality Assurance Agency.

The discussions within the European Union countries are having a direct effect upon the way in which quality assessment, accreditation and evaluation procedures are being developed in the candidate countries. As was the case with the project to develop European-wide approaches to diploma and credit recognition across borders mentioned above, representatives from Central and Eastern European countries (in this case Lithuania's Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education and Slovenia's Centre for Evaluative and Strategic Studies) were included in a 1997-98 project, led by the UK's Open University Quality Support Centre, which, by identifying best national practices, was designed to promote compatibility between national quality assurance systems.

The lead being taken in this area by the European Commission does not mean that the countries of Central and Eastern Europe already have a precise blueprint to follow as they set up their own evaluation systems as part of the general reform of their higher education systems. The point is to develop systems which match up to the specific and diverse traditions and requirements of national educational systems whilst also passing the threshold of compatibility with common European Union practices. Consequently, the region's research capacity in these areas is also growing. Since 1992, the Centre for Science Policy and Higher Education, at the University of Warsaw, has been monitoring the direction of change within Polish higher education and the development of external and internal mechanisms for quality assessment of both teaching and scientific research. Alongside it, the Research Group of Evaluation Studies, at the University's Institute of Sociology, founded in 1998 on the basis of work already being done under PHARE auspices, has developed contacts with other Polish and foreign evaluation research centres and set up an Information Centre promoting 'democratic' evaluation procedures.

On the practical side, Bulgaria has based the remit of its own specialised National Agency for Assessment and Accreditation, which it set up in 1995 with the support of the Quality Support Centre of Britain's Open University, on existing Council of Europe and European Commission recommendations. Indeed one of its stated functions is to encourage higher education development towards western standards. The Agency had completed 20 programme assessments by November 1998 and by now should have extended its role from individual programme accreditation to institutional accreditation. Romania, for its part, has enlisted World Bank support to develop its system for continuously monitoring the standard of courses and research at higher educational institutions.

All three of the ex-Soviet Baltic States are trying to develop a common system for assessing the quality of their educational systems, as foreseen in the Declaration on Co-operation in Quality Assurance of Higher Education in the Baltic States, which was signed by the three Baltic Ministers of Education on 25 October, 1994. The agreed principle is that this will be based upon international standards and outside assessments. However the binding decisions on accreditation of higher education institutions and their study programs will be left to national quality assurance bodies which are currently being established in each Baltic state. The problem is that since their legislation is different, each state has to develop its own manuals and quality assessment methodology. Indications from Latvia suggest that these manuals and methodologies will however, as in Bulgaria, be based upon the developing European consensus.

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As part of a TEMPUS supported programme, the Latvian Ministry of Education and Science and its partners are aiming to create a higher education quality assessment accreditation system in Latvia, which will ensure that by 2003, all Latvian higher education programmes will be compatible with those of EU Member States and that the sectoral directives concerning the mutual recognition of professional qualifications will have been fully implemented.

It can hardly be a surprise within this context that it is Estonia and Lithuania, together with Romania, which have been among the first group of countries to ratify the Council of Europe/UNESCO sponsored Lisbon Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region.

7.6 VISITING LECTURERS

In conclusion, having looked at mobility both out of and within the Central and Eastern European area, it is perhaps worthwhile to spend some time looking at the effects of staff mobility, in the form of visiting lecturers, on the region's institutions of higher education. There is of course an inherent problem when it comes to integrating visiting professors into the host institutions and that is language. The

majority of those who have come to Central and Eastern Europe as visiting faculty have not been able to teach in the national language and many of their new colleagues are not particularly at home in English. Students, on the other hand, do have a surprisingly high proficiency in English, French and German and are often expected to take courses in one to three foreign languages as part of their studies. Nevertheless, it is highly unusual for compulsory courses to be given in non-national languages and visiting professors, although sometimes very popular amongst students, tend to find themselves on the list of optional, subsidiary subjects.

The Czech situation is typical. All Czech students are expected to study one, and more often two, foreign languages as part of their studies, which include a far higher number of courses than is the norm in some EU member states. The graduation requirement specifies a kernel of compulsory and examined courses and a pre-set number of optional contextual courses. The latter may require considerable work or the mere placing of a signature on a lecture room attendance sheet. It is these courses that visiting lecturers teach. They are attended by those whose language skills are sufficiently high, but they can rarely be taught as part of the core curriculum. This is the reality that all the visiting lecturer programmes must deal with, unless they are language teachers or end up at such Departments as that for British and American Studies at the Philosophical Faculty of Presov University in Slovakia, which is almost totally dependent on foreign assistance for its survival.

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Perhaps the most ambitious of visiting lecturer programmes has been the multi-country Civil Education Project (CEP), mentioned above with reference to its Eastern Scholars and lecturer training activities, run through the Soros Foundation and cooperating closely with both Yale University and the Central European University. Of equal interest, from our perspective, is the EuroFaculty Project supported by the European Union and a number of West European countries, which has also been mentioned above.

7.6.1 THE CIVIL EDUCATION PROJECT (CEP)

The CEP declares that in order for civic democratic values to become firmly entrenched, the higher educational sector must be helped to produce a mass of informed and critically minded graduates. With this in view, the CEP, in consultation with higher educational institutions throughout the region, recruits and pays western trained foreign scholars to teach at Social Science, Humanities and Law Faculties on one year contracts. In its first year of operation, 1991, fifteen CEP Visiting Lecturers went to eight universities in the former Czechoslovakia. In 1998/99 187 Visiting Fellows went to almost 100 higher educational institutions in nineteen Central/Eastern European and Eurasian countries

CEP fellows usually teach essential elective courses, which would otherwise not be on the curricula at all. In rare cases, on certain programmes, where the students' foreign language skills allow for it, CEP lecturers are the only instructors for given compulsory courses. The hope is that, by their example, CEP lecturers will help to make their Central and East European colleagues more aware of modern teaching methods (interactive teaching, discussions, creative course work etc.). At the same time the fellows are encouraged to involve themselves, as much as possible, in the daily life of their host institutions. Over the last decade, CEP lecturers have consequently been involved in curriculum development, seeking research funds, giving advice on foreign research and study programmes, helping library development projects, arranging faculty and student seminars, developing local language teaching materials, and organising public debates and lecture series.

In practice, the CEP programme, which has been active in the Baltic states since 1992, has brought more than sixty CEP Fellows to eight Baltic universities (Tartu University and Tallinn Pedagogical University in Estonia, Latvian University, Jelgava Agricultural University and Valmiera University College in Latvia, and Vytautas Magnus, Lithuanian Agricultural, Kaunas Technological and Vilnius University in Lithuania). Most CEP courses in the Baltic States have been in the disciplines of International Law, Public Finance, International Relations and, to a lesser extent, Sociology.

In Bulgaria, where the programme also started in 1992, more than forty CEP Visiting Fellows have taught various disciplines in the humanities and social sciences at eleven major state and private universities (Sofia University, Varna University of Economics, Varna Technical University, New Bulgarian University, International University, Svishtov Academy of Economics, Varna Free University, Burgas Free University, Rousse University, University of National and World Economy – Sofia, and Blagoevgrad University).

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The CEP also organises an annual student academic conference, bringing together students from across Central and Eastern Europe and the former states of the Soviet Union and a host of national activities. In almost every country CEP fellows are involved in coaching Moot Court teams for competitions across Europe. At Palacky University in Olomouc, Czech Republic, CEP lecturers are involved in the development of a new public administration programme with the Central Moravian Regional Development Agency to establish a regional training centre in EU affairs. In Spring 1999 CEP-Romania launched the Romanian Journal of Liberal Arts (RJLA), a semi-annual refereed academic journal. The journal offers a Forum for presenting and discussing contemporary research in all fields of liberal arts: humanities, social sciences and law. In Slovakia, a CEP Visiting Lecturer in Bratislava, organised a provocative and well-attended forum on Democracy in Slovakia in the run up to the September 1998 national elections.

In Hungary, the large number of CEP outreach activities include a Regional Conference on Business Ethics, a Round-table on Gender Issues, the publishing of a textbook on Ethnic and Minority Issues in the region, and the organisation of a National Human Rights Round-table in May 1999 as part of the European Council's European Human Rights Week. Another related activity is the Central European University and HESP backed Summer University (SUN), which attracts around 500 academics from across the region (many on full scholarships) to discuss new subject areas and new ways of teaching in old subject areas.

Finally, in Bulgaria, since 1996 an Annual CEP Balkan Debate Forum has been organised. The key to this Forum is that it attracts forty or more students from ten Balkan countries and organises them into multi-national debating teams to discuss current issues facing the region. This crossing of borders is enhanced by the fact that the teams do not know during the preparatory period whether they will be arguing for or against the motion put before them. The idea is that in this way the students involved will face up to their own preconceptions and prejudices and engage in an open and constructive dialogue with both their team mates and their opponents

7.6.2 EUROFACULTY

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The Baltic States based EuroFaculty, with its Directorate in Riga, and Centres at each of the three leading Baltic universities (Tartu University, Vilnius University, and the University of Latvia) has also already been mentioned. With a total staff of around 200 (predominantly local administrators) and an annual budget of about two million ECU, it is no small undertaking. Since switching tactics for the 1994/95 academic year at the end of its first year of operations, the EuroFaculty's strategy has been to organise full semester courses, properly integrated into the existing curriculum, allowing EuroFaculty's own visiting lecturers to team-teach basic undergraduate courses in co-operation with local faculty. The emphasis has been upon developing a basic core curriculum, as the foundation for more advanced courses.

This change of direction made the EuroFaculty much more than just another foreign aid programme. It became a player in local higher educational politics. Unable, by itself, to force any university faculty to change its programmes against its will, it has had to rely upon support from the university leaderships and national governments to pursue its aim. In Estonia, support from both sides has been strong and EuroFaculty has been integrated into the university, with a very visible campus presence. In Latvia, the government is supportive, but internal university politics have sometimes managed to smother EuroFaculty initiatives. In Vilnius, the failure of the government to back university reform in general has had a clear impact upon the EuroFaculty's own room for manoeuvre and its programme

remains smaller here than in the other two national universities, with far fewer courses and far fewer students involved.

The EuroFaculty has had the greatest impact on the teaching of economics. The Latvian government's commitment to improve economics teaching as part of its drive for European Union membership gave the EuroFaculty the institutional support it needed to create a four year Economics Honours BA Programme, which was first taught at the University of Latvia in the autumn of 1997. The thirty students admitted every year do a programme essentially identical with those taught at West European universities. The hope is that most of the graduates from this programme will go on to study at Masters level in one of the EU countries or the USA. In the autumn of 1998, third and fourth year undergraduates at Tartu University were given the option of entering a similar EuroFaculty administered BA Economics programme.⁹ Progress has been slower at Vilnius University, where a programme has now started to retrain lecturers for Microeconomics teaching in cooperation with the Faculty of Economics and Management. There is still a problem finding suitable lecturers for the more advanced courses, although it is hoped that here too a programme similar to the University of Latvia's BA Honours Programme will eventually be started.

The EuroFaculty has faced two major challenges in its attempts to contribute to the reform of the law curriculum. Firstly persuading the existing faculties of the need for it and secondly attracting suitably qualified foreign lecturing staff to help with the process of developing new courses. At Tartu, despite the fact that the rush to private practice decimated the faculty in the early 1990's, progress has been quickest. A new Civil Law programme has been agreed in principle, and over time local lecturers will be trained to teach it. At Riga, a promising start has been made, with the EuroFaculty teaching individual civil law courses, but no formal agreement has been reached about further steps. At Vilnius, however, despite some early success in curriculum reform, no long term agreement has been reached with the university and the foreign faculty position remains critical.

Since deciding in 1996 that the main focus of EuroFaculty should be on Public Administration and Public Policy, rather than Political Science, compulsory courses on Public Administration and Policy Analysis have been established by EuroFaculty at both Vilnius and Riga. At Tartu, where there are two local lecturers, with considerable western experience, progress in curriculum reform has been quick. This is perhaps because a completely new Faculty of Social Sciences has been created since 1990. At Vilnius another new organisation, the Institute of International Relations & Political Science has taken the initiative in developing a new curriculum and has been willing to accept EuroFaculty as one of its partners (in contrast to the situation in the Faculties of Law and Economics). At Riga, though, the fact that subjects connected with political science and public administration are taught in different departments has tended to mire the process of curriculum reform in a long process of negotiations.

The picture in Political Science is still more confused. At the Tartu Department of Political Science, basic courses like Political Theory, Comparative Politics, International Politics and International Political Economy are being offered, but EuroFaculty courses are not a compulsory part of the Political Science Department programme. In Riga, EuroFaculty has developed core courses on International Politics and International Political Economy and in Vilnius, the EuroFaculty has agreed to assist the Institute of International Relations and Political Science in developing undergraduate streams within the existing Master's programme

The University of Latvia and the EuroFaculty are also working together to develop proposals for a one year European Studies programme, offered at the Masters level by a newly created Institute of European Studies at the University. Partner universities for this project have been found in Denmark and the United Kingdom.

7.6.3 THE PROBLEMS OF FOREIGN ASSISTANCE

The attitude across the region towards foreign assistance programmes is mixed. Because of the desperate situation in which they find themselves, the Albanians are prepared to adopt almost any measures that are suggested to them, so long as the proposers provide money enough for the implementation phase. What the end result of this mixture of desperation and good intentions will be is hard to predict. At present it creates a contradictory picture in which innovative programmes are being introduced amidst continuing chaos, creating imbalances between subject areas and between the reality of society and theory of the classroom.

In a number of other countries, one sometimes encounters more grudging attitudes towards the good intentions of foreign organisations and foreign-funded NGOs in the higher educational field. It appears, for example, that the Civic Education Programme's operations in Poland are being wound down amidst suggestions that this kind of assistance is no longer necessary, whilst, in the Baltic states there have long been grumbles that the EuroFaculty sucks up money that might have been better spent within the actual departments that they are trying to reform. It is probably impossible to expect that that there would not be some feelings of resentment on the part of some local lecturers against foreign financed programmes that, by their very existence, seem to call into question their suitability and credentials as teachers of the social sciences. This resentment is only fanned by a strain of condescending impatience and arrogance, which is sometimes to be found amongst the cadres of visiting lecturers.

However such complaints, even when they are justified, should not blind us to the larger picture. The existence of organisations like the EuroFaculty provides a focus for outside donors who, understandably, like to see their funds directed at one overriding and definable goal. It seems unlikely, in fact, that, in the absence of the EuroFaculty, so much money would have been provided by the donor countries for

a seemingly more diffuse group of projects. Ultimately, one sign of the value of the EuroFaculty and the CEP schemes is their undoubted popularity amongst students.

It is also true that foreign aid programmes can inadvertently create a division between the 'haves' and 'have nots', in which some social science departments, normally in the capitals, prosper with the help of foreign funding and others, normally in the provinces, stagnate. There is undoubtedly a self reinforcing mechanism at work here too. Having started off supporting a department at one university, there is a natural tendency to offer study abroad and faculty exchange possibilities to these same, now trusted, counterparts. This tends to divide universities and faculties and create tensions and resentment as western money and staff create or exacerbate imbalances and differentials. This is perhaps inevitable, but outsiders should at least be sensitive to it and aware of how its effects might be controlled or constructively channelled.¹⁰

7.7 CONCLUSIONS

Since 1989, the countries of Central and Eastern Europe have increasingly become involved in European Union student and staff mobility schemes, run through both the PHARE-TEMPUS and Socrates-Erasmus programmes. The EU 'associated countries' are now eligible to take part in some of the Socrates II projects, which overall are expected to involve about 1.2 million students and 200,000 lecturers in mobility programmes over the next four years. Although it is clear that the main focus of regional mobility schemes involving Central and Eastern European countries is on movements from East to West, there are also some signs that mobility programmes within the region are also finally beginning to revive. These are still on a small scale, generally involving various forms of local cross-border mobility. The exception is the CEEPUS programme, which seems to have found a way of encouraging mobility between all the Central and Eastern European countries that takes full account of the budgetary restraints under which their higher educational systems have to function.

Moving in the opposite direction have been organised groups of lecturers, typified by the activities of those involved in the Civic Education Project and the Euro-Faculty. Although there are obvious limitations on what non-native speakers can achieve and signs of some small but understandable frictions between the guests and their hosts, both programmes have successfully brought western standards and norms of course development, teaching practice and extra-curricula involvement to the attention of universities spread throughout the region.

International exchanges of student and staff have also placed a number of other matters on the higher educational reform agenda. At its most simple, this involves setting up proper structures, such as International Departments and giving them sufficient institutional power to become the centre of all an institution's contacts in

this area. Although simple in theory, practice is complicated by the need to take-on the entrenched interests of faculties in this area.

On a more complex level, internationalisation has increased the need to develop course structures and quality control mechanisms that are compatible with those of other countries operating within the same mobility programmes. As mobility increases, two factors have assumed new importance. Firstly, that students involved in serious mobility schemes, or those who have gone abroad independently to study, should be able to get recognition for the courses that they have done abroad as part of their own course requirements at their home institution. Secondly, that their home institution should have some way of assessing the status and level of the higher educational establishments, where the courses have been taken. The first requires the development of a compatible pan European system of course credits and the second a pan European system of quality assessment, evaluation and accreditation. On the horizon, although not in place within the European Union either, might be the development of common norms to cover the content of particular subjects and even particular courses.

Moves towards creating compatible quality assessment and evaluation procedures is given greater impetus by two other factors. The first is the recent, but rapid, growth of the private sector in Central and Eastern Europe. In some countries, this sector is already playing a significant role and its importance everywhere is bound to increase as cash strapped governments struggle to meet the rising demand for tertiary level education. As the sector grows, so also will the need to develop clear and fair methods of quality assessment. From the government point of view too, the importance of independent quality indicators are also growing. Since 1989, governments throughout Central and Eastern Europe have stepped back from the direct control of higher education. In its place, in line with the growing norm in Western Europe, a system of assessing institutions and making financing dependent upon an array of quality output indicators needs to be developed. Quality assurance is thus associated with increased institutional autonomy, accompanied by greater social transparency and accountability.

NOTES

- ¹ *World Statistical Outlook on Tertiary Education* (UNESCO, 1997).
- ² ARION encourages study visits made by educational decision-makers.
- ³ The Eurydice Network is [1] an information system for policy-makers, providing direct access to information from other Member States on issues relating to education and [2] a provider of studies and information as a back-up for educational activities.
- ⁴ For example, in 1995 the EU-Czech Association Council invited the Czech Republic to join the Socrates, Leonardo da Vinci and Youth for Europe programmes. In 1996 first contacts on the basis of silent partnership were established. In October 1997, the Czech Republic joined the EU programmes and since then it has paid the annual, so-called 'entry ticket', which enables funding of the projects and student/teacher mobility within these programmes.
- ⁵ Chapter II (Comenius) activities for primary and secondary education must account for at least 10 percent of the total and Chapter III activities for cross-disciplinary activities, in particular language skills (Lingua), must account for at least 25 percent of the total.
- ⁶ Youth for Europe IV running from 1999 has been opened to the associated countries of Central and Eastern Europe. One of its aims is to promote youth exchanges for young people aged 15 to 25 outside any educational or training structure.
- ⁷ Such attitudes are not unknown in the EU, with both Greece and Denmark traditionally hesitant about transferring credits from non-university to university programmes.
- ⁸ For an extensive discussion of the different definitions of quality assurance, see Donald Ekong: Policy Paper on Quality -in- *World Conference on Higher Education* (Vol. 3 Commissions, Paris 1998).
- ⁹ Tartu University Economics Department was host to the International Trade, Labour Markets, and Integration Conference funded by PHARE/ACE in February 1999.
- ¹⁰ Education for the Transition (April 1997) - *op cit.* and Baskerville: Redeveloping Higher Education - *op cit.*

8 REFORMING HIGHER EDUCATION CURRICULA IN THE POST-COMMUNIST ERA

8.1 INTRODUCTION

In its founding statement, issued in Prague in January 1997, the ‘Artes Liberales’ association of Central and Eastern European academics stressed the relationship which its members felt existed between the provision of broad based liberal arts programmes for the widest possible cross-section of students in higher education and the development of functioning civil societies in the post-communist era.

“Set free half a decade ago from the fetters of years of politicisation and ideological abuse, our universities and colleges largely still remain in a critically weakened condition with respect to accepting the responsibilities of educating for democratic leadership. Yet it is clear that a free society can only remain so where its citizens are educated to accept the burdens of freedom and democracy. We are convinced that programmes of liberal education that reach beyond preparing the student for specific tasks and imparting specific skills and that offer broad intellectual, historical and cultural perspectives are of the utmost importance to the progress of our emerging democracies, the strengthening of our economies nationally and trans-nationally, and the development of the human potentiality of our citizenry.”¹

Unfortunately, memories of the past have made the chances for the success of this clarion call for cross-faculty civic education courses slight. During the communist era, all of the region’s universities had to teach an array of courses, which every university-level student had to take, designed to instil in them the basic marxist-inspired world-view. Many students did not take such courses in ‘Red Studies’ immensely seriously, but they did have to pass examinations in them in order to graduate. In Slovenia, the courses formed part of a more ambitious, but still ideologically Marxist, common cross-faculty programme designed to encourage young people from all the different constituent national republics of Yugoslavia to consider themselves brothers in a united and socialist-orientated country.

Such programmes were swept away, together with Departments of Marxism-Leninism, as one of the first steps of regional university reform. One of their lingering effects today is widespread cynicism amongst both students and professors about the whole idea of setting up any cross-faculty compulsory programmes designed to encourage the development of civil and civic values. This cynicism has been reinforced by the emergence of almost totally autonomous faculties within the universities and their increasingly narrow concentration upon their own programmes and their own concerns. Nevertheless, the creation of the ‘Artes Liberales’ network, in 1997-98, did serve to reveal a number of small experimental interdisciplinary programmes that were being established across the region, such as the Polish based ‘Interdisciplinary Studies in the Humanities tutorial’ at Warsaw University and the East-Central European School in the

Humanities, promoting the development of interdisciplinary postgraduate education in Ukraine, Belarus, Lithuania and Poland itself.

8.2 INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

Even though they might not be keen on taking a compulsory sub-programme in democracy studies, many Central and Eastern European students are frustrated by the narrow, single subject or single faculty focus of their existing courses. Most surveys reveal a desire to take at least some courses outside their speciality. This would suggest that there might be some possibilities for promoting civic-education-orientated courses in the pool of optional courses, a certain number of which often have to be taken alongside the compulsory core courses. From the point of view of 'education for democracy', it would, for instance, seem advisable that science students should have an opportunity to complete some humanities subjects, a proportion of which could be in areas related to civic education. This is actually something that the Slovak Ministry of Education has recently been trying to promote, but, thus far, without any very great results. Indeed, a regional survey of the comparative difficulties of different types of university reform, conducted by 'Artes Liberales' in October 1997, suggested that it would be even harder to increase the number of courses that integrated science and arts/humanities than to increase the number of interdisciplinary courses offered on the arts/humanities side alone. Nevertheless, from a purely academic point of view, in both the humanities and the sciences there is an increasing need to address complex problems that cut across disciplines and from this perspective ways will need to be found to develop more inter-faculty and inter-disciplinary programmes.

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Since 1996, Romanian universities have begun to allow students to take a limited number of subsidiary courses outside their own faculty, although the possibilities are still limited. Here, as in Poland, the possibility of taking a cross-faculty interdisciplinary major is still out of the question. In Poland the main stumbling bloc is continuing opposition from within the Main Higher Education Council. Slowly but surely, though, the situation is beginning to change. The Graduate School for Social Research in Warsaw, mentioned earlier, is now running doctoral programmes in a number of social science fields on a multi-institutional basis, combining the previously segregated resources of the best universities in the country and the research institutes of the Academy of Sciences to provide a structured and, if required, multi-disciplinary graduate programme. In Slovakia, the Centres for European Studies at the Comenius University and the University of Economics in Bratislava operate as inter-faculty educational and research institutes, with their courses open to students from all faculties at the university. Here the reason is tied up with the whole concept of European Studies, which is essentially an interdisciplinary subject, but in the Czech Republic a further step has been made, with the setting up of an avowedly inter-disciplinary institute, the Institute for Fundamental Learning (IZV), within the Philosophical Faculty of Charles University.

Even after nine years, however, its existence is still a matter of considerable controversy, with many within the university still unconvinced that a mixture of inter-disciplinary courses can ever form a valid basis for a university degree programme.

The IZV was established in 1991 to replace the Marxist-oriented social science and humanities curriculum and offer new master's programs. Students may sign up for this Institute and then take cross faculty courses, something that is otherwise impossible. The fact that the Institute has survived at all is a compliment to the tenaciousness of its founders, but it has not really managed to reach its full potential. In recent years, it has become one avenue for attracting fee paying foreign students to the university (fees just below \$2000 per semester), because its inter-faculty status gives it access to the fairly large number of courses taught across the university in languages other than Czech. It would be sad if this were to be the Institute's fate, but there has been talk of freeing the Institute from Philosophical Faculty tutelage and allowing it to accept graduate students alongside its current intake of undergraduates.

8.3 RENEWAL IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES

In the absence of clear possibilities for setting up coherent democracy sub-programmes for science students and the continuing problems encountered in trying to establish properly structured inter-faculty and interdisciplinary courses promoting the idea of civil and civic responsibility even on the arts and humanities side of higher educational institutions, the emphasis in this chapter will be upon the process of curricula reform in specific Social Science and Humanities subjects.

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The key to the proper functioning of democratic, civil societies is that knowledge and understanding about how they work is as widely spread throughout society as possible. One important factor in this process, and the one that stands central in this study, is the ability of the society itself to produce, from within its own higher educational system, future 'elites', possessing this knowledge and understanding and having the ability to diffuse it through society as a whole, in their future role as teacher, civil servants, business men, politicians, journalists etcetera. In the increasingly inter-connected world, which confronts the new post-communist democracies of Central and Eastern Europe, this knowledge and understanding must also stretch beyond national boundaries to encompass the international arena and especially the European Union, membership of which currently stands at the centre of each country's national ambitions.

Consequently, the academic subject areas covered below have been chosen on the basis of their importance as building blocks for the creation of outward looking, free-market orientated, democratic, civil and civic societies. At the centre stand such subjects as sociology and politics, without which it is impossible to under-

stand the forces at play in civil society or to grasp the internal functioning of democratic government. Alongside them stand Economics and Business Studies, the first of which provides society with an understanding of the inner dynamics of a market economy and the second of which produces the basis for an ethical 'enterprise culture', the foundation for any free market orientated system. An understanding of international relations, for its part, provides the possibility for democratic societies to chart their own paths and understand their strategic options in an uncertain post-communist world; whilst the increasing spread of knowledge about all aspect of the European Union and its legal system allows citizens to reach beyond easy slogans and make their own informed decisions about the benefits and responsibilities of eventual membership. On a more practical level, the introduction of higher education level programmes for the academic study of the principles of public administration help to lay the foundations for the emergence of a transparent, responsive and professional civil service, which attempts to serve, rather than control, the citizen. Underpinning all of these specific academic areas is the study of free and independent journalism, which provides the oxygen that cleanses society and ensures the free flow of information. The idea is to give an impression of change, rather than a complete listing. Consequently, a number of subject areas, such as psychology or civil and business law, which might have been thought relevant, have been excluded because there is either not enough information available to develop a clear picture of developments or because of time and space constraints.

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Student demand for places on programmes in all of subject areas mentioned above has been growing markedly over the last decade, and yet, of all subject areas, the social sciences have offered the greatest challenge for renewal. Under communism, all social science/humanities subjects had been closely controlled and because of the weight of Marxist dogma, modern approaches to such subjects as politics and sociology were limited to the dissident intellectual community.² After 1989, there was a clear out of the 'old guard'. Lecturers in the social sciences/humanities in most parts of Central and Eastern Europe were given the choice between early retirement or a new western-style evaluation of their capabilities. In Lithuania, in early 1989, the Departments of History of the CPSU and of Scientific Communism were merged into new social science structures. By the autumn of the same year there were only half as many lecturers in the new structures as there had been in the old.

In 1997, the Council of Europe recognising that the weakness of tertiary level social science teaching and research might pose a long term threat to the 'transition to democratic society', launched an initiative in this area. The aim has been to pinpoint measures which could be taken to address its concerns by producing guidelines in such areas as curriculum development, institutional frameworks etcetera, and models of good practice and recommendations for decision-makers at government and institutional level in the fifteen countries concerned.³

Despite the problems of starting from scratch, it has, though, often eventually proved easier to introduce new disciplines, than to overcome the embedded traditions and idiosyncrasies of faculty structures in subjects such as law and economics that survived the upheavals of 1989. At Tartu University, the creation, from scratch of a new Faculty of Social Sciences and its rapid process of curriculum renewal, contrasts with the trajectory of the Faculty of Economics, at the same institution, which had to be threatened with closure before it started on the same process.

By its very nature, such a survey as the one presented here fails to give a clear picture of the way in which the changes being charted relate to each other within one faculty or institution. It is for this reason, that it seems worthwhile to begin with an analysis not of a particular subject area but of the various processes of reform that are going on within one single institution – Charles University’s Faculty of Social Sciences. This faculty, at the country’s most prestigious university, has been chosen because it represents a best case scenario that is being copied by other national higher educational institutions. A similar process of reform is taking place at leading universities in other Central and East European countries too. Although firmly embedded in the specific situation of the Czech Republic, the process of institutional and curriculum reform at Charles University’s Faculty of Social Sciences can be taken as emblematic of the search for a new social science curricula throughout the post-communist world. The case study is followed by a survey of other changes that are taking place within the social science sector in the Czech Republic to give a more complete picture of the current situation in one of the region’s countries.

It is very hard to capture the process of change in any other way than through an examination of the new curricula that have already or are currently being introduced. Despite some isolated attempts to find ways of assessing and rewarding especially gifted professors or departments, there is, as yet, nothing in any Central and Eastern European country that could even remotely be compared to the array of external professional performance and output indicators that have been developed over the last twenty years in European Union member countries, and especially by English universities. In Central and Eastern Europe, all that we are left with are input indicators, judgements of quality based upon an analysis of what is being taught, rather than how it is being taught and what the results are. Whilst some readers might weary of the listings of courses contained in the rest of this chapter, at this stage in the transition process, such an input based analysis does serve to give us an insight into the extent to which the higher educational sector has tried to adapt what it teaches to match the new demands of their post-communist societies.

Curriculum changes represent part of a process of redefining the role of the university in the post communist era. This is why the Council of Europe has taken a special interest in the development of broad European Studies programmes in the

region, seeing in them a force for increasing tolerance of diversity and decreasing ethnic and other tensions. The existence of properly designed courses in the areas covered by this chapter contribute to creating an atmosphere of open discussion and a 'democratic exchange of opinions' within the higher educational sector. This does not mean that all of the courses listed below are taught at a high level. There are still significant gaps of knowledge in specific areas of the social sciences. What is significant, though, is that, despite the limitations, higher educational institutions in Central and Eastern Europe are making a commitment to teach the kind of programmes that are considered the norm in Western European and American higher education. Whilst petty personal jealousies sometimes delay progress, as they do throughout the world, this does not detract from the fact that democratic and human values have already become a central part of the whole higher educational ethos in Central and Eastern Europe.

8.4 A CASE STUDY: THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AT CHARLES UNIVERSITY, PRAGUE

The Faculty of Social Sciences is Charles University's youngest faculty, having been created in 1990 after a fundamental reorganisation of the Faculty of Journalism, with the express intention of combining undergraduate and graduate level teaching with research in such areas as public administration and the social, economic and cultural life of Czech society. It is made up of five institutes: the Institute of Sociological Studies, the Institute of Political Studies, the Institute of International Area Studies, the Institute of Communications and Journalism, and the Institute of Economic Studies. Whilst taking self-contained courses in one specific subject area, students are free either to take elective classes which cover other disciplines within the social sciences, such as philosophy, ethics, and history, and/or to study a number of foreign languages.

The Institute of Sociological Studies (ISS), created in 1993, provides bachelor-level instruction in sociology and social policy,⁴ masters-level instruction in sociology and public and social policy and doctorate-level instruction in sociology. Its research activities are geared to comparative surveys of labour markets, the formulation and implementation of public policy in the Czech Republic and the comparative analysis of Czech and Slovak social policy since 1992. The ISS has developed a number of international university contacts with, for instance, the University of Kostnice and Oxford University, which provide some opportunity for staff exchanges.

The Institute of Political Studies has a Department of Political Science and a Department of International Relations. The Department of Political Science offers bachelor- and master's-level programmes in Political Science and bachelor-level courses in International Relations. The Department of International Relations

offers graduate level courses for master's students in International Relations. There are a limited number of openings for Ph.D. students. Each academic year, approximately forty applicants are admitted to the bachelor's programme and fifteen to each of the two master's degree programmes. The bachelor's programme is divided into compulsory core and elective courses. The required core courses are: Introductory Political Science, History of Political Thinking, Comparative Politics, Political Geography, Overview on Modern History, History of Czech Politics, Introduction to the Study of International Relations, Philosophy, Sociology, Economics, and Law. Elective courses allow students to either deepen their knowledge of topics covered in the required courses (Political Science, Comparative Politics, Philosophy of the Middle Ages, Modern Philosophy, and History of Political Thinking) or move on to more specialised topics (Cultural History, World Religions, Historical Traditions, Czech or Czechoslovak Foreign Policy, the Formation of the International System, Europe between the Two World Wars, European Integration, and the Genesis of Totalitarian Regimes, etc.). The Department of International Relations offers a number of graduate-level courses covering the development of the European Union (20th century Europe in the reflections of Patočka, Arendt and Voeglin, Europe and the German question after World War II, The Development of the European Community, European Security Architecture, Problems of the Environment and its Protection in the EU; Political Integration of the European Union, Current Problems of European Economic Integration etc.).

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These are reinforced by courses offered by the Department of (Western) European Studies, established within the Institute of International Area Studies in 1997, with European Union assistance.⁵ The Department's courses cover the political, legal, historical and cultural development of the European Union member states. The Institute of International Area Studies itself was established in 1994 as a joint venture of Charles University, the Czech Academy of Sciences and the Czech Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Its focus is multidisciplinary; covering the history, politics, legal systems, economics, sociology, culture and languages of four main regions, each represented by a department. Apart from the Department of European Studies, these are the Department of German and Austrian Studies (focusing on the relationship between Czechs and Germans throughout history, and the role of Germans and Jews in Czech history and culture); the Department of North American Studies (focusing on the role of the USA in Central Europe and the place of Canada in world politics), which cooperates closely with the department of American Studies at the Faculty of Philosophy; and the Department of Russian and East European Studies (analysing the transformation process and the re-emergence of civil society in Central and Eastern Europe and the role of Russia in international politics).

The Institute of Economic Studies covers questions connected with the single market and economic integration. Established in 1993, it is divided into four departments for Microeconomics, Macroeconomics and Finance, Institutional

Economics and Management, and the History of Economic Thought. Research plays an important role at the Institute, and a number of faculty members play a prominent role in the Czech Economic Association. (The 1995 10th Congress of the European Economic Association, attended by more than 1000 economists, was held in Prague). One of the most important projects undertaken by Institute staff was a joint research project with the Economics Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences on the 'Privatisation Process in the Czech Republic', published by Kluwer Academic Publishers in 1997. The Institute's teaching programmes start with bachelor courses lasting three years. The two-year program for the master's degree includes four specialisations: General Economic Theory, Economic Policy, Security Markets and Finance and Banking. Preference at the doctoral level is given to those who intend to go on to work as lecturers and researchers.

The last constituent part of the faculty is the Institute of Communication Studies and Journalism. Journalism studies at the tertiary level in Czechoslovakia can be traced back to sociology lectures at Masaryk University in Brno in 1925, but the first Department of Journalism and Library Science was only established at Charles University in 1953. In 1960 it became the Institute of Journalism, then as part of the restructuring that followed the Soviet invasion, a separate Faculty of Journalism was set up within the university in 1972. In 1990, following the downfall of communism, it became part of the new Faculty of Social Sciences. The Institute has two departments: the Department of Journalism, with a photographic laboratory, newsroom and DTP Studio, Radio and Television Laboratories (training studios), and the Department of Mass Communication.

The Institute offers a bachelor's degree in journalism and a master's and a doctoral programme in Journalism and in Mass Communication. The bachelor's course in Journalism reflects the European, rather than American, tradition of first laying a firm theoretical academic background before developing practical journalistic skills. In the first few semesters, students must take courses in such areas as philosophy, sociology, political science, law, psychology, economics, etcetera before turning to general journalism courses (Czech literature, the history of journalism, foreign languages, stylistics and composition, and ethics of journalism) and only then beginning to specialise on a specific medium and practical courses. The development of the journalism programme has been greatly influenced by a 1991-94 TEMPUS programme involving the Gutenberg Group within the Association of European Journalism Schools. This not only provided much needed equipment, but also gave faculty members the chance to see how this kind of journalism training was conducted in other countries. Between 1991 and 1993 the Department also hosted teachers from Columbia University's Graduate School of Journalism in New York. The Department maintains close contacts with the Centre of Independent Journalism in Prague, which is supported by foreign foundations. Student exchanges with Aarhus University, Denmark, have taken place on a regular basis, and annual exchange fellowships are under way with the largest French institution for journalistic education, the CFPPJ in Paris.

The Department of Mass Communication does research on the structure, evolution, contents, activities and impact of different kinds of mass communication (mainly the traditional media) in the Czech Republic, as seen within a European and global context. The Department is, in fact, the only non-commercial institution in the country, active in this area. The Department's main long-term research project under the heading 'The Media as a Source of Learning' is currently concerned with studying the transformation of the Czech media in the first half of the 1990s. The Department is also currently looking into the development of regional media in the context of the emergence of local politics. The Department had few indigenous traditions to base itself upon when it began its work, but by making a critical evaluation of European and other overseas experiences, it has developed its own inter-disciplinary approach based upon a combination of history, linguistics, psychology, sociology and political science.

8.5 SOCIAL SCIENCES IN THE CZECH REPUBLIC

In the Social Sciences panorama of the Czech Republic, the Charles University Faculty of Social Sciences does not even stand alone within its own university. Alongside it stand departments from other faculties such as the Institute of Political Science of the Philosophical Faculty (first opened in 1968, closed in 1970 and reopened in 1990) with its own bachelor and master's degree programmes in political science, taken either with history or with languages. Both options combine core compulsory with elective courses along similar lines to the system at the Social Sciences Faculty. The Institute has a considerable reputation for its research activities covering such areas as Czech Cultural Relations with Germany and Austria, European Integration and Issues of Globalisation and Regionalism.

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There are also comparable departments and institutes at other universities both in Prague and in the provinces. The Higher Economics School (VSE),⁶ also in Prague, has a Department of Politics (founded 1990) as well; this time under the Institute of Economics within the Faculty of International Relations. The department's ten lecturers provide either compulsory or elective courses for students at the Institute for Economics; a compulsory course on Comparative Political Systems for students within the Faculty of International Relations; and a number of other specialised courses at the master's level, such as European Political Systems with an emphasis on European Integration. The Department also has its own political science majors and minors up to master's level and has offered a Ph.D. programme in political science since 1995.⁷ The programmes are comparable to those offered at Charles University's Faculties of Social Sciences and Philosophy. What is most noteworthy is that each semester approximately 1100 students at the Institute for Economics complete one of the courses in political science. The Department is also involved in a number of research projects, some run by the Institute of Economics ('The Economic Development of Czechoslovakia after the Second World War'), some by other Czech institutions such as the Institute of History, and some by foreign

organisations such as the Central European University ('Rethinking Transitions to Democracy'), and has published a large number of study texts.

The process of renewal in the Social Sciences in the Czech Republic is still continuing. In Olomouc, the Philosophical Faculty of Palacky University set up a Department of Human Sciences and European Studies (KHVES) in 1990 with the express purpose of establishing political science as a new subject and nurturing a new generation of political scientists. At first combined with minors in history and then with English or German studies, the financial help of the European Union's TEMPUS Programme meant that by 1996/97 students were able to take the new combination of political science and European studies. KHVES also offers post-graduate studies in political science.

In 1998 a new Faculty of Social Studies was established at the Masaryk University in Brno, by separating the existing social science programmes from the Philosophical Faculty to form the university's eighth faculty. The new faculty has departments for Political Science; Sociology; Social Policy and Social Work; Communication and Journalism; and Psychology and offers bachelor's and master's degrees and Ph.D.s. As at all Czech universities the five year master's programme combining two areas of study is the normal end point for university studies.

The Political Science curriculum covers political theory, political systems and their functioning, party systems and systems of representation, international relations and politics. The Sociology curriculum is designed to help students to understand the social mechanisms of modern societies and states and includes courses on modern social theories, the historical development of social thought, family sociology, social ecology, industrial sociology, cultural sociology and social data analysis. The study of Social Policy and Social Work covers the functioning of newly set up institutions in this area, the current legislation of social welfare, the drafting of social programmes and the functioning of social groups. The Mass Communication and Journalism programme includes courses on the theory of mass communications, the making of radio and TV programmes, and the philosophy of language, stylistics and aesthetics, all of which can be combined with another study subject to give the students the opportunity to specialise in political, economic or social journalism. Psychology offers students an orientation in contemporary conceptions and methodologies of psychology, and in specialised disciplines of psychology and in related scientific disciplines. The programme contains practical training which aims to develop a student's personality, communicative abilities, and self-presentation techniques.

At a more specialised level, the Faculty of Economics and Management of the Czech University of Agriculture founded a Department of Rural Sociology in 1997, which began two extensive research programmes in January 1998. The first is concerned with social changes in Czech villages, looking at both the present-day

effects of changes in property rights and at the post-war collectivisation period, and the second deals with current social changes in agricultural and rural areas.

The development of the new social science disciplines at universities in the Czech Republic are supported by a number of new or modernised academic journals. To give but a few examples, the International Institute of Political Sciences at the Masaryk University in Brno now publishes its *Journal of Political Sciences* as a quarterly, covering such subject areas as: political theory; international relations; democratisation in post-communist and developing countries; the situation of political parties in the Czech Republic; elections; and European integration. The Czech Political Science Association, based in Prague, publishes the biannual *Political Science Review*, founded in 1994, covering the entire spectrum of political science, which is aimed at political scientists, politicians and a wide range of readers interested in political science. The University of Economics' Centre for European Studies publishes the bi-annual *Modern Europe and the Czech Republic* covering the integration of post-communist states into the European Union and problems of economic transformation. All of these, and other journals like them, are published in Czech, whilst the Institute of International Relations, with its own array of popular Czech language publications on international affairs, also intermittently publishes an English language journal 'Perspectives'.

8.6 THE REVIVAL OF SOCIOLOGY IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN UNIVERSITIES

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The initiatives described above, with special reference to the Czech Republic, are being repeated across the region. It is obviously impractical to survey developments in all the social science subjects to the extent that we have covered innovations in the Czech Republic, and even here our treatment has been far from exhaustive. The regional survey below, covering different subject areas of the social sciences/humanities, is, thus, not intended to be a scientific cross section. A few interesting innovations have been picked out for mention, but many more have been ignored. Sometimes the spotlight falls on an initiative in one country or university to the exclusion of an equal or even earlier initiative in the same direction by another country or university. The aim is to give an impression of the kinds of changes that are taking place, not a full listing. At the same time, it must also be borne in mind that a good or adequate curriculum does by itself attest to the actual quality of the education on offer. The limitations that have been noted earlier in this study with regard to lecturing standards, facilities and so on still apply. Together the two different strands of the report attest to the limitations, but also the ambitions, identifiable in the higher education reform process in Central and Eastern Europe.

In Poland, the academic study and teaching of sociology at the tertiary level has had a chequered history. The subject was banned during the high Stalinism of the early 1950's only to slowly reemerge as times improved, staying mainly on the margins of academic respectability. The Institute of Sociology at the Nicholas Copernicus University in Torun is fairly typical in this respect. In its present format it emerged in 1995/96 as one of eleven teaching and research sectors within the Faculty of Humanities. It is organised into four sections for General Sociology and the History of Sociology; the Structural Consequences of System Transformation; Rural Sociology; and Cultural Sciences. The teaching of sociology as an independent discipline began in Torun in 1989. The full five-year programme to master's level includes a chosen specialisation in both of the final two years. The Institute also runs a programme up to master's level in social work, a graduate programme in rural sociology and (since 1994) a special programme 'Social Sciences for Teachers'.

Each of its four sections is also involved in research work. The Section for General Sociology and the History of Sociology is concerned with studying the history of sociology in Poland and Eastern Central Europe and the concept of totalitarianism in Polish political thought. The Section for the Structural Consequences of System Transformation's main scientific focus is on problems connected with the transformation of social structures in today's Poland: economic activities, the emergence of a middle class, unemployment and poverty. The Section for Rural Sociology is involved in two main research projects. The first involves developing strategies for the revitalisation of rural communities and the second involves developing strategies to raise living standards in rural areas. Both projects receive financial assistance from the PHARE programme. The section also publishes the results of its studies in an annual publication 'Eastern European Countryside'. The section for Cultural Science concentrates its researches on such areas as cultural dominance with reference to minorities; the sociology of religion, and especially the role of the Roman-Catholic Church in Poland's modern culture; ethnic minorities in Poland; and sociological theories of social movements.

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In Romania, the Department of Sociology within the faculty of History and Philosophy at the Babes-Bolyai University in Cluj-Napoca also has an interest in rural sociology, alongside its more mainstream activities concerning the sociology of the family, inter-ethnic relations and the sociology of transition. The department has almost 300 students on its four year undergraduate academic programme and also offers sociology courses and seminars to students majoring in other subjects. In 1995, the Department began to offer a master's degree programme for around ten students per year. As in other countries in the region, the Department of Sociology having pioneered social work courses in the early 1990's has now left this field which has been taken up by the newly formed (1993) Department of Social Work.

Warsaw University's Institute of Social Policy offers three different avenues to its master's degree – a full time social policy programme; a part-time social services

programme for social work practitioners; and a part-time programme in social policy and work related issues. It is also possible to take a post-master's programme in social insurance and social services. All of these programmes are supported by the Institute's own research programmes on Social Policy in the Period of System Transformation, Comparative Social Policy, and Local Social Policy and its involvement in the international research project 'New Welfare Mixes in Care for the Elderly', coordinated by the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research in Vienna.

An innovative one year master's programme on European Social Policy Analysis, targeted at students, teachers, management and executive level civil servants, and enterprise managers, has been introduced by the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, with European Union assistance. The courses cover such topics as Comparative Social Policy, European Integration and Decision-making, Policy Progress, Theories and Principles, Comparative Research Methodology, Economics of Social Policy, European Social Policy Analysis and Evaluation, varieties of social policy analysis and evaluation. A related programme, Policy Analyses – European Aspects, for the same target group, has also been developed. This time its curriculum includes courses on: the Methodology of Social Research; Policy Analyses; the Shaping of European Policies; Economic Policies; Comparative Government Policies, Social Policy; Slovene Security Policy in the Framework of European Integration; and Comparative Ethnic Policies.

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In all of these programmes and initiatives, foreign support, often funded through the TEMPUS programme has been of considerable importance. The Institute of Sociology and Social Policy at Hungary's Eotvos Lorand University, which now offers three master's level programmes in sociology, social policy and social work has developed a network involving universities in Austria, America, Britain, Croatia, the Czech Republic, France, Finland, Germany, Greece, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, and Sweden. This network is the basis of an ambitious programme designed to send all of its students on one-semester student exchanges abroad.

8.6.1 PARTICIPATION IN INTERNATIONAL PROJECTS

It is obviously important from the perspective of creating a properly functioning civil and civic society, that higher educational institutions and the research institutes attached either to them or to Academies of Science, both produce sociological research which highlights the problems of society during the transition period and try to bring it to the attention of policy makers and the general public. This is normally done by publishing reports, monographs or journal articles and occasional conferences and symposia. Alongside this, the countries of the region have been slowly integrating into a number of international social science programmes such as the International Social Survey Programme (ISSP), which

Hungary joined in 1986 followed by Poland, Slovenia, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, and, in 1996, Slovakia and Latvia.

In Lithuania, for example, the Institute of Philosophy and Sociology of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, besides conducting over forty public opinion surveys has been involved in a number of interesting sociological projects during the 1990's. Some of these have been parts of larger international projects, such as the report prepared in 1995 by the Institute's Department of Demography on 'Migration – European Integration and the Labour Force Brain Drain' which was integrated into a larger international project, supported by the United Nation's European Economic Commission, carried out in ten Central and Eastern European countries. Some, such as the report prepared by the Institute's Department of Social Organisations in 1994 on the 'Integration of the Lithuanian Borderlands into the Re-established State' were financed by national organisations, in this case the Open Society Fund Lithuania. And some, such as the 1994-95 report on the 'Professional and Social Mobility of Lithuanian Women', which analysed the possibilities for and obstacles to improving the position of Lithuanian women in the labour market, were prepared for special events, in this case the Fourth United Nations World Conference on Women. For its part, the Institute of Sociology at the University of Warsaw has prepared reports on such subjects as Social Marginality in Poland; Society and Politics in the Process of System Change; Business Ethics and Corruption in Poland; The Image of German-Polish Relations in the context of European Integration; the Young Generation of the Nineties in Poland; and Social Identities and Attitudes towards Democracy.

8.6.2 REGIONAL ACADEMIC JOURNALS AND CONFERENCES

The Polish Academy of Sciences' Committee for Sociology has been publishing the Polish language, quarterly journal *Sociological Studies* since 1961 covering sociology, contemporary political and social problems, the transformation processes, and social practice. In Slovenia, the Faculty of Social Sciences of the University of Ljubljana publishes the country's premier social science journal 'Theory and Practice' six times per year, covering topics in sociology, political science, psychology, defence studies, anthropology, media science, journalism and cultural studies. Within the Faculty, there is an International Relations Research Centre, which, amongst other activities, publishes a 'Journal of International Relations'. Alongside this, stands a Defence Research Centre, which besides its work on civil-military relations was responsible for conducting groundbreaking research on the role of the mass media in the Serb-Croat conflict.

Sociology problems are also the subject of a large number of conferences and meetings held throughout the region. The Hungarian Sociological Association organised a conference in Budapest in September 1999 'Ten Years After 1989. Eastern and Central Europe's Road to the New World. A First Balance Sheet'

which discussed such topics as: Social Studies in the Post-Socialist Process: Social Frames and Social Strategies in the New Central and Eastern Europe; Social Stratification; The Transformation in Households and Families; the Institutionalisation of the New Political System and Party System; EU Enlargement; Social Policies, etcetera. In the same month, the Institute of Sociology, of the Academy of Sciences of the Czech Republic and the Centre for Central and Eastern European Sociology of the German Society of Sociology jointly organised a conference in Prague on 'European Integration and the Eastern-Enlargement of the European Union' and in September 2000, the Polish Sociological Association⁸ will organise a conference 'Fate and Choice' to discuss the heritage and the prospects of Polish society.

8.7 PROBLEMS OF SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH IN THE POST-COMMUNIST WORLD

Despite this generally favourable picture, it cannot be denied that the social science research sector is having problems coping with the need to adapt to the new international environment. The foreign aid that has flown into the region has generally not been used to cushion the existing systems of research, but to force through modernisation programmes. Social science research in Central and Eastern Europe is in crisis. National research funding in Hungary, as in all countries of the region, has been continuously falling since 1991 (at an overall rate of 40 percent). Many institutions have closed down, and it is increasingly difficult to commercially publish the results of those that remain. Wages have fallen to such an extent that many researchers have given up and found other jobs, those that remain normally have a second outside job. This situation means that few young researchers want to enter the profession.

The signs of a reaction against these trends were to be seen in a 1996 special issue of the Hungarian social science quarterly 'Replika', which published a series of essays under the title 'Colonisation or Partnership? Eastern Europe and Western Social Sciences'. The first article was provocatively entitled 'Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome in the Social Sciences in Eastern Europe.' It criticised the 'colonial' way in which Western social science researchers, with their comparatively large funding, had invaded Eastern Europe and, imposing their own research priorities and methods, launched "data safaris, looking to spot and capture local data with the assistance of local guides."⁹ The end result was a fragmented research effort, serving foreign rather than national interests. Other contributors challenged this stark presentation, attributing the present crisis to internal rather than external funding choices and arguing that western research activities were actually providing the wherewithal to upgrade local activities up to international standards.

It is clear that the interaction between the once divided parts of Europe has not always been easy. However, there are signs that Central and Eastern European social scientists are beginning to build their own autonomous regional research networks alongside their international ones, even if they are often still financed from European Union and other Western funds. Despite the frustration, it is clear that there will be long term benefits from the foreign aid that has flown into the social sciences across the region, not least in the universities with their new libraries and computers and useful international contacts.

8.8 THE REGIONAL REVIVAL OF POLITICAL SCIENCE AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

In 1995, with TEMPUS support, the University of Bucharest got government approval for creating a new Department of Political Science, within its International Faculty of Humanistic Sciences. This Department now offers a four year first degree, a one year master's degree and a one year continuing education diploma in Political Science and Public Administration. The master's and diploma courses are targeted at teaching staff, finishing undergraduates and Ministry civil servants who have previously finished a first degree or a different specialisation at master's level. There are about ten applicants per place and 600 students were enrolled during the 1996/97 academic year.

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In Slovakia, some 150 students are registered at the Department of Political Science, within the Philosophical Faculty of Comenius University, where, in October 1992 a special UNESCO Chair for Human Rights Education was established. The department itself was founded in September 1990, with ten staff. Initially it only offered bachelor and master's level degrees,¹⁰ but, since 1994, it has been possible to study up to the Ph.D. level. Amongst the many specialisations now on offer is a master's level degree on Public Policy and Administration. Once again with TEMPUS help, a new programme in Comparative Local and Regional Studies is currently being developed in cooperation with the UK's Manchester Metropolitan University. The Slovak Political Science Association, which was re-established in 1990, is also run from the Department. It currently has just below 150 members.

Since political science had no tradition in Slovakia, the association has devoted considerable attention to education, retraining and summer courses and the building up of research networks. It has published a number of studies devoted to the problems of democratic consolidation in Slovakia since independence and together with the Czech Political Science Association, the Slovak Association organised the Fifth Regional Conference of Political Science Associations on the topic of 'Ten Years After: Success or Failure?' supported by the Friedrich Ebert Foundation and attended by representatives from Austria, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Croatia, and Poland. The Hungarian Political Science Associ-

ation, for its part, also organised its own fifth annual meeting on a similar topic 'Ten Years of Hungarian Democracy'.

In Lithuania, the local Political Science Association was founded in 1991 and affiliated to the International Political Science Association in 1994. Despite its thirst for international contacts of this kind, it took some time for the teaching of Politics to settle down after the heady days of independence. At first lecturers drawn from a variety of disciplines did the best that they could with few, if any, suitable textbooks. Gradually, with the help of foreign visiting professors, (through TEMPUS, the Civic Education Project, the EuroFaculty, the Fulbright and other programmes and through university exchanges especially with Denmark, Sweden and Norway) the curriculum settled down into an easily recognisable pattern. At the centre of the new discipline stands the Institute of International Relations and Political Science (IIRPS) at the University of Vilnius, founded in 1992, which, taking a leaf from the EuroFaculty approach, now intends to recruit its own graduates as the new generation of university lecturers.

Benefiting from its situation in the capital, the IIRPS, with an academic staff of over 30, has been very successful in getting both national and international support for its activities. Starting with a two-year diploma programme in international relations for students who were studying at other departments of the University of Vilnius, it set up its own four-year bachelor degree programme in politics in 1993 and its master's and Ph.D. programmes in political science the following year. The IIRPS also runs a master's level Public Administration Programme, with help from the EuroFaculty, and is in the process of developing an undergraduate programme. In 1995 the IIRPS set up its Centre for Studies of European Integration and, with TEMPUS support, launched a two year inter-disciplinary European Studies MA in 1997, open to bachelor degree graduates. Within the four major modules that make up the course (Politics and Policy in Europe; European Economy; EU Policy; and European Law), students may take some optional courses with a European cultural, historical or artistic slant offered by other faculties of the university as options.¹¹ All students must also develop a good mastery of two European languages. A four year doctoral level programme on European Affairs can be taken by those who have finished a master's programme.

In its research the IIRPS places its emphasis on the situation in the post-communist states, particularly the Baltic countries and the former Soviet Republics. It has completed a number of projects including reports on: Lithuanian Political Culture (1994-95), financed by the Friedrich Naumann Foundation; The Lithuanian Party System (1994-96), financed from the State budget; and The Lithuanian Encyclopaedia Dictionary of Political Science (1995-97), financed by the Democracy Commission Program of the US Embassy in Vilnius. The Institute has also been publishing the twice-yearly journal 'Political Science' since 1995.

8.9 EUROPEAN UNION STUDIES AS A LITMUS TEST OF TRANSITION

It is clear that at present, with the process of accession to the European Union already underway in most Central and East European countries, the provision of 'European Union Studies' courses at the tertiary level has become a litmus test both of the educational sector's commitment to meeting the demands of the job market for good experts and of its commitment to helping create an informed civil and civic society. In pursuit of this ideal, the tertiary sector must set as its long term goal the production of informed citizens able to face the challenges of European Union membership whether their careers lead them to a profession, business, the media or the civil service.

Since 1989, many programmes, modules and courses touching on, or dealing with European Union Studies, have been introduced at all levels of higher education. In a recent survey in Poland, 202 higher educational establishments claimed that they covered European subjects during their lecture programmes and 171 of these reported that European issues were discussed in specialised programmes. Two things are not made clear in such figures. The first is that the Polish Main Higher Education Council, which alone has the right to recommend that subjects should be added to the list of approved degree programmes, whilst happy to see extra courses on European matters being added as extras to existing programmes, opposes combining them into a subject in their own right. Secondly, it is also unclear what the exact nature of the courses involved is (culture, language, European Union etc.), how many hours are involved and whether the courses are optional or compulsory? Although European Union topics are most often covered within the programmes presented by faculties of economics, social sciences and law, they have found a place within the curricula of technical universities too. The Faculty of Economics and Management at the Slovak Agricultural University, in Nitra, is, for instance, involved in a TEMPUS financed project to set up a course on 'European Law in Agriculture and Land Management'.

There are two major problems, identified across the region that are holding back expansion. The first of these is a lack of lecturers to teach the courses and a lack of money to provide the often expensive textbooks that are required to support them. Despite TEMPUS support both for professors and lecturers from the region to make month long study trips to Western European universities, and the expansion of foreign language training, supply is still not keeping up with demand, especially at a time when little young blood is coming into tertiary level teaching. The problem is made worse by a general uncertainty about funding existing university programmes and a consequent hesitation when it comes to financing new innovations.

A second problem, perhaps related to this last point, is the lingering opposition within the university academic councils to setting up interdisciplinary degree programmes, and European Studies, or European Union Studies, are inter-

disciplinary subjects without parallel. What this means in practice is that the University of Latvia, despite its twelve faculties, nineteen institutes and research centres, and sixty six programmes at bachelor and master's level, does not as yet offer a single unified programme on European Union Studies; although a TEMPUS financed project is currently underway to establish a master's level programme in Political Science called 'European Studies in Riga'. It is not that the courses do not exist, but that they remain fragmented and scattered, forming parts, and often optional parts, of major subjects in other disciplines.

From the perspective of education for democracy, the pattern by which courses on the European Union appear in the prospectuses of an array of different faculties is encouraging, in so far as it means that large numbers of students occupied with different majors have the possibility of taking at least some optional courses in this area. However, the pattern of spreading such courses across the faculties rather than grouping them together as one coherent unit, reduces the institutional power of European Studies lecturers, who find their future subject to the whims of other disciplines.

The Council of Europe has set up a project entitled 'European Studies for Democratic Citizenship' (1997-2000) to react to the challenges posed by setting up interdisciplinary European Studies programmes. Its emphasis is more upon the cultural, historical and social aspects of Europe, than upon European Union structures as is the case here, because this is felt to better suit the objectives of the Council. Nevertheless, the Council's work to promote high quality programmes, establish networks and develop models of good practice has done much to create an exchange of knowledge both between West and East and within the Central and Eastern European region itself. It is to be hoped that educational policy makers in Central and Eastern Europe will bear the work of the Council in mind as they react to a number of spontaneous initiatives which are beginning to establish European Union studies as a separate discipline, even without official recognition.

Due apparently to an administrative oversight, in Bulgaria European Studies, even in its wider mix of cultural, historical and language courses, was not included on the official State Register of approved academic disciplines. Thus, when we come to look for European Union related courses, we find that European Law courses fall within Law and European Studies programmes in Law and Management/Business Faculties; European Economic Cooperation courses form part of the curriculum of International Economic Relations programmes in Economics Faculties; EU Institutions courses form part of International Relations and Business Administration programmes in Faculties of International Relations, Business, Political Science and International Relations; and courses on European Trade Issues form part of the curriculum of Business Administration programmes in Business Faculties. There are though some anomalies. In 1993/94, a ten semester European Studies BA Programme was begun at the Faculty of Business and Management of Rousse University. It is made up of the following blocs of courses:

Europe; European Ethnic Cultures [delivered in English, French and German]; European Languages [training in a second European language]; Communication and Personal Efficiency; and Business and Management.

In Poland, although the same official attitudes to inter-disciplinary degree programmes encountered in Bulgaria hold back the development of true European Union studies courses, such programmes are beginning to appear. It is possible to do European specialisations within traditional Masters programmes in History or Sociology at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow, or to spend an additional year, at the end of formal studies, at the Faculty of Law and Administration of Warsaw University, specialising in one of the three special Schools for English Law, French Law and German Law. In 1991, the Law Faculty of the Adam Mickiewicz University of Poznan organised an experimental European Major within its programme on 'International Economic and Political Relations'. However, when the first group of students finished the programme in 1996, the Higher Education Council refused to recognise it and no master's certificates could be issued.

Despite the hesitancy of the educational establishment, however, European Union Studies programmes are beginning to break out of the official straitjacket. In Bulgaria, a professor from the 'St Kliment Ohridski' University in the capital can still point out correctly to the author that the Centre for European Studies in Sofia is not an officially recognised part of the higher educational system, but a look at developments across the region suggest that it is a part of a wave that cannot easily be held back, either in Bulgaria or throughout the region as a whole.

The Centre for European Studies (CES) in Sofia with its free access library, European Documentation Centre status, and monthly newsletter 'Evropa' has become a focal point for the development of European Studies in Bulgaria. Set up in 1990, it operates as an independent organisation under the government's Committee for European Integration. It is financed partially by the state and partially with TEMPUS support, donations and project earnings. The Centre was involved in the establishment of Bulgaria's sole MA programme in European Integration, one version of which it continues to organise with accreditation from the New Bulgarian University, whilst a shorter, second version is now taught independently by the 'St Kliment Ohridski' University. The curriculum is inter-disciplinary and covers the historical, civilisational, economic and legal aspects of European Integration in 655 hours. It is organised in modules (compulsory and optional courses) and includes special language training and courses on EU terminology. Alongside this, the Centre has developed a number of courses on European Integration topics of varying intensity, targeted at civil servants, businessmen and teachers.

A much larger initiative along the same lines is underway in Hungary, where twelve European Study Centres involving fourteen higher educational institutions were set up in late 1998 with funding from the Hungarian National PHARE programme. The Centres' remit is to develop new integrated, multi-disciplinary

courses concentrating on European Community Law, European Economic Integration, European Political Integration and the History of European Construction, with other subjects (such as European History and Culture) being included to the extent that they lay the framework for the major areas of study. These courses will not only be intended for students, but also as university extension courses for lawyers, civil servants, businessmen etcetera.

In Poland, TEMPUS funding has also been behind the development of eight inter-faculty university based Centres for European Studies. The Centre at the Jagiellonian University, runs a Ph.D. programme and has developed master's and bachelor's level courses in such subjects as Ethnic Minorities in Europe, the Role of the Media in Contemporary Europe, European Law, EU Selected Political and Legal Problems. The University of Warsaw Centre is responsible for coordinating a 320-hour Graduate Studies Programme established in 1992 and a three year post-baccalaureate Certificate in European Studies programme set up in 1995 as a specialisation within an International Relations master's degree programme. In cooperation with the University of Maastricht, the Centre has been running a programme, financed by the Dutch government, for Polish civil servants involved in the current EU accession negotiations. Since 1997, the Centre has also published a Yearbook of Polish European Studies, containing information about the development and the results of the integration process of Poland in the European Union and Polish perspectives on the process.

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In Estonia, Tartu University has set up its own College of Europe, modelled on and in cooperation with the College of Europe in Bruges and the Polish civil service training college Natolin. Thus far, only the shell of the College is there, the ultimate aim is to develop a master's programme in European Union studies and a research centre on European Union issues. In Romania, the European Institute of Romania, with full government backing, is developing plans to establish four university-level European Studies Centres and a Centre for European Law. In Slovakia, the inter-faculty Centre for European Studies at Comenius University, set up by Rector's decree in 1996, has two units: the Department of European Integration and the Department of European Civilisation and Cultural Anthropology. It started its activities in January 1998 with the organisation of a one-semester pilot course on European Integration, for undergraduate and graduate students of all faculties at Comenius University. The eventual goal is to set up a master's programme.

Finally, a Centre for European Studies, supported by the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, was set up in early 1996 within the Faculty of International Relations at the Prague University of Economics. The Centre acts as an inter-disciplinary focal point for encouraging the development of programmes and courses connected with the economic, political, legal and cultural aspects of European Integration and the problems involved in Czech accession to the EU.¹² It offers a special 'Certificate of European Studies' course designed as an optional one- or two-term

programme, taught in English and aimed at undergraduate and graduate students. In its eight working groups, the Centre has gathered 30 lecturers from different departments and faculties of the university. In addition to this the Centre also organises meetings, conferences and open lecture series to spread information about European Integration to a wider public. The Centre is building up a library on European Affairs and publishes its own periodical 'Contemporary Europe and the Czech Republic'. The Faculty of International Relations' Department of World Economy, which cooperates closely with the Centre, accredited a new five year master's programme 'European Integration', launched in September 1998. Many of the courses can also be taken as part of a ten course minor specialisation at bachelor or master's level by students from other disciplines. Students taking programmes in International Trade and doing specialisations in Tourism also have to take a limited number of courses on European Integration issues.

Many of the activities undertaken by the Centres are backed up by the European Union's Jean Monnet Project, which provides financial support for the establishment of special Jean Monnet Chairs in European Studies and for an array of courses and research projects. Poland currently has fifteen Jean Monnet Chairs, Hungary thirteen and the Czech Republic only four. With its twenty other Jean Monnet support grants, the Czech Republic is also far behind the Hungarian total of ninety grants involving support for an array of Permanent Courses, European Modules, Doctoral Grants, Complementary Initiatives, Research Projects and Teaching Materials.

8.10 TEACHING EUROPEAN LAW AT HIGHER EDUCATION LEVEL

The legal systems throughout Central and East European are still in crisis. The courts work slowly, judges are inexperienced and the laws are not always clear or complete. In Albania, the Magistrates' School, a government-subsidised and European-funded institution aimed at assuring the professional training of judges and prosecutors, only opened in mid-October 1998, with twenty students, as a first step in trying to increase the level of professionalism among those who sit on the bench. Even in Latvia most judges are still insufficiently trained and the court system is too weak to enforce many of its decisions.

In such a situation, it is perhaps not surprising that the depth of knowledge within the legal sector about European Law and relevant foreign languages is neither deep nor extensive enough to provide confidence about the successful implementation of the 'acquis communautaire' by the region's civil service and courts. The process of approximating national legislation to European Union standards, as a prelude to accession into the Union, is still, in some cases, proceeding too slowly. Judges in civil and administrative courts, criminal and business lawyers, court clerks and junior and senior members of ministry legal departments all have to be trained not only to understand the impact of EU Law on their national legal

systems, but also to apply EU law in practice. University Legal Studies Faculties are therefore being called upon to both revamp their curricula, by including a package of European and Comparative Law as compulsory parts of their programmes, and to launch outside initiatives for the retraining of the legal profession.

This would be a major challenge even at the best of times, but, with national university financing under pressure and commercial legal practices siphoning off the most talented lecturers, the task has been doubly hard. There are, at most, only a handful of Ph.D. students in European Law in most Central and Eastern European countries and almost all of those who currently lecture on the subject have an initial specialisation in another area. The study of European Law is also hampered by the paucity of library resources and textbooks. However progress has been made, even if not at the pace required. New initiatives, such as the Law Journal of Tartu University in Estonia, have begun to provide a forum for a regional exchange of experiences. Most legal programmes have now been redesigned and the imbalances between public and private law and national and international law partially righted. However, too many of the new courses are still options, which have been tacked onto the existing programme and European Union Law is often taught at a junior level, rather than as an advanced course in the final year of study.

The Bulgarian government has decreed that all Bulgarian law students must take a compulsory, 75-hour minimum, course in European Law as part of their five year Legal training. This has only been made possible because groups of lecturers from the European Law Department of Sofia University, who have had the chance to retrain in Western Europe on PHARE/TEMPUS programmes, now travel across the country teaching European Union Law courses at those Law Faculties, that still lack expertise in this area. Whilst European Union Law is a compulsory part of the curriculum at the 'St Kliment Ohridski' University's Faculty of Law, courses on EU Financial Law and EU Regional Policy remain 30 hour minimum options. One of the big problems facing Bulgarian universities as they try to expand their coverage of European law is a shortage of textbooks. In Sofia itself, the problem is not so critical with library holdings in EU Law available at the Centre for European Studies, the PHARE Programme for the Approximation of Legislation at the Ministry of Justice and at the Faculty of Law of Sofia University. This situation is a luxury compared to the situation outside the capital, where even the few books that there are, are mostly in foreign languages.

TEMPUS support has also been important in developing courses on human rights for judges who would have to apply the European Convention in practice. As a result of one project, successfully completed in 1997, a one-year postgraduate course on the 'Protection of Basic Human Rights in European Law' is currently being taught in five Bulgarian higher education institutions. In the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, human rights issues are covered in the curricula of the Faculty

of Philosophy and the Faculty of Social Studies as well as the Faculty of Law, but the faculty has little depth of knowledge when it comes to European Union Law.

The TEMPUS programme has also been of immense value in adjusting the curriculum at Polish universities. Lodz University, which offers a European specialisation in its master's of Law programme, had TEMPUS help in introducing courses on EU Social Law and EU Business Law. When the Faculties of Law at Warsaw, Krakow, and the Catholic University in Lublin introduced such EU related subjects as Environmental Law, Company Law, and Social Law, they too did so with TEMPUS support.

In Slovakia, the Comenius University in Bratislava is developing a TEMPUS supported project entitled: 'European Law – a new dimension of teaching and training law in the Slovak Republic', and in Albania, the Faculty of Law of the University of Tirana, plans to establish a post-graduate programme on European and Comparative Law in cooperation with the Italian university of Bari. The University of Bucharest's Law Faculty runs two postgraduate programmes with the support of the 'Institut Franco-Roman de Droit des Affaires et de la Cooperation Internationale' in which it covers European Law.

Quite apart from these activities, although drawing most of its students from the region's Law Faculties, the Central European University in Budapest offers, as one of its programmes, an LLM in International Business Law, which includes the following selected courses: Introduction to European Constitutional Law; EU Law (I, II, and III); Legal Writing; Labour Law of the EU; Legal Institutions of the Market; European Conflicts of Laws; Intellectual Property and Competition; Economics of European Integration; West European Politics; European Integration and Politics; and new optional courses on European Enlargement.

8.11 BUSINESS STUDIES

During the communist era, although theories of capitalist economics were relatively freely discussed in some of the country's research institutes, the study of capitalist business methodologies was by definition excluded from the university curriculum. If the higher education system is to be open to society, then it must take notice of the immense economic changes that are taking place and the emergence of a small and medium private business sector. 1995 was the first year in Hungary when more people were employed in the private sector than in the public sector. The previous year, the private sector's share of GDP had reached seventy percent. In the Czech Republic, in 1997, businesses with less than 500 employees accounted for 42.1 percent of the production of goods and employed 50.3 percent of the workforce in industry. In Estonia in 1996, three and a half thousand new businesses were registered.

The question emerges of precisely what the connection should be between education and the emergence of an 'Enterprise Culture'. The continuing discussion about whether or not it is actually possible to teach people to be entrepreneurs need not detain us here. From the perspective of this study, what is important is that the small and medium sized company sector, businesses employing one to five hundred people, is the backbone of a civil, market-based, society. However, entrepreneurship is still often seen as dishonest, related somehow to profiteering or 'black marketeering'. Society does not, as yet, value and nurture entrepreneurship for its own sake, nor fully recognise that small business successes are beneficial to society as a whole. Thus the development of business education is part of a wider project of civic education, designed to generate understanding and support for the small business sector within the population at large.

It is, in fact, true that most new business failures seem to be due not so much to a lack of entrepreneurship as such, but to a more mundane lack of knowledge in such basic areas as management skills, financial administration, marketing etcetera. These are areas where courses at the higher educational or further/continuing education levels can be beneficial. Standing somewhere between the two extremes of purely practical business creation and more diverse entrepreneurial awareness projects are the university level programmes taught at state and private management faculties and business schools throughout the region.

Most of these, understandably, concentrate upon turning out students with a good general, if somewhat academic, knowledge of enterprise culture. At the private business schools, and especially at those following the American model, 'Entrepreneurship' courses often takes a prominent place in the curriculum. But even here, as at most of the state university Business Faculties, the overall stress is upon broad ranging business related programmes, covering such areas as human resource and strategic management, finance, business communication, marketing, advertising etcetera. In both cases, it is important that comprehensive and compulsory courses dealing with 'Business Ethics' are included in the curricula. A few of the graduates in Business Studies do indeed go on to set up their own companies, but many more enter the state bureaucracy or take up mid-level positions in large national or foreign commercial organisations.

In the Czech Republic, the VSB-Technical University in Ostrava and the Silesian University in Opava have received TEMPUS support to create a master's in 'European Business and Management'. Mendel Agriculture and Forestry University in Brno, the Technical University in Brno and the University of Pardubice used TEMPUS support to set up two year postgraduate degrees in 'European Studies in Business-Economics and Management' at all three universities. Charles University and the University of Economics in Prague have received TEMPUS financing to look at the possibilities for developing an MBA programme at Charles University, Faculty of Social Sciences.

The Faculty of Economics at Tirana University already offers a master's level post-graduate programme on Management and Administration, supported by the University of Nebraska, USA. This is a two-year programme and the first group of students graduated in April 1998. All of the seven lecturers and the study material came from America, but it is planned to replace the lecturers with specially trained Albanians in the years to come.

A similar strategy has been followed by the Faculty of Business at Bulgaria's University for National and World Economy. In late 1992, it introduced a bachelor-level degree in European Business Administration as a joint programme with the University of Humberside in the United Kingdom, funded by the British Know-How fund. At the end of their third year of study, students can present a dissertation and graduate with a degree from the University of Humberside. If they study for a fourth year, they can also receive the degree from the University for National and World Economics. During the first three years the programme is delivered in English and strictly follows the curriculum of the University of Humberside. Since 1994, a special Centre for Inter-University Studies at the university has been made responsible for developing programmes in the fields of business administration and management developed by foreign universities. It has also introduced a two-year international modular Masters degree in Management, written and developed by the University of Humberside, with three separate routes leading to an MBA, an MSc in Housing and Regional Planning and an MSc in Tourism Management.

8.12 ECONOMICS

Since 1989, in an attempt to restructure economic faculties, cooperative ventures and an intensive exchange of experts with European and American institutions has been underway across the region. In some countries, though, it will still be many years before the universities can offer robust economic Ph.D. programmes of their own.

In the interim, those able economics students wishing to do a postgraduate degree, but who do not want to go to Western European or American Universities, will continue to be drawn to the Centre for Economic Research and Graduate Education (CERGE), an independent research and educational institute of the Charles University in Prague. Created in 1991, originally as part of the Faculty of Social Sciences, with the help of considerable, mainly American, expertise and foundation support, the aim has been to develop accredited postgraduate degree programmes in economics that would set the standard for the entire region. CERGE runs a Ph.D. programme in theoretical economics, which produced its first graduates in 1995. CERGE has had TEMPUS support to develop a European Economics Ph.D. curriculum.

CERGE is also an internationally recognised centre of advanced economics research and acts as a conduit bringing the most modern approaches to economics to the attention of academics, government officials and economists from other institutions in the Czech Republic and the other countries of Central and Eastern Europe. CERGE's own research is mainly focused on the process of going from a centrally planned to a market-oriented system (changing enterprise behaviour, labour market dynamics, market imperfections and functioning markets, disequilibrium economics, property rights, public choice, environmental economics, institutional design, etc.). The results of its researches are published as working papers and special reports and discussed at national and international conferences.

The Budapest University of Economic Sciences is the country's major centre for courses and research of this kind. The aim of its research projects in the European sphere is to provide a theoretical background to support those negotiating the country's accession to the European Union and is thus focused on fiscal and monetary policies, development policies and regional policies. In Romania, a major TEMPUS backed project called TEMPER has been responsible for developing the curricula and providing library support for two new masters' Programmes in 'European Integration and European Business' and 'The Economics of Transition' at twelve Romanian universities.

8.13 PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

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As late as 1994, only five universities in Poland provided full master's level degree programmes in public administration, whilst other higher educational institutions offered nothing more than specialisations that could be considered useful in this area. There was a general feeling that public administration courses were not really relevant, or, perhaps, that the problems of public administration were a minor irritation, which would either solve themselves given time or which could be left on the back-burner until other more pressing issues had first been dealt with. Over the last few years, though, the malfunctioning of the public administrations in the candidate countries has become a major concern to European Union member states as they contemplate the effects of admitting the Central and Eastern European states into their club.

There are two quite separate questions that affect the universities. The first is their involvement in a crash campaign of civil service training designed to improve the functioning of the existing system of public administration in the present. The second is the long-term contribution that they should make in developing university level training in public administration. In some countries, such as Estonia and Lithuania, university institutes and centres are recognised licensed bidders for current in-service public administration training contracts. In other countries of the region, even where a basic network of undergraduate and graduate public administration studies has been created, the government's inability to precisely

define training needs, combined with a history of poor contacts between the higher educational sector and the various government ministries concerned, has often unnecessarily excluded them from the crash campaign. Whatever the situation is with regard to the mainly ad hoc provision of in-service training, the long term development of a responsive and open administrative system is unthinkable without well-designed public administration courses at the higher educational level.

The Estonian government, for one, does recognise how important this is going to be for the country's long-term plans for playing a full role within the European Union. The University of Tartu, Faculty of Social Sciences' Department of Public Administration and Social Policy offers a bachelor level degree in Public Administration, a Master of Arts in Public Administration and Social Policy, and a Master of Public Administration. In addition to this, in partnership with the Tallinn Pedagogical University, it offers a two-year part-time master's degree in Public Administration for civil servants using courses from the British Open University in Tallinn. The same two partners are currently working with the Danish School of Public Administration to develop a modular training programme, with officially recognised university credits, for mid- and junior level civil servants engaged in EU affairs.

In Bulgaria, although in-service training systems for civil servants remain fragmented and underdeveloped, the universities have managed to develop a firm base in public administration training at the Bachelor's level, which is now being extended to master's and doctoral levels. These programmes were pioneered by the initially more flexible 'private' universities and, because of the limited quotas that the government allows for public administration, the intake numbers remain higher in the private than the public sector. The pioneering Department of Public Administration at the New Bulgarian University, Sofia, was transformed at the beginning of July 1997 into the Centre for Public Administration with the aim of developing in-service training for civil servants in the public sector. In the 1997/98 academic year there were 100 students on its bachelor and master's programmes. Although the curriculum for Public Administration courses is officially decreed by the Ministry of Education, the actual content of the programmes reflects the specialisation of the individual university. Thus the public administration courses at Sofia University are strongly inter-disciplinary; those at the University of National and World Economy are strongly biased towards business administration, those at the South-Western University to law and those at the New Bulgarian University to political science.

The leading state university in this area is the Department of Public Administration, within the Philosophy Faculty, at the 'St. Kliment Ohridski' University in Sofia, which has received considerable TEMPUS support and American expertise. It launched its master's programme in 1998, two years after starting its first bachelor level programmes. Neither step was taken without considerable opposition from groups within the university who questioned either the whole concept of develop-

ing a public administration specialisation, or the interdisciplinary and social science based nature of its curriculum. The department now has around double its official quota of forty students and is developing its doctoral programmes. The Department of Public Administration also offers short-term retraining programmes designed for civil servants. The same university's Faculty of Law, champions the idea of establishing a Bulgarian version of the French ENA [an idea opposed by the Department of Public Administration] and has for several years offered a 'specialisation' in public administration within its Law master's degree. Centred around administrative law subjects, the specialisation is not officially recognised as an MPA programme.

Recognising that there was a demand for public administration training for civil servants, who were going to man the new decentralised local governments, the Romanian 'Babes-Bolyai' University's Faculty of European Studies in the city of Cluj-Napoca has set up a European College of Public Administration at Bistrita. In Slovakia, the Faculty of Economics, (which includes an Institute for Municipal and Regional Development) at Matej Bel University in Banska Bystrica has established a master's level course in Public Economy and Administration, whilst the Institute of Public Administration in the Faculty of Law at the P.J.Safarik University in Kosice offers a master's level course in Public Economy and Administration.

8.14 NURTURING RESPONSIBLE JOURNALISM

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The creation of a real civil/civic, or open society requires the existence of a free news media. Free not just in the sense of not being controlled by the government or by other national interest groups, but free in a way which encourages an equal and open exchange of opinions by providing the information required for an informed public debate and transparent decision making. Although other factors are involved, what is essential is that the journalists should have a clear sense of the ethics and responsibility required of them in their profession. A considerable effort has been made to instil these values amongst journalists as part of a large-scale educational effort directed at the reform of university journalism faculties and the retraining of practising journalists.¹³

At the centre of this effort has been a comprehensive redesign of the curricula for such courses and the stress placed within them upon journalistic ethics and responsibilities. Despite the fact that generous grants from mainly American foundations have bankrolled the acquisition of new libraries, new equipment and new teaching priorities, the new journalism programmes that have emerged over the last decade still stress academic knowledge to a much greater extent than would be the case in the United States. Thus in most cases, journalism is seen as part of the social studies, with students doing a comprehensive academic training in sociology, politics, economics and so on, alongside their more practical courses and specialisations on news writing and editing. It is perhaps for this reason that the

various hands-on courses presented by mainly US financed Centers for Independent Journalism still attract considerable numbers of journalism students.

Ten years after the collapse of communism, the media is essentially free throughout the region. In Albania, an estimated 200 different publications are available, including daily and weekly newspapers, magazines, newsletters, and pamphlets.¹⁴ Three Greek language newspapers are published in the south of the country. In Romania several hundred independent daily and weekly newspapers are published and, as of September 1998, 72 private television stations and 162 private radio stations were broadcasting. Approximately 2.8 million households were wired for cable, giving significant portions of the population access to both private and foreign broadcasts. There are still some hurdles to be cleared, according to the United States State Department Annual Human Rights Country Reports. In 1998 in Albania and Bulgaria,¹⁵ some journalists were still intimidated and beaten up because of what they had written. In Romania, journalists can still be punished for defaming the country, whilst in Estonia there have been complaints that officials are still unnecessarily secretive, and in Hungary worries have been expressed that media ownership is becoming concentrated in too few hands with possibly detrimental effects upon media freedom. In the main, though, it is clear that media freedom is being observed by governments and, as is the case in Lithuania, the media is beginning to police itself by setting up its own special ethics committees and establishing an ombudsman to check libel cases and other complaints.

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In 1989, only Hungary and Albania did not have departments for university-level journalism training. In Albania, such a department had existed between 1968 and 1974, but had then been closed down when the regime recognised that it had no places for the graduates in an undynamic, controlled media market. From the 1956 uprising to the end of communism, Hungarian journalism training was entrusted to a special school run by the communist party controlled Hungarian Association of Journalism. When Albania set up its journalism programme at Tirana University in 1992 only one of the five professors had any journalistic experience, whilst a second managed to take part in a summer journalism programme at the University of North Carolina in 1993, sponsored by The Freedom Forum. Not surprisingly its courses have remained rather theoretical, with the Media Training Centre, set up with Soros Foundation support, equipment funded by the International Media Fund and an initial staff of young Americans, providing more practical training. The faculty still depends upon outside support from such organisations as USAID's ProMedia programme and the Danish School of Journalism to put on short term practical courses.

In Hungary, the setting up of the Budapest American Journalism Center in 1991 by the University of Maryland with an International Media Fund grant, was the starting point for developing higher educational programmes. Although at first concerned with in-service training, the Center quickly began to develop university-level courses on all aspects of practical journalism for students attending the newly

established Media Studies Programme (1992) at the Eotvos Lorand University in Budapest. Courses taken at the Center are recognised for credit by the university and the Center has increasingly been absorbed into the higher educational structure. It is now also possible to take a postgraduate programme in journalism at the University's Institute of Sociology and Social Policy. In the last few years the Universities of Pecs and Szeged have also developed journalism specialisations.

As in Budapest, the International Media Fund together with a host of other sponsors¹⁶ has financed a Journalism Center in Warsaw, which offers a two-year certificate, practically orientated journalism training programme for students. This compliments the more European/theoretical bent of the country's longer established programmes at Warsaw University (1950); Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznan, (1970); Jagiellonian University, Krakow (1977); and Silesian University (1968), where in 1994 some 2,000 students were following a 'specialisation in journalism' within a political science or social science degree. The New York based Independent Journalism Foundation has followed a similar strategy to that of the International Media Fund and, after establishing its first Center for Independent Journalism in Prague soon after its establishment in 1991, has gone on to establish similar Centers in Bratislava (1993), Bucharest, (1994), Budapest, (1995) and Kosice, Slovakia (1996). The well-equipped Centers and their News libraries, all funded by the Freedom Forum, offer tuition-free training and institutional support to practising and aspiring journalists, taught increasingly by local, rather than American, trainers, which supplement the work of university journalism departments and provide hand on journalism training for others wishing to enter the profession or to upgrade their skills.

In Slovakia, during the troubled years of the Meciar government, the two Centres for Independent Journalism have presented a continuous stream of courses covering all aspects of journalism to national and regional newspaper and radio journalists, often presented by visiting US journalists, supported by the Knight International Press Fellowship Program. The Centre has also presented courses at the Adult Education Department of the P.J.Safarik University in Presov. The Independent Journalism Foundation¹⁷ also supported the new journalism programme presented by the non-profit Academia Istropolitana Nova. This is based on a master's level curriculum designed by the Journalism Department at the University of Illinois, and is open to graduates of Central European or NIS universities with a degree in economics, science, law or the arts. As one would expect, the primary focus will be on hands-on training (for environment/ science, arts/ culture, and economics journalists wanting to work in radio, TV or the press), but there will be 12 intensive common courses, covering the theory, history and ethics of journalism, taught by local or American experts.

In the Baltic countries, journalism teaching at universities has had a longer and unbroken tradition, normally emerging from study groups interested in communication within Faculties of Philology. The University of Vilnius' Institute of Journa-

lism, within the Faculty of Communication, (set up in 1991), is the oldest having been set up in the late 1950's, twenty years before its counterparts in the Universities of Tartu and Latvia. Although all three courses remain rather too theoretical for American tastes, with a stress upon social sciences and mass-media theory, the reform of journalism teaching in higher education owes much to the four year relationship (1992-1996) which the three national Baltic universities maintained with Ohio University's Institute for Telecommunications Studies and its School of Journalism as part of that university's larger project to support democratisation and independent media development in the area. Funding from USAID, the US-Baltic Foundation, the International Media Fund, and Voice of America allowed Baltic university staff to travel to Ohio and Ohio university staff to develop audio and video production facilities at the three national universities, and to conduct on-campus workshops for Baltic broadcasters and students on news reporting, electronic news gathering, satellite communications, audience research and public broadcasting.

During the 1993-94 academic year in Romania more than 800 students were enrolled in journalism courses of various kinds at six state and private universities and three non-university institutions. Only three universities, in Bucharest, Timisoara and Sibiu offered fully fledged journalism programmes. Whilst the programme at the School of Journalism and Communication Science at the University of Bucharest was the oldest, and most pedagogically sound programme, the course in Timisoara, was initiated by California State University, Chico, with help from USAID and has an American-style curriculum and modern equipment donated by the International Media Fund Foundation, the German Marshall Fund and the IMF.

In Bulgaria too, the well funded and well equipped journalism/mass communication programme started at the American University in Bulgaria, under the auspices of the University of Missouri School of Journalism,¹⁸ with its fifty students doing a two year journalism major, within their four year course, and six faculty, clearly outshines the under-funded and under-equipped forty seven year-old journalism and mass communication programme at Sofia University. Most of the almost one and a half thousand students attending the Faculty of Journalism and Mass Communication concentrate on mass communications rather than journalism.

8.15 CONCLUSION

From the single perspective of 'education for civil society', the main disappointment from this survey is the clear indication that there is almost no support for the notion of developing new cross-faculty and cross-disciplinary courses on 'democracy studies' or 'civics' in place of the now abolished communist era courses in 'Red Studies'. Indeed the very idea is met with wearied cynicism. One survey of regional attitudes has made it clear that it would be even harder to do this than to

introduce more inter-disciplinary courses on the arts/humanities side of the university, something that is only now, after ten years of struggle, beginning to happen in a minor way. In the absence of any moves to establish such cross faculty ‘democracy’ education, this chapter has focused, instead, on giving an overview of some of the curriculum innovations which have been taking place across the region in an array of subjects, that have a clear relationship to the educational underpinning of a civil/civic society.

What is revealed in the case studies is the extent of the changes that have occurred since 1989. It has sometimes been easier to set up completely new faculties than to reform existing ones, but even in the latter case there are achievements enough, even if they have sometimes been hard won. There are enough examples of good practice in all of the countries in the region to expect that over-time the types of curriculum innovation now being introduced by one university or college will spread throughout the national higher educational system. The European Union’s PHARE/TEMPUS programme has played and is still playing a major role in getting this process on its feet by creating structures for an exchange of expertise between European Union and Central and Eastern European institutions of higher education. Active in all areas, American Foundations and government agencies have made a particular impact on the reform of journalism training.

Significant though these changes are, they should not be interpreted as meaning that the process has been completed. Well planned courses and curricula, developed by a kernel of inspired local lecturers, often helped by their EU colleagues, must become self-sustaining once the spotlight of reform moves elsewhere and the initial group of enthusiasts disperses. Good curricula adopted wholesale by other educational institutions lacking the same level of expertise, will fail to deliver to their full potential. New curricula alone cannot overcome a lack of finances to buy library books and a professoriate made unattractive by low pay and excessive demands. However as part of a process which includes the development of national quality control procedures, staff development courses and so on, the changes outlined here should not be underrated. Even the country that faces the hardest task in bringing its higher educational structures up to European standards, Albania, has its centres of excellence, which can, with proper support, be used as a model for future national development.

The creation of a civil/civic society depends upon the development of new skills and attitudes acquired through education, an education structured to reflect the values of the new open economy and society. These values should permeate the entire higher education experience and should not be limited to special courses. As Benjamin Disraeli, the nineteenth century British Prime Minister, once said: “A university should be a place of light, of liberty and of learning.”

NOTES

- ¹ Statement issued by the Artes Liberales Committee Prague, January 1997.
- ² Partial exceptions to this rule were Poland and Hungary.
- ³ The Higher Education and Research Committee (CC-HER) 'Social Sciences and the Challenge of Transition' (1997), cooperating with the European Science Foundation (ESF) in the form of a reference panel of experts, set up under the Standing Committee of the Social Sciences.
- ⁴ First semester required courses in the history and systems of sociology, methodology, statistics, and mathematics.
- ⁵ The Institute also received considerable support from the German Academic Exchange Service and the British Council to support libraries and computer technology.
- ⁶ VSE has six faculties and 12,000 students.
- ⁷ *Master's degree courses:* Basics of Political Science; the Czech Political System; America's Political System, Comparison of Political Systems; Europe's Political System; Comparative Politics; Development of Democracy; the Sociology of Politics; Decision Making; Management and Politics; Czech Foreign Policy; Political Theories and their histories; Business and Politics; Decision Making and Analysis in Politics; Political Aspects of the Integration Process in Europe; Text Analysis and Models in Political Science.
- ⁸ The Polish Sociological Association has around 1,000 members, approximately one third of the total number of sociology graduates in Poland. It has thirteen regional chapters, in Warsaw and all other university centres.
- ⁹ G. Csepeli, A. Örkeny and K.L. Scheppele: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome in Social Science in Eastern Europe. in- *Replika* (Budapest University of Economic Sciences, Department of Sociology, 1996) Special issue.
- ¹⁰ *Compulsory subjects:* Introduction to Political Science, Comparative Politics, History of Political Thought, Political Science in the 20th Century, Approaches to Political Systems, Theory of Human Rights, International Relations, Slovak Political System, Local Government in Slovakia, Public Policy and Administration, Economic Theory, Politics and Mass Media. *Optional subjects:* European Political Cultures, Constitutionalism, Legitimacy and Human Rights, Slovak-Czech Relations, Transformation of Eastern Europe, The Development of Political Life in Slovakia, The Post-Communist Period in Slovakia, Comparative Analysis of National Problems in Slovakian Political Propaganda, Persuasion and Marketing, Political Communication in Transition.
- ¹¹ A Similar programme was introduced at Kaunas University of Technology in Autumn 1998.
- ¹² It publishes the biannual journal: *Modern Europe and the Czech Republic*.
- ¹³ From outside the region, no country has been as active as the United States, operating either through the USAID funded ProMedia or through the international non-profit sector, represented by the International Media Fund, the Independent Journalism Foundation, the International Center for Foreign Journalists, and Freedom House.

- ¹⁴ Unfortunately, the press has a bad reputation amongst its falling readership. A 1998 survey showed that 63 percent of readers believed the press was itself causing problems for ordinary citizens, and only 18 percent thought that the press was making a positive contribution to the life of the nation.
- ¹⁵ The Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly's Observation Committee announced in August 1998 that it would review problems with regard to media independence in Bulgaria.
- ¹⁶ Other sponsors include USAID, the Press and Information Office of the German Federal Government, Bonn, the Freedom Forum, the Thompson Foundation, UK, the German and American Embassies in Warsaw, The Center for Foreign Journalists, the Trans-Atlantic Dialogue on European Broadcasting International, the National Forum Foundation and the Goethe Institute, Warsaw.
- ¹⁷ Other sponsors: University of Illinois; Florida International University; Fulbright Commission/Slovakia; Knight International Press Fellowship Program; Austrian Government; Friedrich Ebert Foundation/Slovakia; British Council/Slovakia; Open Society Institute/Budapest.
- ¹⁸ The International Media Fund provided grants totalling \$400,000. Other support included the first Freedom Forum Journalism Library in the region and grants from the Soros Foundation, IBM Europe and UNESCO.

9 HIGHER EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING

9.1 INTRODUCTION

In recent years declarations of common European Union educational principles have increasingly stressed the importance of 'Lifelong Learning', linking it to the newly popular slogan of a 'Learning Society'. The concept of Lifelong Learning takes as its premise that human beings do not stop acquiring worthwhile knowledge when they step outside the existing formal educational structures, but that they continue to acquire quantifiable knowledge in more informal settings throughout their lives. This has two results when it comes to suggesting avenues for future educational policy. The first is that the existing popular division of education into clear steps on a ladder going from primary to postgraduate education is misleading. The ladder of education is actually, from the perspective of 'lifelong learning', a network of intersecting pathways leading upwards at different gradients but all giving the possibility, if so desired, of eventually reaching the summit. The second is that if this is true then there should be multiple entry-ways into different levels of education, not posited purely upon formal schoolroom achievement but upon a weighing of formal and more informal educational experiences.

These concepts have begun to make their way into national policy in European Union member states and onto the list of declarations at international conferences. Indeed the promotion of the European dimension in adult education and an improvement in its quality is one of the stated aims of Strand V of the SOCRATES Programme, in which the candidate countries of Central and Eastern Europe are now eligible to participate. Participation rates in tertiary education, among people in their late twenties, are already now apparently above ten percent in Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway and the United States and this promises to be only the tip of the iceberg. The increasing recognition that in advanced technology societies the entire workforce will have to continually upgrade their skills will increasingly draw more and more older people into the higher education system.

New groups of students bring with them new interests and needs and these will increasingly oblige the tertiary sector to diversify its recruitment methods and criteria and its educational structures, programmes and styles of delivery. The OECD has already become a strong promoter of lifelong learning, seeing it as a way to break down the tyranny of the faculty and the discipline. Granted the possibilities being opened up by the internet for on-line courses, the question arises of why degree courses should last for specific periods of three or four years. Obviously, the community of learning represented by higher educational institutions has much to commend it, but what the new technology is beginning to do is to increase accessibility for all kinds of non-traditional students. In the United States, there are already reportedly over 400 Virtual Universities operating at the local, national and global levels. A market that was opened up in Europe to a sceptical reception from

many in the educational establishment, by the now much imitated British Open University, with its audio and videotapes, has now finally come of age.

9.2 LIFELONG LEARNING IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

While this process has been gathering speed in Western Europe, the main focus of government policy at the tertiary level in Central and Eastern Europe has been concentrated upon the younger generation. In many Central and Eastern European countries, the structures of non-vocational adult continuing education were pushed aside after 1989, in the belief that they represented nothing more than one more link in the discredited 'communist indoctrination' network. With little or no political support and with government subsidies reduced or completely abolished, this kind of adult education became an arena almost entirely dominated by under-financed, non-profit NGOs.¹ Even where some elements of the old structures have survived and have tried to reinvent themselves for the new era, as in Hungary and Slovakia, financial pressures have often forced them to move in the direction of income generating training and away from those social activities that might have contributed to education for democracy.

9.2.1 COMMERCIALISATION OF ADULT TRAINING

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The problem with the increasing commercialisation of training programmes, often now paid for by employers, directed at adults (in such areas as management training, language training, and information technology training) is that they have increasingly come to benefit mainly those who are already in work and those with promotion prospects. If we look at the situation in Estonia the extent of the problem becomes clear. Between the beginning of 1996 and November 1997 about one fifth of 20–60 year olds attended work related training courses of some kind. Twenty seven percent of younger people, between 20 and 39 years old, had done some type of training, but only nine percent of those aged between 55 and 60 years old had. Within the younger group there was a clear disparity between those with a higher education diploma and those without. Almost forty one percent of those with higher education had taken training courses, whilst only fifteen percent of those with vocational education and five percent of those with basic primary education had. The participation rate amongst workers was over three times lower than amongst managers or specialists.

9.2.2 PART TIME STUDY IN HIGHER EDUCATION

In higher education, the drive to increase university places for the under 25 year olds has been accompanied by a collapse, or at best a stagnation, in the provision of various forms of part-time undergraduate and graduate education. For instance,

in the Czech Republic the number of part-time students fell in percentage terms from nineteen percent to nine percent between 1989-90 and 1995-96. In Slovenia, although overall numbers of part-timers rose, the increase was entirely due to young people being forced to take part-time university courses because quotas were keeping them out of full-time education. The numbers of over 25 year olds declined here too. In Hungary, the government's determination to waive tuition fees for full-time first degree students has meant that all other students,² even part-timers taking their first degree, have to pay tuition. This tuition burden is exacerbated by the fact that colleges and universities receive only one third of the normal per capita financing for part-time and one fourth for correspondence students.

9.2.3 UNIVERSITIES OF THE THIRD AGE

Financial constraints have also had a predictable affect upon the development of 'Universities of the Third Age,' for educating older people, which several countries in the region had begun to set up in line with UNESCO guidelines in the late 1980's. The Comenius University, the Slovak University of Agriculture and the University of Zilina, which together comprise the Slovak University of the Third Age, still officially provide four semester or more programmes of half day courses, but, in line with the generally parlous state of Slovak university funding, there is little reality behind the commitment.³

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The governments of the region are beginning to recognise that they must do something to revitalise the non-formal educational sector. The 1998 Czech Higher Education Law encourages the country's higher educational institutions to play a more active role in the development of a life-long educational system and the Hungarian government has made a commitment to ensure that the elderly and the unemployed are not squeezed out of the training sector. However, it is hard to see how, in the current conditions of financial restraint, non-formal studies can be anything else but the poor cousin of the system.

9.3 VIRTUAL EDUCATION AND THE INTERNET

One positive factor is that, as the countries of the region have only started the computer revolution relatively recently, they are not encumbered with high investments in now outdated educational networks. In this technology the advantage of coming second has been considerable. More than one in ten Estonians are now on-line and Estonia ranks among the top fifteen countries in Europe in computers per capita, ahead of France and Italy. Public internet access points are provided throughout the country, even on remote islands in the Baltic Sea. In schools, the 'Tiger Leap Programme' to the information society, launched in 1996, provides information-based learning systems for all pupils. The goal is to provide all com-

pulsory schools with a computer classroom with ten to twelve places and all grammar schools with two computer classrooms. In Hungary the ambitious Sulinet (Schoolnet) has enabled students in more than two-thirds of secondary schools to browse the internet from their classrooms. Latvia's national education plan foresees that by 2003 all general and professional educational facilities in Latvia will offer a computer class and provide a common network and access to the Internet.

In the field of higher education a Central and Eastern European Networking Association (CEENet), a grouping of national organisations which works to coordinate the establishment and operation of academic, research and education networks in Central and Eastern Europe and in adjacent countries, is already in place. Founded in Prague in 1992, CEENet, which has received the bulk of its support from Austria and its national research and education network (ACONet), is now registered as a non-profit organisation in Vienna and has its secretariat in Warsaw. There are now over twenty members (Albania, Armenia, Austria, Bulgaria, Belarus, Croatia, Czech Republic, Estonia, Georgia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Moldova, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Slovakia and Usbekistan). CEENet promotes technical and organisational collaboration between national research networks; organises conferences, workshops and courses; and circulates information. On the basis of CEENet, a coherent group of local experts on the educational aspects of the Internet, networking and information technology is beginning to emerge, able to build the infrastructure and manage the process of educational networking.

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The first shoots of the indigenous internet educational revolution are starting to appear. In Prague, students of sociology from the Philosophical Faculty at Charles University have set up the 'Virtual Institute', a non-profit Internet Centre for Social Studies, founded in the autumn of 1998. It aims to be a contact hub for social scientists both in the Czech Republic and abroad. It offers on-line courses, information on research projects, sociological publications like journals and books as well as discussions among scientists and students on theoretical and current topics. In the summer term of 1999, it was possible to take two on-line courses and seven or eight more have now been prepared. The Virtual Institute is not accredited and does not give diplomas, but it shows that Central and Eastern European educational institutions are already in a position to take advantage of the new possibilities offered by the communications revolution.

9.4 DISTANCE LEARNING

The groundwork for the eventual emergence of accredited internet-based distance learning degrees has already been laid by the considerable growth which has occurred in distance learning, as those with jobs study to improve their qualifications.

Open Universities have started operating throughout the region, either as departments of national universities, or more normally as subsidiaries of international distance learning providers. In the Czech Republic, alongside several university faculties offering distance degree programmes, the American-based Newport University and the British Open University are also active. Both offer credit based degree programmes, the first in cooperation with one of the local universities, whilst the second independently offers its three part Business programme leading to an MBA. In Slovakia, the private City University in Bratislava has been offering distance education programmes in cooperation with the British Open University since 1991. In Bulgaria, a TEMPUS programme project helped to set up the innovative Open Faculty at the Technical University of Sofia where students can use newly developed multimedia learning materials for a variety of interdisciplinary subjects. At the private New Bulgarian University, Departments for Continuing and Distance Education have also been established.

Hungary has been at the forefront of regional developments for almost a decade now. The Hungarian National Council for Distance Education was set up in 1991. Its approach has been to establish Regional Distance Education Centres in co-operation with interested colleges and universities (in 1997 there were ten such centres involving sixteen higher educational institutions). Initially these centres tried to adapt ready-made western programmes and course materials, but increasingly they have tried to develop their own original course material. The first independent higher educational institution to use distance learning methods to organise its programmes was the Denes Gabor College of Technology and Informatics, founded in 1992 and now organising education in forty two regional centres in the fields on microelectronics, computer science and informatics. In Romania, something similar is developing. With PHARE support a National Centre for Open Distance Education has been created in eight main university centres with the full support of twelve universities.

The PHARE Multi-Country Cooperation in Distance Education Programme, of which the Romanian project was part, was launched in Hungary in 1994/95. Encompassing eleven Central, East and Eastern European countries it promotes development throughout the region by developing concepts and preparing expert reports. In 1997, again as part of this programme, the European Training Foundation started a project to develop a trans-regional distance education infrastructure and training course modules for twelve priority subject areas including European Law; Management and Business; Social Sciences and the training of teachers and trainers; and the Modernisation of Public Administration Services.

In an innovative move, the TEMPUS programme has financed a project in the Czech Republic, involving Charles University, the Masaryk University in Brno, the University of South Bohemia in Ceske Budejovice, and the Institute of Chemical Technology in Prague, which is trying to ease the way for the introduction of 'EU Directives in the Curricula of Biology and Chemistry', by developing distance

learning programmes for university graduates, research institutions and enterprises.

Despite these efforts, distance education is still only being conducted on a relatively small scale and the concept has not yet been fully embraced by university administrations or teaching staffs. Nor has it yet been able to fully overcome a general public perception that it is a second chance education and therefore a second rate one. Progress has also been quicker in some countries than in other, and in Slovenia, for example, although the first modern distance learning programmes were introduced in the 1990s, they still cover no more than one percent of all graduate students.

9.5 CONTINUING EDUCATION

Another important area in which the higher educational sector is active is continuing education. Enrolment figures here have been rising as colleges and universities react to market driven demands for refresher and retraining courses. Tirana University, for example, offers a four month Continuing Education/Retraining Programme for about fifty persons per year who finished their studies before 1992. The 12-15 lesson, day release courses on offer cover such areas as accounting, financing, management, marketing, computing, and economics. The lecturers are Albanian and most of the students are already employed in government ministries.

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Continuing education for lawyers has long been standard in the United States and it is obviously vital in the post-communist situation as new areas of law are opened up and parliaments continue to struggle to approximate national legislation to European norms. The strategies used to meet this clear market demand have been varied, including the development of short seminars, complete programmes and even specially set up commercially orientated university institutes. Going across the region, from Estonia (Concordia University) via twelve law faculties in Poland, the University of Matej Bel, in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia to the Universities in Ljubljana and Maribor, it is possible to identify a host of short on to three day continuing education courses/seminars on European Union law put on for lawyers, public administrators and members of parliament.

These developments are most advanced at the Law Faculty of the Eotvos Lorand University in Budapest, which has set up a financially independent Institute of Further Legal Training to develop courses for lawyers, paralegals and other professionals, with a permanent staff of twelve and a register of 300 lecturers. About 100 short to long courses on different topics, mostly covering new areas of law brought to the fore by the transition process, have so far been developed. The Hungarian Oil Company, for example, has provided further training in European Union Law for its employees. Courses covering areas of law relevant to the work of engineers, physicians and economists have also proved popular, attracting

1,000 participants to the fifteen courses offered in 1997. At the top end of the market, the institute offers post-graduate programmes (two years of courses, plus six months of thesis preparation time) in corporate, transportation, environmental and banking law, with students attending courses one full day every fortnight. The institute has reached an agreement with the Budapest Chamber of Attorneys making it responsible for developing further training programmes and, in all, around 10,000 lawyers, from across the country, do some kind of continuing education there every year.

Most Faculties of Social Sciences across the region also offer at least some short continuing education courses within their departmental areas of expertise. These last for an average of two weeks and are normally designed to attract teachers from secondary schools, journalists, politicians, business people and civil servants. Longer courses are rarer, however. In Prague, the Charles University Faculty of Social Sciences is working together with the Faculty of Law to present a rather more adventurous one year/two semester post-graduate certificate programme on European Affairs, called the 'Europeum', open to those who have previously graduated in law, economics, history or political science. The programme has three modules covering the economic, legal and political (historical, sociological and cultural) aspects of the European Union, with an emphasis throughout upon the developing relationship between the Czech Republic and the European Union. It is examined through a combination of written and oral examinations and in 1997/98 sixty people, mainly civil servants or workers in the non-governmental sector, with a few private sector employees, attended the programme.

A similar programme, leading to a continuing education diploma, and this time designed to attract Romanian civil servants dealing with, or wanting to know more about, the Romanian pre-accession process, is on offer at the 'Babes-Bolyai' University, Cluj-Napoca using courses taken from the same university's Comparative European Studies master's programme. At the University of Ljubljana, a two year International Affairs course-work based master's programme, covering both European and global issues, is taught on Fridays and Saturdays to make it easier for those with daytime jobs to attend.

9.5.1 TEMPUS SUPPORTED PROGRAMMES

The EU's TEMPUS programme has been active in helping to spread continuous education possibilities and especially those which have to do with European Affairs. It has, for instance, supported the development of a continuing education course in this area, for those who have already completed their master's degree, presented, since 1996, at the Institute for Postgraduate Studies of Budapest University of Economic Sciences. In Bratislava, the Centre for European Studies, at the Comenius University is using TEMPUS support to develop multidisciplinary introductory courses on European Integration for a target group of about

100 people, made up of civil servants from Slovak Ministries and a group of future European Union Affairs trainers destined for the country's local and regional government organs. In the area of local government, TEMPUS also supported a programme (linking the Centre for European Studies, the New Bulgarian University, Stockholm University, the College of Europe, the Bulgarian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Association of Bulgarian Municipalities) entitled 'Local Administration Continuing Training in European Affairs' (LACTEA) which started in early 1999.

As with distance learning, the TEMPUS programme has also been prepared to support initiatives that help to lay a more permanent structure to support the continuing education programme. Thus in the Czech Republic, two interesting initiatives are in process. The first of these involves the vsb-Technical University in Ostrava, the Technical University in Liberec, and the Silesian University in Opava, who are jointly hoping to set up an Inter-University Enterprise Centre to design continuing education courses related to the project title 'Training in EU Technical Legislation for Industries and Small to Medium sized Enterprises'. The second, this time involving the Technical University in Brno, the University of Pardubice, and the Czech Technical University in Prague together with European Business Holding, the Delegation of the European Commission to the Czech Republic and the Ministry of Transport and Communications, is designed to develop a National Network of EuroStudy Academic Centres, which will, in the first instance, develop and offer four multimedia continuing education courses in European Studies.

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Such TEMPUS supported initiatives are not limited to European Union Studies. In Romania, for instance, a project has been underway involving the Universities of Bucharest, Cluj-Napoca, Constanta, and Timisoara and seven other Romanian universities and twenty nine enterprises and commercial organisations in the creation of a University-Enterprise Centre at the Technical University of Timisoara offering continuing education courses to technical managers in the fields of management and administration.

9.6 CONCLUSIONS

Unfortunately, although the programmes of continuing education listed above and mentioned earlier in this paper are worthy of note, they do not form the tip of an iceberg, instead they float atop an almost empty sea. The programmes on offer are not based upon projections of labour market demands, but rather on what the faculties involved are able to offer and upon their hunches of what will be popular. Indeed there is little feedback between education and the labour market. What is needed is some form of central direction which ensures that a range of subject areas are developed and that the programmes on offer are sustainable.

The sector, certainly in so far as university level courses are concerned, suffers from all the shortcomings that we have already mentioned when discussing the university reform process. The standard of instruction is varied and traditional in nature, a format even less suited to adult education than to undergraduates, and there are few opportunities for a crossover from the informal to the formal sector. One of the main deficiencies in all of this activity is that very little thought has so far been paid to quality assurance and even in the higher educational sector many of the courses on offer are poorly organised.

It is not that governments are not unaware of the problems within the whole adult educational structure, but it is a matter of making priorities at a time when resources are limited. In Slovenia, for example, whilst the training expenses incurred by employers every year average out at around one hundred US dollars per employee, the government, even after increasing expenditures, can only afford to spend eight US dollars per capita on adult education. Perhaps at this stage, the important fact is that governments are increasingly feeling that they should make a commitment to take action in this area, even if, in the short term, there will remain a considerable gap between that commitment and the reality. In general, as has been made clear in the current 'Government Programme for a Civic Hungary', the commitment has been made with an eye on developing European Union policies and on possible future European Union assistance:

"...Under the conditions of the market economy, new legislation should allow people to keep learning during their whole life, to participate in retraining with the use of modern educational programs and methodologies.

...The Government will [act]...in order to accomplish the afore-mentioned goals, and in order to match those to the new governmental structure, and to be able to count on the support which will be given by the European Union in the future.

...For those disadvantaged groups, which are traditionally excluded from higher education, the Government's short-term aim is to establish alternative study opportunities. The Government wants to make higher education available for those talented young people who are "trapped" in small villages, for the well-performing Gypsy students, for the handicapped, and for the "old" generations which were excluded earlier." 4

NOTES

- ¹ In Hungary in 1994, there were 292 associations and foundations active in the field of adult education and 804 in other fields of education.
- ² 6,000 or so part-timers and more than 50,000 students following correspondence courses.
- ³ In Slovenia a University of the Third Age was formally established in 1986 in Ljubljana, by the Slovene Society of Teachers and the University of Ljubljana, Philosophical Faculty.
- ⁴ Government Programme for a Civic Hungary
[www.meh.hu/egyeb/modprog/angol/7.htm]

10 GENERAL CONCLUSIONS

The challenge of European Union accession

The European Council in Helsinki in December 1999 placed the admittance of the ten candidate countries in Central and Eastern Europe (amongst others) firmly on this decade's EU agenda. This was a truly historic decision. It has allowed all of the countries in the region to give a clear direction to their policies, but it will not be easy for them to take all of the steps that will be required. The Central and Eastern European group are comparatively poor countries and the tasks which confront them are broad. Prioritising one area of government expenditure will cause shortfalls in another. Over the next decade they will not only have to make a major effort themselves to meet the entry requirements, but they will also need considerable support from the EU member countries, both at the official governmental and at the non-governmental level.

Although reform of national higher educational systems is not a stated condition of entry, it is clear that the tertiary sector is both a catalyst for societal renewal and a reflection of the stage, which that process has reached. The higher educational sector has a long term role to play in ensuring that the Copenhagen EU entry criteria for democracy, the rule of law, and human rights are met and is itself a significant part of the self-supporting civil and civic society, which should stand as their basis.

The challenge of civil society

The decade of change that has begun to transform the societies of Central and Eastern Europe from rigid systems into freer and more dynamic communities has affected all aspects of life. The process of change is still fragile and far from finished, but granted the extent of what has needed to be done, it could scarcely be expected to be otherwise. Yet the process has by now acquired a dynamic of its own, which has even allowed former communist parties to return to power in both Poland and Hungary, without greatly affecting the tempo of change. Even in the poorer Romania and Bulgaria (and Albania), where officially encouraged change has either been slow or chaotically contradictory, it is possible to identify the shoots of an emerging civil society, even if some of the murkier parts of the nationalist mythology in both countries have not yet been fully confronted. The elements of racism, anti-Semitism and xenophobia, which survive here and elsewhere in the popular culture, will only slowly be laid to rest, as the citizens of Central and Eastern Europe begin to accept not only the benefits but also the responsibilities of freedom and democracy. The growth of civil society thus provides a counter-balance to the negative mythologies of the past and a foundation for constructing new positive national identities.

Education for civil society

There have been some doubts about whether the countries in the region could nurture really indigenous civil/civic societies, and the results thus far are incon-

clusive. Social activism is limited and cynicism and alienation widespread. Besides merely understanding the mechanics of democracy, citizens should be encouraged to absorb its values (i.e. respect for others; ethnic, racial, political, cultural and religious tolerance; civic courage etc.). National educational systems, although certainly not the only possible structures that could be used for this purpose, are the natural mechanism for propagating such values amongst the population. The secondary schools are in the front rank of 'education for democracy' across the region. To take but one example, the new history curriculum and the new history textbooks in Romania are a possible first step in forging a more inclusive national identity.

Institutions of higher education also have a very important role to play in this endeavour, even though it is unlikely that they will be able to develop cross-faculty 'democracy education' courses of their own. In the first place it is here that the new generation of teachers are being trained and it is here that the real debate on national history and other important matters will be conducted. Secondly, it is the very factors which allow this debate to take place – freedom for different opinions, respect for the arguments of others, adherence to academic standards of evidence and proof, the ability to change one's mind, etcetera – which also form the foundations for civil/civic society. At a time when the practical value of higher educational institutions is being stressed, it is important not to forget their role as ethical guardians of the national psyche and sources of social criticism and renewal. Thirdly, institutions of higher education in Central and Eastern Europe can also play an important role in encouraging the growth of civil society by themselves reaching out to the community, forming partnerships with societal organisations and welcoming outsiders onto their managing councils.

Reforming higher education

Despite their different histories, traditions, and social structures, the Central and Eastern European candidate countries and Albania, have all started to reform their higher educational systems with an eye on the emerging Western European consensus, characterised by such documents as the Bologna Declaration and the Lisbon Convention. The higher educational sector has also integrated itself into the international network of intergovernmental and non-governmental international educational organisations.

Higher education has been freed from direct government supervision across the region, as the vestiges of communist-era ideological control have been swept aside. Institutional autonomy and academic freedom are the new guiding principles, with the latter sometimes even being incorporated into national constitutions. Two tier degree systems have been introduced almost everywhere. Faced with growing popular demand for places, integrated binary higher educational structures, including professional and university type institutions, have been established and the private sector given a free rein. Curricula have been modernised, especially in such civil society relevant courses as social science, political science, journalism, economics,

law, and business studies. As governments have relaxed their control over the day to day activities of institutions of higher education, so they have begun to construct quality assessment, evaluation and accreditation procedures. Greater student mobility has meant that credit based degree systems have become more common and that these and the quality procedures are comparable with EU norms.

In all of this, the differences between the Central and Eastern European countries are now considerably smaller than the differences between the Western European nations. As with the provision of computer technology, it is clear that those who come later can sometimes jump whole stages of development. Overall, it is clear that, although higher educational approximation is not a prerequisite for European Union membership, policy in this area is being influenced by the prospect of accession and that, on paper at least, the legacy of communism has been overturned.

Perspectives

In judging the comparative situation in different countries, it is clear that, despite interesting and innovative initiatives being taken in different fields in all of the countries studied, the overall situation in the Czech Republic, Hungary, Poland, Estonia and Slovenia is generally far better than in Romania and Bulgaria, with Albania lagging furthest behind. There should be some knock on effect from Estonia into the other two Baltic Countries and the situation in Slovakia seems set to rapidly improve. What is remarkable though is, despite the very real problems that remain, how much has actually changed in Central and Eastern European higher education over the last ten years. Although still terribly underfunded the direction being taken by higher education is clear. It awaits to be seen whether the governments in the region will be prepared to put enough money into the sector to halt the brain drain out of academia that remains the major challenge to its long term future.

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Problems of higher education reform

Unfortunately, the passing of laws and the creation of legislative structures, important though they are, have not by themselves transformed higher education in the region. No one should underestimate the force of bureaucratic inertia and the quiet opposition of individuals throughout the system who favour reform so long as they can avoid its consequences. Although the region's governments recognise the importance of a thorough reform of the sector in their official pronouncements, higher education does not occupy a leading place when it comes to deciding spending priorities. Over the last decade actual spending has often fallen in real terms, meaning that the already inadequate infrastructure (buildings, libraries etc.) has deteriorated further. New commitments to 'lifelong learning' will only stretch a taught budget to breaking point. Many Ministries of Education, despite the undoubted dedication of many of their employees, remain understaffed and lacking in expertise. University administrators are not always experienced enough to fulfil the tasks which fall upon them in the new devolved system. The increasing

numbers admitted into higher education are threatening to overwhelm the system, and yet, demand still far outstrips supply.

Lecturing staff in newly popular subjects, such as the social sciences and politics, are often inexperienced, whilst the comparative decline in lecturers' pay and the falling status of the teaching profession generally has meant that it is increasingly hard to attract and motivate lecturers. Although the best professors in any single country are a match to any in the world, the depth of expertise is not great. The low numbers of students doing Ph.D.s is already raising fears about the long term supply of academics. Teaching methodologies and examination systems are out-dated and yet there are few staff development units. Research in the humanities and social sciences is in crisis throughout the region, with little money for original research and few possibilities for publication.

The overriding problem is a lack of funding. It is inevitable that tuition fees will increasingly be introduced across the region. It is important, though, that any funds raised in this or other ways should be used as an addition to existing budgets and not as a replacement for funds withdrawn from the budget for other purposes. At the same time care will have to be taken to ensure that tuition fees do not force the less well off out of education whether as full or part time students.

The foreign support programmes

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The European Union's PHARE/TEMPUS Programme has played a prominent supportive role in higher education institution building and curriculum development, disbursing some 6.7 billion Euros during the 1995-99 budget period. Alongside it works the World Bank, which is beginning to increase its lending to support higher educational reform in the region. American Foundations and individual American Universities have also played an important role in supporting the reform of higher education in the social sciences/humanities sector. This is especially noticeable in Journalism. In a class by itself is the Soros Foundation, with an endless series of higher educational projects to its credit, all conducted with a view to helping create 'Open' Societies throughout the old Eastern block. Nevertheless it is not only such large scale programmes that are having an impact. A series of much smaller scale programmes, supporting individual institutions or departments, helping to publish books or to automate a library, have also had considerable impact.

A Dutch contribution

The Netherlands clearly contributes to the reform process by contributing to the big international programmes. When compared to total needs, its bilateral higher educational support initiatives to individual countries will remain very limited, but it need not be ineffective. The value of bilateral programmes will be highest in the long run, if they are prioritised and largely channelled to long-term, even if small, projects which aim to up-date and extend knowledge in specific areas where the country concerned has a contribution to make. In the case of the Netherlands, areas, identified in this study, where official assistance would be particularly useful

would include teachers training in civic education, the design and introduction of quality control measures, and the upgrading of tertiary level vocational education. A host of smaller projects, such as support for the Romanian Institute of Contemporary History, are already being run on a case by case basis through the MATRA project. This has, for instance, allowed university administrators from Central and Eastern European universities to make contact with and exchange ideas with their Dutch colleagues, who have considerably more experience in dealing with modern higher education accounting methods.

Whilst inter-university contacts are already developing naturally on their own, government assistance should, perhaps, be particularly directed towards encouraging bilateral contacts with provincial and less well known institutions of higher education in Central and Eastern Europe (both private and public).

Higher education as civil society

It is though not just new legislation and evolving structures that are important. At the centre of this study has been the question of the state of civil society in the different countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the contribution that the higher educational sector can make to its consolidation. Tertiary education is itself both a part of civil society and a barometer of its strength. Universities and colleges can be a catalyst for reform within society, but they remain a product of and a reflection of the society in which they function. Ultimately, when making a judgement about the overall readiness of different countries in Central and Eastern Europe for membership of the European Union, a broader balance needs to be struck going beyond the state of higher education reform alone.

No country can completely escape its past and the legacies of communism can still be identified throughout the region (a suspicious, non-participatory population, a lack of self reliance etc.). At the same time, even in a country like Romania, where continuity with the old regime has probably been strongest, an identifiably free, civil society has emerged, even though it remains rather weak. As mentioned earlier, there are still many problems involved in processing the past and the past has to be processed before a clear vision of the future can come into being. Higher education reform is one part of this process. If it is still possible to meet Romanian university lecturers whose ideas seem fixed in an intolerant, nationalistic past, it is also possible, today, to meet critical and free thinking intellectuals and students. The danger in Romania, as in other countries in the region, is that popular disenchantment with the meagre results of 'democracy' will swell to such proportions in the short term that it swamps the very real long-term initiatives that are being made to educate the population for democracy. Despite all of the problems involved, and they are many, the Romanian higher educational sector offers hope for the future. It has been restructured along lines which reflect the norms of the European Union and it is increasingly playing a role in the debates about and within 'civil society'.

Whilst this report on higher education and civil society is tinged with the optimism of the Prophet Hananiah, the author does recognise that in predicting the time-span of the yoke of Babylon, it was his more pessimistic rival, the Prophet Jeremiah, who ultimately prevailed. Nevertheless, despite the very real possibility of short term economic and political reverses in several countries in the region, the evidence presented concerning the tempo and extent of renewal in the higher educational sector and the long term effect that this will have upon the growth of civic responsibility and civil engagement does seem to be a cause for guarded, but real, optimism. The candidate countries have shown that they have the capacity to take measures that will not only align their educational sector with common emerging European norms, but will also help to embed the spirit of the Copenhagen 'political' criteria within their emerging civil societies.

ANNEX: SELECTED STATISTICAL INDICATORS

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

Table 1 GDP growth rates and GDP per capita: [real GDP as a percentage of 1989 value]

	1993	1997	GDP per capita 1997 [us\$]
Albania	66	80	2,120
Bulgaria	76	67	4,010
Czech Republic	79	90	10,510
Estonia	62	73	5,240
Hungary	82	91	7,200
Latvia	49	54	3,940
Lithuania	68	70	4,220
Poland	88	112	6,520
Romania	76	82	4,310
Slovakia	75	95	7,910
Slovenia	89	104	11,800

Table 2 Unemployment and inflation 1993 and 1997

	unemployment %		inflation %	
	1993	1997	1993	1997
Albania	22	N/A	85	32
Bulgaria	16	14	73	1,100
Czech Republic	3	4	21	9
Estonia	7	10	90	11
Hungary	13	11	23	18
Latvia	5	7	110	8
Lithuania	4	6	410	9
Poland	15	12	35	5
Romania	9	7	260	150
Slovakia	13	13	23	6
Slovenia	14	14	33	8

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Table 3 Size of private sector

	private sector as % of GDP mid 1997
Albania	75
Bulgaria	50
Czech Republic	75
Estonia	70
Hungary	80
Latvia	60
Lithuania	70
Poland	65
Romania	60
Slovakia	75
Slovenia	55

EDUCATIONAL INDICATORS

Table 4 Number of 0-9 year olds, 10-19 year-olds and 20-29 year olds (1995; 1,000)

country	0-9 years	10-19 years	20-29 years	total population
Bulgaria	962.8	1,195.9	1,153.3	8,427.4
Czech Republic	1,249.5	1,586.5	1,502.8	10,333.2
Hungary	1,214.6	1,510.9	1,438.8	10,245.7
Poland	5,539.9	6,577.5	5,214.8	38,580.6
Romania	3,038.0	3,664.4	3,611.3	22,712.4
Slovakia	778.1	24.4	788.8	5,356.2

Table 5 Unemployment rates of the active population (1995; %)

country	15-59 year olds	15-24 year olds
EU Average	11	21
Bulgaria	N/A	N/A
Czech Republic	3	6
Hungary	10	23
Poland	14	32
Romania	10	27
Slovakia	13	25

Table 6 Unemployment rates in the population of 25-59-year olds, by level of education (1995; %)

country	ISCED 0-2	ISCED 3	ISCED 5-7
EU Average	12	8	6
Bulgaria	N/A	N/A	N/A
Czech Republic	9	2	1
Hungary	N/A	N/A	N/A
Poland	13	11	4
Romania	16	1	1
Slovakia	24	10	3

ISCED 0 pre-primary; ISCED 1 primary education; ISCED 2 lower secondary education; ISCED 3 upper secondary education; ISCED 5 higher education not equivalent to first university degree but requiring upper secondary certificate for entry; ISCED 6 higher education leading to first degree; ISCED 7 higher education leading to post-graduate degree.

Table 7 Higher Education Students (ISCED 5-7) as a percentage of all pupils and students (1994/95)

country	total (1,000)	ISCED Level 5-7	'%'
Bulgaria	1,666.7	223.0	13
Czech Republic	2,256.4	179.2	8
Hungary	N/A	116.0	6
Poland	8,996.5	682.0	8
Romania	4,594.5	300.5	7
Slovakia	N/A	82.2	8

Table 8 Numbers of students in higher education (men and women; 1,000)

Country	1985-1986	1990-1991	1994-1995
Bulgaria	114	189	223
Czech Republic	117	126	137
Hungary	64	76	116
Poland	431	512	682
Romania	182	222	300
Slovakia	62	65	82

Table 9 Number of women in higher education (1,000)

country	1985-1986	1990-1991	1994-1995
Bulgaria	62.0	97.0	135.0
Czech Republic	47.3	53.6	59.4
Hungary	N/A	N/A	59.5
Poland	244.0	286.0	374.7
Romania	73.1	102.1	142.6
Slovakia	27.0	30.3	40.3

Table 10 Students in higher education by field of study 1994-1995
(men and women; 1,000)

	Bulgaria	Czech	Hungary	Poland	Romania	Slovakia
Humanities, Applied Arts, Theology	51.6	19.4	20.3	95.6	35.2	7.1
Social Science	70.4	32.3	11.7	168.2	54.8	12.7
Law	12.8	6.1	5.0	44.6	15.4	3.7
Natural Science	5.2	4.9	7.9	21.3	11.9	2.5
Mathematics, Computer Science	3.4	2.0	28.0	16.0	15.3	0.8
Medical Science	18.1	10.1	11.7	34.1	36.4	6.9
Engineering, Architecture	55.0	37.7	0.0	146.1	113.6	27.6
Other	6.5	24.0	31.8	156.4	17.8	20.8
Total	223.0	136.6	116.4	682.2	300.5	82.2

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A Note on Educational Statistics:

The statistics on higher education in the eleven countries being considered in this study can sometimes seem contradictory because they are compiled according to national norms. The figures given above, although they only cover six of the eleven countries, have in contrast been collected on a comparable basis using the ISCED definitions. They are the first result of a European Union financed project to develop EU comparable educational statistics in the PHARE countries and have been drawn from the 1999 edition of 'Key Data on Education', published by the European Union's Eurostat division.

LITERATURE

A. Education Links

- Baltic Countries - Directory of Higher Educational Institutions
[www.lu.lv/ihe.html]
- CEENet (Central and Eastern European Networking Association, covering academic and research networking in the region) [<http://ceenet.nask.org.pl/>]
- ENIC Network (European National Information Centres for Academic Recognition and Mobility) [<http://culture.coe.fr/her/esumobeniclist.200498.html>]
- European Universities [<http://www.agora.stm.it/university/uni.htm>]
- Internet Resources on the Education of East Central Europe (OSEAS-Europe homepage): [<http://www.bibl.u-szeged.hu/oseas/eceedsites.html>]
{prepared for the 1998 NAFSA Workshop}
- Information on European and NIS Educational Systems (OSEAS-Europe homepage)
[<http://www.bibl.u-szeged.hu/oseas/edsystems.html>]
- International Association of Universities -Central and Eastern European Members
[<http://www.unesco.org/general/eng/partners/ong/iau/members.html>]
- College and Universities Home Pages - Geographical Listing 1995/6 (DeMello listing) [www.mit.edu:8001/people/cdemello/geogr.html]
- College and Universities Home Pages - Alphabetical Listing 1995/6 (DeMello listing) [<http://www.mit.edu:8001/people/cdemello/univ.html>]

B. International Groups

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- Artes Liberales [www.edlead.org/arteslib.html]
- Association of European Universities (CRE)
[www.unige.ch/cre/about/about_welcome.html]
- Central European Exchange Programme for University Studies (CEEPUS)
[wwwc.oead.ac.at/CEEPUSPublic/Information/Information.asp] and
[www.adis.at/ceepus]
- Civic Education Project (CEP) [www.cep.org.hu/index/html] and
[<http://alice.ibpm.serpukhov.su/partners/ccsi/usnisorg/educultr/cep/htm>]
- Confederation of European Union Rectors' Conferences (CRUE)
[www.crue.upm.es/eurec/]
- Institute for Human Sciences/Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen (IWM) [www.austriaculture.net/AKEast1613.html] and
[www.ping.at/iwm/iwmhome.htm]
- Open Society Institute (Budapest) Programmes [www.osi.hu/programs.html]
- SOROS Foundation [<http://www.soros.org>]

C. Civil Society

- Against Bias and Prejudice* - The Council of Europe's work on history teaching and history textbooks [[http://culture.coe.fr/hist20/ECC-ED-HIST\[95\]3.htm](http://culture.coe.fr/hist20/ECC-ED-HIST[95]3.htm)]
- Central/East European Grassroots Organisations* [www.friends-partners.org/~cssi/ /europe/index.htm]

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