Modernisation of university management in the West Balkan Region

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Abstract

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The paper describes the current situation and diverse higher education landscape within the countries of former Yugoslavia comming from one common system and creating new different national and intranational systems. Furthermore the authors discuss the governace and management structures based on written self evaluation reports comming from eight universities from the region. This institutional comparison also uses the results of site visits and supervisor work by the authors for these universities. The critical comparative analysis will help the audience to understand the challenges of modernisation of higher education in a particular region in Europe. The qalitative analysis will also help to identify the main obstacles but also successes.

Presentation

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1. Introduction: Nation state diversification of higher education system(s)

Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) from the West Balkan Region (WBR) are still struggling with traditional systems of education and some fundamental changes at HEIs. The education systems in these countries represent a mixture of the standard system inherited from the former Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (SFRY) and highly divers policies and institutional frameworks established in the period after the war. In this post-conflict region higher education (HE) plays a very important role by social cohesion and development of new nation states. After almost two decades of hardships the WBR is entering a new phase of its development and reintegration in the European and global economy. HE presents one of the main pillars of this reintegration and development: It plays a key role as an engine of modernisation and driving force of competitive advantages through human resource development. The new elite of society coming from HEIs has to stabilize and improve the economy and society.

Universities from WBR need support in integrating them in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). A three years Tempus project called "Modernisation and Reconstruction of University Management and Structures" (MOREMS)[1] involving universities from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Serbia, and FYR Macedonia (cf. table 1) together with HEIs from EU put a high emphasis to improve existing university management system and structure. Also, there is a need for development of the central university services capacities and functioning, like office for teaching issues, office for international relations, department of human resources and legal affairs, student services and student career office, which are key areas of improvement for the project.

Institution	Country	Structure
University "Džemal Bijedić", Mostar	Bosnia and Herzegovina	non-integrated
University of Banja Luka	Bosnia and Herzegovina	integrated
University of Mostar	Bosnia and Herzegovina	non-integrated
University of Tuzla	Bosnia and Herzegovina	integrated
University of Rijeka	Croatia	non-integrated
University of Split	Croatia	non-integrated
State University of Tetovo	FYR Macedonia	integrated
University of Novi Sad	Serbia	non-integrated

Table 1: Project MOREMS, participating universities from WBR

The project MOREMS is dedicated to strengthen the institutional and functional capacities in these fields and has as its specific project objectives:

- Introduction of the university structure and management reform
- Improvement of the central university services functioning and capacities (Office for Teaching, Office for International Relations and Department of Personal and Organisation)
- Development and improvement student services capacities (Student services and Student Careers Office)

Most HEIs in WBR still have a historically grown non-integrated structure, where faculties are legal entities. Within such non-integrated institutions, the rectorates do not have any significant managerial competencies because these lie exclusively with the faculties. Only some HEIs in WBR are organized as integrated universities. Switching from a non-integrated to an integrated governance struc-

ture was subject of numerous discussions in the previous period. Many new Higher Education Laws in WBR try to create a modern (integrated) environment also for well developed management structures and processes.

Another critical issue is the lack of autonomy of the higher education institutions in financial and staff matters. Against the background of the scarce financial resources and increasing international competition within the EHEA, HEIs need sufficient room for making decisions on their institutional strategy.

Other obstacles for HEIs in the region are inadequate position of the services and offices at the university, as well as, the lack of competent management and administrative staff. University central support services must be increasingly responsive to faculty needs and accountable for the quality of the services they deliver.

Current rigid and unwieldy administration becomes a real burden to the academic staff, instead of making their administrative work as simple and productive as possible. From the given current situation it is obvious that HEIs in the region are faced with difficulties and that reform of the university management structures and improving the university services is essential.

Following we will describe the current situation and diverse landscape of HE in WBR, coming from one common system and creating new different national and intranational systems and moving to a Re-Europeanization. This institutional comparison uses self evaluation reports of all universities and will work with the authors' experiences as peer visit supervisors for these universities. The leading questions are:[2]

- *What is the university management trying to do? What are its norms and values, its mission and goals?*
- *How is the university management trying to do it? What are the organisational characteristics of the managements and its key activities and to what extent are these in line with the norms and values?*
- *How does the institution change in order to improve?*

The following chapter will give a brief institutional context to describe the normative framework in which HEIs in WBR work. In a second step a critical comparative SWOT analysis will help to understand the challenges of the modernisation of higher education in a particular region in Europe. This qualitative analysis also helps to identify the main obstacles but also successes. Based on these results at the end the authors identify and answer the above questions.

2. Institutional context

Universities are going through significant changes to play an appropriate role in society and economic development. Similar organisational practices are appearing around the world. As countries from WBR want to become part of the EU, in the development of their HEI they follow and copy EU regulations and rules. The way from one ecosystem as part of the former SFRY to a small nation state higher education system and back to the EHEA is not simple. The need of diversification between the national higher education systems as a convention to save the educational market by building up unique higher education systems and the former system as a requisite of the former republic was one of the main challenges after the wars of the 1990s. To be different from the neighbourhood countries as the key for young nation states was one of the goals also in higher education. This new (higher education) identity finally turned into adoption of EHEA and EU rules. The first step towards a so called modern higher education system in HEIs in WBR as in many countries around the world was to set up appropriate policies and legal frameworks to be able to adapt modern governance and management structures at institutional levels. WBR has a long tradition of institutional autonomy. Compared to other Eastern European higher education systems, HEIs in SFRY introduced a self government model at all faculties in the mid-sixties. Later in the mid-seventies a new concept of enterprise-like organisation (the so called "organisations of associated labour") were implemented. Universities and faculties were organised as companies, all employees were members of the "workers assembly" as the major

decision making body with equal voting rights. It was the beginning of the entrepreneurial era in the WBR. Faculties were free to open to the market and manage the institutions independent from the central federal government. (Turajlić 2009, p. 17).

It seems that today's' quest for universities in the WBR is to be integrated or not to be integrated. We face within the new nation states' higher education systems different institutional concepts. So we do not have only national diversification of higher education in the WBR but also intrastate diversification. Newly established universities like the University of Novi Pazar in Serbia or the State University in Tetovo in Macedonia are integrated universities, while the more traditional and older ones like in Skopje in Macedonia or in Belgrade in Serbia are still non-integrated. Non-integrated means that the legal entity is not the university but the faculty. So the dean's position is very strong and he has the same rights like a rector of a Western European university in for example Austria. As the legal representative he or she deals with the ministry about the faculty budget, builds the faculty structure and hires employees. The self evaluation reports but also the institutional peer visits showed that this is the main point of conflicts and seen as the main obstacle to become a modern university. Parallel structures, inefficient resource allocations, overlapping faculty strategies and conflicts of interest at institutional but also individual levels are key aspects of the discussion about integration. Croatia as well as Serbia started in the last decade an evolutionary process to integrate the faculties into one university and create a new institutional understanding of a university. The new law in Croatia was stopped by the court as it was against the constitution. In the case of Serbia today the ministry tries to stimulate the idea of functional integration instead of a legal integration. Faculties from traditional universities like University of Belgrade in Serbia but also the University of Zagreb in Croatia were against integration. Compared to EHEA where integration is a key element besides governance and management issues of university development, WBR is still struggling with basic legal framework issues. What are the reasons for it?

As it was mentioned above faculties in the time of SRFY were quite independent. They were afraid of the central university influence and loos of independency. In fact, faculties are entrepreneurial units and the engine of higher education development (Clark 1998). State funding sources are not enough to provide basic services in higher education. With a long history faculties are experienced to deal with disastrous budget conditions and to survive. Faculties have excellent entrepreneurial attitudes to detect and use additional financial sources as well as to act as market oriented units.

Second, universities- not only in WBR - are not famous because of they willingness to change. (Shattock 2003, p. 1f.) Traditions and status quo are more important then the opportunities, which be tackled through new solutions. Changes in higher education need both directions top down and bottom up. It seems that the inflationary trend of new laws for higher education in the last decade and periodically changes in higher education policy didn't really support the opens for change. Indeed, faculties and universities created an adaptive institutional environment to be able to deal with these frequent modifications of the legal framework but this didn't lead to a new institutional euphoria for change.

Finally, compared to EU funding models the funding mechanisms in WBR are based on state funding and study fees. Universities earn approximately around 20-40% through study fees. (Ivošević & Miklavič 2009, p. 64f.) Most of the countries pay the university certain number of "student places" while the university offer additional places for so called self payers. Faculties with more self payer students are traditionally the rich faculties like law, economics or medicine. They are against the integration because they expect less faculty budget, if the rectorate is responsible for budget allocation. They might support today's' poor faculties like humanities or history.

Besides integration there are many other obstacles for WBR universities. Based on self evaluation reports and peer visits of eight WBR universities following analysis will show the main challenges but also emphasize, which should be seen as strong elements of higher education management.

3. Main challenges and management action plans

When analyzing the self evaluation reports written by the universities involved one gets an idea of what they regard as their strengths and opportunities, but also what they regard as their weaknesses and most serious threats.

a) Legal Framework and Higher Education Politics

Nearly all WBR universities involved state severe problems with the legislation regarding higher education in their countries. In their self evaluation reports <u>legal frameworks are called "unstable", "incoherent", "inadequate" and "unfinished" as well as badly implemented.</u> In the eyes of the practitioners at the universities legislation for higher education changes too often but still does not cover important aspects of university management. "The laws, more or less, prescribe ad hoc procedures that combine old practices with newly defined reform." (Turajlić 2009, p. 13)

Likewise hard to handle is the fact that legislation changes not only often but also so fast that universities do not get the chance to complete implementation processes before new challenges from a new legislation arise. An even more demanding situation is given if universities have to act according to more than one legislation: Some HEIs from Bosnia and Herzegovina for example are facing the federal Law on Higher Education (from 2007) as well as regional legislation from the level of the Cantons.

This critical view on legislation is accompanied by a critical opinion on the state, "the ministry" and politicians and their expertise regarding higher education management and development. Universities criticize that "overemphasized state managing hinders the development of financial instruments at the University level and inhibits change", that a <u>state strategy of higher education development does not exist</u>, an "insufficient acknowledgement of the importance of higher education and research as one of the priorities of the country's development" and further a "nonacceptance of the existence of necessary autonomy of the University in the European sense". Political decision makers are blamed for their "insufficient understanding of basic problems of higher education". In some cases this insufficient understanding may also arise from the structure of the political systems. For example, in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina[3], politicians on the comparatively small regional level of the Cantons may not always be able to cope with all eventualities of the higher education system.

b) Self-perception and Stakeholder Relations

The overall self-perception of the universities is fairly good and viewed as strength. The universities describe themselves as internationally well connected, open minded and open for reforms, competitive, flexible and able to adopt fast, or as having a clear mission and vision. One university says that for the reason of "job security" the university has a strong image as an employer.

If it comes to stakeholder relations the picture is quite clear. The universities regard it as an *opportunity* to raise the attention for their institution in the public. They believe they can <u>contribute to regional development, e.g. by forming public private partnerships</u>. And they see it as an opportunity that by improving their curricula they can raise the interest of prospective students and the economy. Especially in relation to additional student fees through study fee payers, the universities (faculties) have a strong interest to get a high number of students. These developments and relation between funding and student numbers need also a good quality assurance and accreditation system to avoid corruption and bad study conditions because of the high number of students. Here universities see also a strong role of the student parliament. Some universities have a student vice-rector who should represent the students at the rectorate. Student vice rector has also a long tradition in former SRFY and still is seen as the link between university top management and the students. The student-vice rector gets a salary and is appointed by the students' parliament. Student integration is seen as one of the strong elements of WBR universities compared for example to EU universities.

When it comes to existing *weaknesses*, the universities see their <u>linkage to the public, to ministries and to the economy, and between professions and scientific fields is inadequate</u>. WBR universi-

ties feel their communication with external stakeholders on quality is unsatisfying and that there is an "insufficient harmonization of study programmes with the needs and conditions of the labour markets". Interestingly the openness to the market was one of the key points mentioned above. Here the criticism is more related to the Bologna implementation and how universities understand Bologna as a corset for study programmes.

c) University Structure, Strategy and Management

Altogether, being an integrated university is regarded a *strength* in everyday management. And this is note only a vote by the integrated ones; the universities being not integrated quote as strength a kind of "functional or financial" integration through the existence and work of joint service units. No matter how inventive this may seem, "the success or failure of integrative activities [at non-integrated HEIs] lies not only with the faculties' willingness to assign a level of importance to such activities but with their willingness to finance them" (Ziegele, Tumbas & Sedlak 2010, p. 126). Likewise the status of being only semi-integrated is considered as obstructing "the governing of the University as a whole". Some universities will not reach the state of being integrated in the near future, as in some countries faculties have successfully refused to become integrated into their HEIs. The cost for this autonomy of faculties may be a weakening of the strategic planning capabilities of the HEI as a whole, as integration offers the possibility of "pooling of resources (with a net positive effect on the budget) and also for standardizing guidelines for teaching and research" (Davies & Vukasović 2010, p. 87).

Most participating universities quote as a major *weakness* the lack of a well developed university information system and/or an adequate IT infrastructure, or vice-versa, see the introduction of an integrated information system as an opportunity

A *threat* that seems to worry nearly all universities is becoming "a teaching-based university with a too narrow research base". They share the view that due to external factors, like the financial situation, the teaching at their universities is developing towards more quantity (and more income from tuition fees), but also towards less quality. This increase in teaching duties is shifting priorities and funding away from scientific and research activities, a fact that is even amplified when "overtime teaching is financially rewarded, while scientific work is not". This observation corresponds to research findings on funding of higher education in WBR, according to which "higher education funding is, in reality, funding for teaching in higher education" (Vukasović 2009, p. 144).

Some WBR universities name as a weakness the insufficient inclusion of students into research. Uncontrolled expansion of the higher education sector, e.g. by founding private HEIs, is seen as a threat to the quality of higher education in general.

One vast field for improvement seems to be internal processes and communications. Internal conflicts, e.g. arising from "faculty independence", unsatisfactory communications between faculties or between faculties and university, and insufficient team work among service units are seen as a *weakness* of the university as a whole. This may be the wish for an efficient organisational development process, which can only be managed with an equal balance of rights and duties between university and faculties as well as between academics and administration (cf. Clark 2004, p. 175ff). Only single universities name as an opportunity a self-guided increase in efficiency by, e.g. restructuring administrative units, by creating more joint services or by training their employees.

d) Funding and Finances

The universities declare their financial situation as "unclear and unstable", and their state funding as "unsatisfactory" and "insufficient". This insufficient funding is seen as a threat to necessary modernization as well as new initiatives from within the university: "Means that are at disposal of the university are sufficient for mere survival, without any possibility of investment into development, modernization of the facilities, purchase of equipment, or education of our own academic staff. Increased needs of the university are not followed by increased funds for the university." The problem is not only a lack of funds but also the respective regulations, an "untransparent and rigid financial framework (which usually trails behind needs)". Wages are as well regarded as being to low (cf. 'Staff and Working Conditions').

In contrast to this gloomy and threatening perspective, financial issues also seem to be a field for activity and intensifying own efforts, and where *necessity is the mother of invention*. The universities try to tackle their high dependency on the public budget they receive from ministries of education by diversifying their portfolio of financial sources. The most promising solution or *opportunity* here seems to be <u>international public funds, especially from the European Union</u>. The universities act as truly *entrepreneurial universities* by trying to receive "third stream income" (Clark 2001, p. 12), in this case from sources at the European level.

One university also thinks it possible that in contrast to the status quo and despite the decline of public revenues there will be more state funds for international relations and mobility. Another opportunity to deal with the scarce finances is optimizing expenses, a solution that was only named once. Some universities belief that soon the Western Balkan Countries will have more access to EU programmes of project funding.

While for the institution the participation in international, European funded projects has mostly advantages in the field of internationalisation and organisational development (cf. 'International Relations, Internationalisation and Mobility'), it also has attractive financial implications for the employees: Some WBR universities give all or part of the staff costs earned to the persons involved, as an incentive for them to become engaged in project applications.

Universities accept that the <u>approach to autonomy and diversity demands clear accountability of their achievements and the responsible use of public funding</u>. In order to enhance the transparency of universities, the national accreditation system should be broadened to include international accreditation bodies or experts like Bosnia and Herzegovina is going to do it. Governments should rely on trust based; clear accountability for government finances and let the universities decide for themselves as entirely autonomous bodies how they organize the best possible teaching and research.

e)   International Relations, Internationalisation and Mobility

For all universities within the project international relations play an important role. They all see one of their *strengths* in having and fostering international relations and cooperation, e.g. by participating in international projects. <u>Internationalisation is regarded as "one of the priorities of the university leadership"</u>. In many cases this is connected to a self-perception of being open-minded, an "openness of the university toward all external positive influences (…) to provide any kind of help in the process of realizing our aims". Besides the involvement in international projects, mobility schemes for students and staff are generally mentioned as a key instrument for promoting internationalisation, although some universities are not satisfied with the number of staff that has mobility experience.

The abolishment of visa restrictions is seen as a major opportunity for more mobility and thus more internationalisation. Staff mobility is seen as an instrument of improving teaching and research: "Through utilization of international exchange, (…) an immense area has been opened for the linkage of learning and research, and the base for innovations and research is being expanded." This <u>internationalisation of the universities also carries elements of regionalism</u> as from the Yugoslav era these Western Balkan Universities have strong relationships among themselves due to their joint history on institutional as well as personal levels. This regional identity nowadays has to be counted in for internationalisation, as they now belong to different countries. After the first decade after the civil war, and the process of self identification and integrity development of the new nation states also universities face a new epoch. International relations within the WBR regions are more and more en vogue. This is not only because of the language but also because of culture and tradition. The EU played also a crucial role by forcing WBR universities to work with each other for example in the new Tempus IV framework. These stimuli coming from outside seem to open the boundaries between the national higher education systems in the region. Besides teachers mobility between the countries (based on the lack of enough academics especially for teaching activities at some HEIs) more and more joint research and development from WBR is evolving.

What could be the reasons for this enthusiasm towards internationalisation? It may be that due to the breakaway of former Yugoslavia and suddenly finding themselves situated in different countries and different higher education systems, universities from the Western Balkans regard it even

more natural and necessary to strive for international relations than HEIs from other parts of Europe. In addition they are looking for and believing in international exchange of expertise, offering them solutions for problems at home. Lastly we have to bear in mind that there are special funding programmes concentrating on the region, like Tempus on the European scale, and that this offer has created a demand over the years. It does not come as a surprise that partner universities in such a Tempus project seem to be open-minded towards internationalisation.

f)   Staff and Working Conditions

When it comes to their staff, several universities quote as strength their young and motivated teaching staff or generally a good quality of human resources in teaching. This comes as a surprise as other statements regarding the working conditions at the universities sum up to a different picture. Universities complain about a lack of rewarding and promotion systems to motivate their staff, they state that mechanisms of HR recruiting and development are non-existent and that wages are to low, and not at all a "compensation for the invested work". Statements concerning the actual motivation of staff vary: some quote their staff to be motivated, others have a different impression. One university says the academic staff shows a "lack of sense of belonging to University."

Especially with respect to teaching staff there are more issues addressed. Several universities regard it as a *threat* to quality and stability to have a lot of external and part time teaching staff. The founding of new universities, faculties and departments in the WBR after the Yugoslav era and the correspondent rise in demand for teaching staff, especially on the level of professors, has led to the phenomenon of *intercity professors* – professors teaching at more than one HEI and therefore frequently traveling the region. Therefore it does not come as a surprise that teaching staff is regarded by the questioned universities as stressed from heavy teaching load, also resulting in a decrease in research. On the other hand the site visits showed also that there is no sufficient infrastructure for academic staff to use for example university offices. Therefore teachers come to the universities, teach, and go home again. For research exchange, debates, and the stimulation of new ideas the universities do not have enough space and can not support this in a proper way. The lack of infrastructure and offices are also boundaries to establish an institutional identity for academics. If we try to identify the factors of these bad working conditions we may find different reasons. Universities use their infrastructure as teaching rooms only because of massification of higher education and lack of investments for buildings for teaching purposes.

Furthermore some universities see as a weakness the qualifications of some of their staff. Some tend to concentrate this statement towards the administrative staff or, especially towards academics that take over management tasks or positions. There seems to be a strong demand for professional higher education managers. One university even sees it as an *opportunity* to increase efficiency if the university succeeds in appointing high potentials into key leadership positions. Brain drain, on the other hand, is regarded as a serious *threat* to a stable HR planning.

4. Conclusions

Following we respond to our leading questions based on our analysis and visits to the WBR universities as a summary.

- *What is the university management trying to do? What are its norms and values, its mission and goals?*

The WBR suffers from strong national fragmentation. The HE system tends to be homogeneous, lacking diversity and variety in deliverance of education. The weak cooperation between the actors of the so-called Knowledge Triangle (education, research and business) causes sectoral segregation. The operational and management structure of the WBR universities – where there is no clear division of the functions between the professional governance and the Academic Senate – is too rigid. (Ritzen et al. 2010) The loosely coupled system (Weick 1976) with very strong faculties at non-integrated uni-

versities is a survival strategy for the government as well as for the university. If one part of the system fails, HE will still work. On the other hand, in the time of accountability as one of the leading ideas of reforms within HE, efficiency is the major paradigm. Such a loosely coupled system is not efficient at all. If one university has 30 different faculty libraries with more than 100 employees and the libraries are not connected, how can this university offer interdisciplinary studies?

The management at these universities tries to lead the modernization process. Universities as expert organisations are more connected to academic then to management values. So the management has to build their management concepts on academic values. It seems that most universities in our analysis are teaching-only universities (or act as such). The management makes effort to improve teaching related processes and activities in order to carry the basic funding of the university, which is based on student numbers. Today in many cases the rectorates don't know how many students each faculty has or do not have a detailed picture of the budget. Faculties are more like black boxes for the university administration. In some cases faculties have more administrative staff than the central administration of the university. In our research the basic self-identification of WBR universities is based on the classification of integrated or non-integrated status. Many of the integrated universities use the legal status to brand the university as a modern HEI.

WBR universities are in a permanent crisis mainly because of lack of funding. This forces universities to expand entrepreneurial culture and to increase third party funding for universities. Innovative approaches like installed professional project offices responsible for proposal writing in order to allocate additional funding from regional, national and international sources, are successful improvements. On the other hand integration of decentralized services into strong central service units to deliver the same quality of services for the whole university and at the same time to empower the rectorate is crucial. Independent faculties led to diversification of services for example for students. So it could be possible that students of one single university at two different faculties get different student services.

- *How is the university management trying to do it? What are the organisational characteristics of the managements and its key activities and to what extent are these in line with the norms and values?*

The integration process is an evolutionary road and more a long distance trip than a quick and dirty approach. By the law integrated universities are still struggling with the tradition of strong faculties. Legal frameworks are "door openers" but the implementation of the law is the key element of success. In many cases the management reality and the legal status are still not congruent. WBR universities need top down as well as bottom up approaches to be able to improve their institutions. Functional integration like as it is discussed in Serbia could be a solution to overcome of the legal status paradigm and the need of modern university management.

First, the institutions need a new management culture which has to be linked to the academic culture of the university but not enchained by academic units like the senate. Senate is still the most powerful entity even for management issues at WBR universities. The tradition of academic self-government is one of the major identities of these universities. A culture of negotiation is needed to overcome deficits of legislation and formal rules. This culture also grounds on institutional identification of employees, which has to be developed further.

Second, in the WBR at non-integrated universities the management as change agent plays a crucial role in the modernization of universities without real power. On the other hand, at the integrated universities the management has more formal power but because of the lack of funding is not able to fully use this power to improve the university. Both are captured between international standards and local traditions as well as between formal and informal power of the institutions. Leadership has strong personal, cultural and formal characteristics. Therefore is not only an issue of the HE law as we heard many times during our visits at these universities: "We would like to do but we can not because we are not integrated". A "culture of blame is very strong in this region" as one of our WBR university colleagues said.

Third, skills and competences of HE managers at integrated universities like the non-integrated universities are weak. To lead changes and improvements universities need skilled personnel in man-

agement. Interestingly we saw many young people at rectorate doing administrative jobs. It seems that there is a new generation of young internationally oriented university administrators in the central administration level. This next generation will be the engine of the development and will be also responsible of the implementation of changes, new processes, structures and services. University management has to understand the chance and new capacities of this group of people and support them so they are able to support the rectorate too.

- *How does the institution change in order to improve?*

In recent years, university policy in WBR has been characterised by increasing reliance on the differentiation of the university system as a modernisation factor, by the catalytic forces of the Bologna Process toward shifts in thinking and acting within higher education institutions. Meanwhile, these institutions are being granted more autonomy and their behaviour in the resulting competitive situation is expected to become more cost-aware, and more sensitive towards the needs of society. The approach adopted by public authorities with regard to universities has essentially transformed, and the shift towards enlarged 'managerialism' (Huisman & Pausits 2010) has been seriously influenced by the idea of entrepreneurial universities (Clark 1998).

WBR universities act in a setting far less secure than EU universities. Therefore they need more responsibility and (university) self-government, which deals with crucial issues such as student selection, influencing tuition fee levels, setting employees' income policies and deciding autonomously which programmes to offer. These will be new aspects of the universities' interior "management existence". Modes of competition for students and staff have significant impact on management. The more liberal regulations lead to greater financial independence, further chances but also higher risks. Academic administration and management have become increasingly complex: the institutions have so far become larger and more multifaceted, the tasks have multiplied (modern "multiversities") and therefore the need to provide skilled management and administration has increased (Kerr 2001). More management tasks have to be fulfilled at the institutional level than before. Professional management is an important prerequisite to enable the higher education institution to perceive itself as an autonomous organisation instead of being subordinate to central government.

Specific modes of management for a specific organisation have to be developed and new forms of participation have to be created. Another important prerequisite of change is the appreciation of management (Ruch 2001) in the sense of honouring good performance in the field of management and organisation.

The quality of management will depend on the quality of the administrative web that "ties together" different management functions and administrative positions in different parts of the institutions and with different tasks (Pausits & Pellert 2009).

The mission of the management of WBR universities is to fit their institutions into the EHEA and make them more compatible in terms of teaching, research and services. A modern management enables those universities to collaborate and interact with universities abroad. The universities have to be proactive in shaping the HE in their countries. Status quo criticism is not enough, if the institutions want to improve. Concrete strategies and implementations of these are needed. Improvement of student services, establishment of personnel development units and staff training programmes are only some examples on a long list of tasks to improve. The management has to find the issues which bring quick wins for the university to help the organisation and their employees.

During our work we identified different issues and topics of improvements for all eight universities. The list of recommendations helps universities to identify potential tasks and activities. In fact, the prioritisation of these is a management task and has to be done by the rectorate. "The mantra for reform becomes: complex universities operating in complex environments require complex differentiated solutions. One hundred universities require 100 solutions." (Clark 2004, p. 183) The willingness to change has of course different levels and affinity by each university and management. At the end these universities have to work on their own brand and image as a university based on their core missions teaching, research and services but also on their management as an enabler to deliver, to fulfil and to improve their missions.

Notes

[1] To learn more about the project, please visit the project web site http://www.morem.untz.ba/index.htm

[2] Adapted from the guide for institutional evaluations of the EUA, cf.
http://www.eua.be/iep/activities/institutional-evaluations.aspx

[3] The state of Bosnia and Herzegovina consists of two entities: the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina and the Republika Srpska.

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