

Strategic planning in higher education and research. The case of Estonia

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Four periods of development

- 1989-1995 – the periode of rapid changes, unlimited autonomy and democracy
- 1995-2002 – the periode of rapid expansion, deliberate autonomy and responsibility
- 2002-2009 – the periode of entrepreneurial universities involved in the Bologna process
- 2009-.... – transition to the new model of quality assurance and revising the model for R&D funding

The periode of rapid changes, unlimited autonomy and democracy

- Changes started already before restoring our independance (20 August 1991)
- 6 state universities:
 - University of Tartu (1632)
 - Tallinn University of Technology (1918)
 - Tallinn University (1919)
 - Estonian Academy of Agriculture (Estonian University of Life Sciences) (1951)
 - Estanian Academy of Arts (1914)
 - Estonian Academy of Music and Theatre (1919)
- Need for state-wide regulations
- New types of institutions

The periode of rapid expansion, autonomy and responsibility (1)

- Development and implementation of legal framework for higher education, research and development (R&D)
- Two types of higher education institutions (HEIs):
 - Universities under public law
 - Professional HEIs
- Two types of ownership:
 - State owned
 - Privately owned
- Research institutes of the Academy of Sciences transferred to universities

The periode of rapid expansion, autonomy and responsibility (2)

- Legal framework:
 - Universities Act (+ University of Tartu Act + Tallinn University of Technology Act)
 - Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act
 - Private Schools Act
 - Organisation of Research and Development Act
 - Adult Education Act
 - Study Allowances and Study Loans Act
 - Higher Education Standard

Higher education institutions

- As of January 2014, 26 educational institutions offer higher education in Estonia:
 - 6 universities under public law (**public legal entities are owners of their assets**)
 - 1 privately owned university (EBS)
 - 8 state professional higher education institutions
 - 8 private professional higher education institutions
 - 2 public vocational educational institutions

Higher education qualifications

- Higher education qualifications in Estonia:
 - HE first cycle:
 - Bachelor of Sciences degree (8 fields of research)
 - Applied HE diploma
 - HE second cycle:
 - Master of Sciences degree (8 fields of research)
 - Degrees awarded after graduation from integrated study programmes
 - HE third cycle – PhD degree
 - **No short cycle qualifications!**
- In the framework of the Bologna process the Estonian higher education qualifications framework is self-certified against the QF-EHEA (2011)

Strategic planning of higher education and research (1)

- Higher Education Strategy for 2006–2015
- Estonian Higher Education Internationalisation Strategy 2006-2015
- Estonian Lifelong Learning Strategy 2020
- Knowledge Based Estonia. Estonian Research and Development Strategy 2002-2006
- Knowledge Based Estonia. Estonian Research, Development and Innovation Strategy 2007-2013
- Knowledge Based Estonia. Estonian Research, Development and Innovation Strategy 2014-2020

Strategic planning of higher education and research (2)

- Human resource development (ESF sponsored):
 - Programme *LÜKKA* (2005-2007, quality assurance in higher education, incl. learning outcomes based curricula development and assessment)
 - Programme *Primus* (2008-2015, supporting the improvement of higher education institutions' graduates' professional competitiveness)
 - Programme *DoRa* (2008-2015, supporting doctoral studies and internationalisation)
- Development of the infrastructure (EFRD sponsored):
 - Buildings
 - Equipment

External quality assurance in higher education

1997-2009

Accreditation of study programmes
STATE RECOGNITION

Institutional accreditation (voluntary)

Registration of study programmes by the Ministry of Education and Research

2009-2011

TRANSITIONAL EVALUATION

2011 ...

Quality assessment of a study programme group
at least once every 7 years

Institutional accreditation
at least once every 7 years

STATE RECOGNITION: The right to conduct studies in a study programme group

Conclusions

- Estonia and Ukraine have been approaching the same goal from opposite directions
- **Legal framework** is just one instrument of public policy in higher education and research
- **Strategic planning is not a Soviet heritage!** It is and has been an essential instrument of business sector development
- **Strategic development plans on the state, regional and institutional level equipped with resources and measurable indicators are the most important tools for implementing public policy**
- **Holistic approach to quality assurance** (internal and external) is a guarantee of success
- **Involvement of stakeholders and systematic training of implementers** are of vital importance

Useful links

- <http://hm.ee/en/activities/higher-education>
- <http://hm.ee/en/activities/research-and-development>
- <http://www.kutsekoda.ee/fwk/contenthelper/10447220/10447221>

Thank you!