

The bridge between Universities and Research Centers: a two-way road to improve human potential at local and international scale

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Fortunately for me I don't have an institutional message because it is very difficult to be very correct, very decent, and in the same time original and interesting.

I am some time very skeptical to take part in some international meetings organized by intergovernmental or nongovernmental organizations because according to my feeling in the last year the majority of these meetings started to suffer the same pathology being very correct from political point of view, very few are creative and non-critical and this is a paradox to put together many scientists who are so obedient to the principle of political correctness at European or national level.

In this case, we need in every meeting a kind of troublemaker who crosses the line of political correctness addressing some questions or offering some answers, which are not exactly "in the correct line".

I will present many questions and, unfortunately for you and for me, less answers because I don't think we have already answers.

When the ES president presented 2 main directions in our field: European research area and European education area with some targets for 2010, but some of them with shorter period 2007, 2005 (Berlin), I feel some skepticism in his sentences related mainly because Europe in 2010 will be, or pretend to be, the most competitive region in the world.

I think it is necessary, before I say: I agree / I disagree, I like it or don't like it, to answer a more general question: What world do we need, or what world do we like because it is very difficult to say exactly what we need.

We like a world like the present one unbalanced, a single superpower very inefficient from some points of view or we need a world more balanced at least 3 main centers to share the power and to compensate some critical errors committed by a single superpower.

These are some problems, which are not really debated because these problems don't look very correct from political point of view. From the political point of view, from the politician side, from the diplomat side a speech in such direction can attack US or EU and is very difficult to navigate between these strong barriers, but for us scientists we don't have the same limits.

I think we need a world with several centers of power. Europe has the chances to be such superpower. It is not important what is Europe from geopolitical point of view, Europe will be the Europe decided in Brussels if necessary, Europe will be spread until Vladivostok, despite the geography and we have seen that Russia is more and more interested to be associated in some of the activities of EU.

It is obvious that Europe at this moment is as associated countries about ½ billion inhabitants with a sole market present, the risk to counterbalance all actual divisions of power and economic activities at the international level having in mind we have at the international level a game with the same goal: somebody loses somebody wins it is not possible to have only winners, in the long dynamics yes, but for short time and economic problems are of short time, we have only these results: losers and winners.

Is it possible for EU to be one of the winners using the actual democratic mechanism?

I think EU is in a very paradoxical situation: in the same time wants to preserve all democratic games long debates large communities and in the same time to be efficient – we enter here in a sum of contradictions and it is a purely theoretical question, it is not a political habituate. It is possible for political pragmatists to sacrifice some democratic rules for political and economical efficiency. I think protecting the cultural diversity, protecting traditions managing all national sensibilities in all fields education culture geography religion EU will not succeed to be the most competitive region in the world in 7 years because it loses a lot of time with region consensus. It is true one of the richness and advantages of EU is cultural diversity but being realist when we cross some limits of diversity is then against the efficiency and political decision and I can agree that times are really hard we have less and less time to take the god decisions and unfortunately, some of our democratic dimensions must be limited for this reason of political pragmatism.

Coming back to the problem of the research and education.

For several reasons in the last 5 decades there is a kind of split between research and high educations. High education was concentrated mainly in universities. In some countries we have an additional difficulty because the research belongs to 3 mains systems of organizational science:

- Universities;
- The Romanian Academy, which has in the same time the honors for the National Academy of the country, the honor of the big network of research institute but it is also the jury who offers the grants for research;
- Many hundreds of research institutes, there are some, not many who keep a label only to receive substitutes from the state in a very difficult financial situation.

If we judge by results the number of top research field is not related with the number of research employed in every system and we need to recompose research and university not because the EU or the Ministry of education said such thing but because we really need this. Unfortunately our institutional research or universities are conducted by a kind of individualistic approach, the creation of a new consortium or a new synthesis between the research and universities or between universities themselves, because we have in this moment too many, too small universities.

In research the situation is worse. We have hundred of research institutes in every country some of them with some dozens or some persons.

If we will not compete we are not capable to be the most performable region, the most competitive region in the world with some thousand regional centers in EU overlapping and ignoring sometimes each other.

I think the rules of the market will act in education and research despite the fact we like or we don't like many times we are offended using the market concepts in science education and science will cannot escape the market rules.

If we don't accept we'll be ordered in the big companies who will say we don't need more universities we don't need more research centers. We finance our own research centers we train our qualified persons and if you will remain with your tradition you will die with your tradition.

I think the universities are too strong connected with the traditions, which are not able to define what are good traditions.

The individualistic approach in the leadership of research institutes and universities will be in my opinion one of the main obstacle in creating EU research area and the education area and in addition to create the bridge between the 2 programs but the

same time the rules for educational and scientific market will be so strong and so imperative in order to oblige the universities and research to move in a good direction if not, they risk to be eliminated to collapse with very nice tradition and be a dead university and a dead research center. In this case, I repeat, concatenation conglomerated preserving the autonomy, or fusionning completely, university and research center is a single construction to reach the target or the commitment of political leaders of EU. I think that the attitude or the commitment of president Chirac, or chancellor Schroeder they know very well what they say when they reach such target if not will be too late for EU to react using traditional democratic consensus.