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**The Arctic and Nordic
Countries in the World of Economy and Politics**

Artur Życki¹

**SCANDINAVIAN ACADEMIC EDUCATION
IN THE EUROPEAN MODEL OF HIGHER EDUCATION**

1.1. Shaping European educational space

European Union Member States adopt their own educational policies, that reflect the richness of cultures, traditions, experiences and unique schooling systems as inseparable elements of national identity. Educational systems have evolved over the centuries within specific economic, social and cultural contexts, which has resulted in different legal regulations regarding different levels of education in different countries, which so far have not been standardized within the European Union².

In the initial phase of European integration, the focus shifted towards the foundation for economic and political links, because these factors were considered contributory to the unity of the old continent. The current reforms of higher education, initiated by the Bologna process, aim at using the existing diverse academic approaches to create a coherent and compatible system in Europe, which is necessary to achieve transparency in higher education, the comparability of the level of education, its competitiveness and cooperation³.

A changing world requires ongoing reform of education. In recent years, it has been carried out in most EU Member States. For the first time, however, the reforms developed and implemented at the national level, reflect the European

¹ Artur Życki, PhD. hab., professor of the Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, Poland.

² *Education and training in Europe: diverse systems, shared goals for 2010*, Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg 2002.

³ D.F. Westerheijden, *Ex oriente lux? Akredytacja w Europie po zburzeniu muru berlińskiego i podpisaniu Deklaracji Bolońskiej – charakter narodowy i różnorodność systemów*, „Nauka i Szkolnictwo Wyższe”, No. 1/18, 2001; also in: A. Buchner-Jeziorska, A. Boczkowski, *Dylematy reformowania europejskiego szkolnictwa wyższego* [in:] *Proces boloński: ideologia i praktyka edukacyjna*, ed. A. Buchner-Jeziorska and A. Dziedzicak-Foltyn, Łódź 2010.

dimension in education. At the same educational requirements in the EU countries have been evolving from arbitrary assessments to quantifiable, measurable criteria, usually in the form of a test. The above mentioned criteria, which have been already applied, apart from numerous obvious advantages i.e. objective assessment of learning outcomes, involves the danger of a schematic approach to students, whose knowledge is assessed by means of tests. Thus, the results of teaching say nothing about the personality of a graduate, who in addition to the acquired encyclopedic knowledge, has the emotions, hierarchy of values, represents certain attitudes and cultural circle. These components remain unverified in this method of assessment, as, similarly to soft skills and teamwork, are simply omitted⁴.

Although a unified system of education is easier to manage and administer, it can lead to dehumanization of education, introduction of elements of the robot not only to the productive but also to the human relations. Perhaps these fears are exaggerated, but the introduction of new, in fact scholastic teaching methods is unlikely to produce tangible benefits in social relations, which may also affect economic development, and hence the labour market. Eliminating the master – apprentice relation can disrupt the exchange of generation-based experiences⁵. The diversification of education and its assessment while maintaining the part that, enables dialogue, exchange of ideas, scientific dispute and interpersonal relationships seems to be more reasonable solution⁶.

It should be remembered, that education not only prepares for professional work, but also stimulates the development of personality, supports the process of self-realization and contributes to active citizenship attitudes in democratic societies. It plays an important role in creating inclusive societies, that are free from discrimination, racism and xenophobia. It fosters fundamental values of European culture, including respect for human rights and tolerance⁷.

The Bologna process has facilitated the migration of students between European universities in search of the necessary knowledge. Initially, the adopted documents assumed, that annually 10% of those in higher education would take part in international exchange. It was also estimated that, it would provide for the exchange of approx. 50 thousand academics and 150 thousand people undergoing vocational training abroad. The reality, however, has exceeded the wildest dreams of European decision-makers. The estimated level of 10% of Europeans studying outside their own country had already been achieved in 2009, whereas, according

⁴ A. Jajszczyk, *Polskie uczelnie – czas na jakość* [in:] *Misja i służebność uniwersytetu w XXI wieku*, ed. J. Woźnickiego, Warsaw 2013, p. 218.

⁵ The issue of the relation master-apprentice in higher education is addressed by Tadeusz Gadacz, interviewed by Joanna Klimczyk: *W poszukiwaniu utraconego mistrza* /J. Klimczyk's interview with T. Gadacz, „Res Publica Nowa”, No. 11, 2002, pp. 24-27.

⁶ A. Dymitrowicz, *Formowanie twórczej osobowości studenta*, „Parergon. Rocznik Naukowo-Artystyczny”, 2001/2002, pp. 2-9; B. Ostafińska-Molik, *Studenci – dziś i wczoraj. Refleksja o etosie* [in:] *Student na współczesnym uniwersytecie: ideały i codzienność*, ed. D. Pauluk, Kraków 2010, pp. 178-180.

⁷ R. Johnston, *Spółczesność ryzyka - implikacje dla uniwersytetów* [in:] *Uniwersytet - między tradycją a wyzwaniem współczesności*, eds. Ładyżyński and J. Raińczuk, Kraków 2003, pp. 19-23.

to the European Commission statistics for the Erasmus program, in the academic year 2012/2013 more than 12% of students and academics benefited from this form of scholarship⁸. It is predicted, that by 2020 the number of participants in various kinds of international exchange programs will have increased significantly and eventually up to 20% of European students will have been doing courses or internships abroad, and the smartest, the most creative and mobile will have been taking courses at 2-3 different EU universities.

For centuries, universities have been using approaches to teaching based on the traditional models of education. The four concepts of an academic institution, namely French - Napoleonic /, German - Humboldtian /, English – Newman's / and American have prevailed. In the French model of higher education the forerunners of first universities were in fact civil servant schools. These were state schools, strongly influenced by the government, which even appointed the management board of the institutions. The schools focused mainly on teaching and followed legally approved curricula. In the German model, the purpose of academic education was to demonstrate the process of the discovery of knowledge and to teach thinking. The university was characterized by a unified approach to teaching and research. Its distinguishing features were academic freedom, disinterestedness in science, focus on research, focus on the development of personality. On the other hand, according to the English model, university should not serve practical purposes, but teach students to think, to reason and to seek to know the truth for the sake of knowledge itself. It was different from the German model in making teaching and research separate. The main objective of the academic education was to engage students in personal development through participation in classes conducted by the university. European model was different from the American model of the university, whose main goal was to educate intellectual pioneers of progress. Hence, the close link between education and research, so that the university became a place of the transformation of theory into tangible results contributing to the development of the tools of civilization. Behind the concept of first American universities were serving the public, openness to new developments and concepts, as well as maintaining a balance between social objectives and principles of the free market⁹.

Current trends in academic teaching are characterized by increased diversification of universities. Today, the scientific progress makes it impossible, even for the largest universities, to become a leader in teaching, not to mention scientific research in any field of knowledge. Individual academic institutions develop specialization approach to studies. There are more and more teaching institutions, which focus on selected specializations, both in terms of research and education. There is a popular belief, that universities should not only adapt to the

⁸ Erasmus facts, figures and trends, The European Union support for student and staff exchanges and university cooperation in 2012-2013, http://ec.europa.eu/education/library/statistics/ay-12-13/facts-figures_en.pdf, [as for 17. 07. 2014]

⁹ J. Józwiak, *Tradycyjne koncepcje instytucji akademickiej* [in:] *Model zarządzania publiczną instytucją akademicką*, ed. J. Woźnicki, Warsaw 1999, pp. 18-21.

changes taking place in the modern world, but they should be their inspirers and propagators.

1.2. Public expenditure on education in the EU. Scandinavian approach

In the European Union there are about 4,000 higher education institutions, which at the turn of the 21st century were providing education to over 12.5 million students¹⁰. At that time, only 12.5% of the population aged 55-59 in EU countries held higher education degree, while in the group aged 35-39, 20% of people were graduates. This trend continued in the following years, and each new generation, at least formally, was better educated than the previous one¹¹. This situation has not changed so far, and it is based on rational, that qualifications and knowledge have immediate impact on employment opportunities. The better the education, the greater the guarantee to find a job and then maintain the link with the labour market. In the considered period of time only 3.9% of people educated to a degree level in the European Union were unemployed. This situation was adversely affected by the crisis in 2007, when the youth unemployment began to rise sharply, although people with high school diplomas were least affected.

At the same time the demand for specialized personnel varies across the countries of the European Community - these countries, which are better developed, need more educated people and are often ready to provide them with better working conditions than they can get in the home countries. This stimulates the mobility of university graduates, including academics. 34% of all the researchers in the world are employed in European institutions of higher education and up to 80% of research works are conducted in academic centres of the EU.

Although science and education are intangible resources, they offer clear competitive advantage in producing physical goods and although the relationship is undeniable, its results are not so immediate. For this reason, the funds allocated to these resources are often considered an expense rather than investment. In taking actions governments and political parties often consider electoral calendar, which is not exactly related to the cycles of education. Expenditure on education (all levels), expressed as a percentage of GDP, varies across countries. In general, societies, which are more prosperous and have better income equality spend more, which is reflected not only in absolute values, but also in percentage share. On the other hand, the poorer societies, with unequal distribution of wealth, spend less. Total expenditure on primary education per pupil exceeds 20% of public expenditure on education in Denmark, Italy, Austria, Portugal and Sweden. It is at the lowest level in Slovakia. Using these criteria, the most financial resources are

¹⁰ For comparison, in the USA the number of schools providing higher education exceeds 4 500, of which 550 have the right to confer doctoral degrees, and 125 are referred to as "research institutions". Of the latter, approx. 50 run the majority of American research work, receives significant public for research and receives almost all of the Nobel Prize in science.

¹¹ According to Eurostat, in 2002 in the EU, only 24% of those aged 30 to 34 had diplomas of higher education. By contrast, in 2013 in this age group 37% were educated to a higher education degree which was an increase of 1% compared to 2012 and of 3% compared to 2010.

allocated to secondary education in France, Portugal and Cyprus, while the highest level of more than 40% of the total public expenditure on higher education is in Sweden, Denmark, the Netherlands, Germany and Belgium¹².

Another issue is the share of education funding from private sources. In this regard, there are clear differences between the European Union and the leading countries in the world. In 2008, 78.4% of total academic education spending in the European Union came from public funds, whereas only 21.6% from private sources. The opposite trend can be observed in the United States, where private funds accounted for 62.6% whereas public for only 37.4%. In the Nordic countries already in 2000 the share of private funding on higher education was at the level of 2-3%. As a result of reforms in 2008, it significantly increased to reach, respectively: 10.9% in Sweden, 4.5% in Denmark and Finland and 3.1% in Norway¹³.

The level of expenditure per student is different in each country. According to OECD data, in the European Union, it amounts to an average of 13 thousand dollars. Scandinavian countries rank the highest in allocating funds to those enrolled in higher education. The annual expenditure per student is 20 thousand dollars in Sweden, 18.9 thousand in Norway, 17.6 thousand in Denmark, and 15.4 thousand dollars in Finland. This level of academic education subsidies ranks the Nordic countries at the world's forefront, and only a few countries provide higher funding for this purpose. The annual expenditure per student accounts for 29.9 thousand dollars in the United States, 21.6 thousand in Switzerland and 20.9 thousand dollars in Canada (figures for 2008)¹⁴.

Financial policy of individual EU Member States, i.e. public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP in the first decade of the twenty-first century is presented in Table 1.

The data show significant differences in the level of public expenditure on education, and these are Scandinavian countries, which compare favourably with other European countries. The leader here is Denmark, which, in the considered period of time, spent the largest percentage of its GDP on educational purposes of all EU countries. Equally high education funding is provided by Sweden and Finland, whose policy in this regard has not changed. Positive changes in this field, are observable in the south European countries, i.e. Malta, Cyprus, yet they are still far from sustainable. During the whole considered period, Scandinavian countries spent more than twice the percentage of its GDP on education than the states displaying much less careful attitude towards this sector and this is an average of one and a half times more than the average for all EU member states. Due to the wealth of the Scandinavians these differences are even greater when absolute values are considered.

¹² *Education and Training 2010*, the Joint Interim Report of the Council and the European Commission on the implementation of the detailed work program on the objectives of education and training systems in Europe, 14358/03 EDUC 168 - COM (2003) 685 final, Brussels, 3 March 2004.

¹³ *Education at a Glance 2011: OECD Indicators*, Paris, 13 September 2011, p. 244, <http://www.oecd.org/education/skills-beyond-school/48631582.pdf>, [18.07.2014].

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 218.

Table 1. Public expenditure on education as a percentage of GDP in the years 2001-2011 in the UE.

Country	in % of GDP				
	2001	2005	2007	2009	2011
UE-15					
Austria /AT/	5,82	5,44	5,33	5,98	5,80
Belgium /BE/	6,12	5,92	6,0	6,57	6,55
Denmark /DK/	8,38	8,30	7,87	8,74	8,77
Finland /FI/	6,25	6,30	5,9	6,81	6,76
France /FR/	5,77	5,67	5,62	5,90	5,68
Greece /EL/	3,51	4,09	(:)	(:)	(:)
Spain /ES/	4,42	4,23	4,34	5,02	4,82
the Netherlands /NL/	4,99	5,53	5,32	5,95	5,93
Ireland /IE/	4,36	4,72	4,92	6,43	6,15
Luxemburg /LU/	(:)	3,78	3,15	(:)	(:)
Germany /DE/	4,53	4,57	4,49	5,06	4,98
Portugal /PT/	5,89	5,21	5,1	5,99	5,27
Sweden /SE/	7,32	6,89	6,61	7,26	6,82
Italy /IT/	4,98	4,41	4,27	5,70	4,29
Great Britain /UK/	4,54	5,31	5,29	5,56	5,88
accession in 2004					
Cyprus /CY/	5,69	6,95	6,95	7,98	7,87
the Czech Republic /CZ/	4,28	4,08	4,05	4,36	4,51
Estonia /EE/	6,83	4,88	4,72	6,03	5,16
Lithuania /LT/	6,03	4,88	4,62	5,64	5,17
Latvia /LV/	6,39	5,14	5,07	5,59	4,96
Malta /MT/	4,73	6,58	6,18	5,32	8,04
Poland /PL/	5,42	5,47	4,91	5,09	4,94
Slovakia /SK/	4, 03	3,85	3,62	4,09	4,06
Slovenia /SI/	(:)	5,73	5,15	5,69	5,68
Hungary /HU/	5,15	5,43	5,29	5,12	4,71
accession in 2007					
Bulgaria /BG/	(:)	4,25	3,88	4,58	3,82
Romania /RO/	(:)	3,48	4,25	4,24	3,07
accession in 2013					
Croatia /HR/	(:)	3,98	4,02	4,42	4,21

(:) – no accessible data. Source: author's own compilation based on OECD, Eurostat and *Yearbook 2004. The statistical guide to Europe. Data 1992-2002*, Luxembourg 2004, p.80.

In the whole considered decade the average percentage of GDP spent on education fluctuated around 5.5%. The 2004 enlargement of the EU did not introduce significant changes in this area, while the accession of Bulgaria and Romania was a factor negatively affecting the indicators relating to supporting education in the countries of the European Community. The new Member States, except for those mentioned above, reach the level of the total expenditure on education similar to the EU -15 countries. This situation, however, indicates significant differences in real expenditure per participant in the educational process, as GDP measured in billion in “old” EU countries is a multiple of GDP of “new” Member States. In addition, the population of the recently admitted states is “younger”, and thus a higher share of young people in the population is either in some form education or potentially subject to compulsory school or other forms of education. All these and some other variables bring about significant differences between the actual spending per pupil / student in the “old” and “new” EU member states. However, the educational policy carried out by the Nordic countries is still unsurpassed standard for all societies of the EU.

1.3. The universality of academic education in EU countries.

The case of Scandinavia

Public expenditure on higher education is not determined solely by the number of students, but also - among other factors – by the duration of study. The average age of completing full-time tertiary education is 23 in the EU, and in individual states it is:

- 21 in Belgium, Ireland, Cyprus, Malta;
- 22 in Greece, Estonia, France, Lithuania, Slovakia;
- 23 in the Czech Republic, Spain, Italy, Latvia, Hungary, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, United Kingdom;
- 24 in Austria;
- 25 in Germany, Finland;
- 26 in Denmark, Sweden.

As it can be easily noticed, the longest are the academic courses in the Nordic countries, where expenditures on higher education are the highest, and in the German-speaking area. In most of the countries the graduation age is more or less the same as the average in the European Community. In contrast, people from the island countries of the EU (apart from the UK) and Belgium complete tertiary education earlier.

In the last decade of the twentieth century, the number of students in Europe has increased significantly, which refers not only to the EU countries but also to those aspiring to join the EU. Between 1990-2001 the number of students in the “old” EU Member States increased almost by 50%, i.e. from 8 816 000 to 12 820 300, and the increase was not due to population growth, but it was caused by increased interest of young people finishing secondary schools in continuing education at universities as well as taking academic courses by persons of older

generations. In most of these countries, this was a sustainable growth. Only in Germany and France a period of steady increase in the number of students in the years 1990-1996 was followed by the period of dramatic decline. However, since 2001, these numbers have been systematically going up and both countries have returned to the previous trend of growth. The downward trend also occurred in the Netherlands, although it took place earlier, in the years 1995-1998 and in Italy, where the slump was observed in the years 1998-2000. This decrease in the growth rate of the people enrolled in higher education coincides with cuts in education budget of the EU in the years 1995-2000. During this period in the Commonwealth public funding for education was reduced by an average of 1.5%. In turn, among dozens of candidate countries the most dynamic growth of the number of students at that time was in Poland¹⁵.

The demand for higher education is growing and will grow despite the demographic decline. Many EU countries such as the United Kingdom and Denmark set themselves the objective of increasing the number of students to more than 50% of the population completing secondary education by 2010, and although completion of this task has been postponed, the adopted policy has been consistently implemented. The demand for lifelong learning is rapidly increasing, and European universities respond to it by extending their educational services prepared and implemented in cooperation with specialized organizations, so that they would satisfy the requirements of the labour market. In this type of cooperation the task of universities is to sustain standards of teaching while raising the level of education as well as maintaining its utilitarian quality.

The dynamic growth in the number of people in higher education and its ever-increasing popularity is presented in Table 2, which shows all the countries of the European Union, and the number of students in the years 2001-2011. These are possibly the most complete and up-to-date figures. Traditionally, the data related to Cyprus and Malta as well the Balkan countries - members of the European Union, were the most difficult to obtain.

Thus, in the first decade of the twenty-first century, despite the aforementioned demographic problems and a lower population of those at the age of beginning full-time tertiary education, an increase in the number of students in all EU countries can be observed. This trend indicates the correct response of the young generation to the challenges posed by the modern world and the requirements of labour market regarding qualifications and skills. The increase in the number of students in the considered period was particularly dynamic in the Nordic countries, German-speaking countries, Benelux and the Czech Republic, Slovakia and the UK. In most countries the growing trend was steady. Only in Hungary, Austria and Poland there were some occasional drops, which disturbed the overall tendency to increase. Moreover, since 2011 a clear downward trend has been observed.

¹⁵ A. Życki, *Szkolnictwo wyższe w Polsce w warunkach członkostwa w Unii Europejskiej*, Warsaw 2007, pp. 100-101.

Table 2. Number of students (in thousands) in the European Union 2001-2011.

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Belgium +	359	367	375	386	390	394	394	402	425	445	462
The Czech Republic +	260	285	287	319	336	337	363	393	417	437	446
Denmark +	191	196	202	217	232	229	232	231	235	241	259
Germany +	2 084	2 160	2 242	2 331	2 269	2 290	2 279	2 245	2 439	2 556	2 763
Estonia +	58	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	62	(:)	66
Greece +	478	529	562	597	647	653	603	638	672	642	661
Spain+	1 834	1 833	1 841	1 840	1 809	1 789	1 778	1 781	1 801	1 879	1 951
France +	2 032	2 029	2 119	2 160	2 187	2 201	2 180	2 165	2 173	2 245	2 260
Ireland +	167	176	182	188	187	186	190	179	183	194	196
Italy +	1 812	1 854	1 913	1 987	2 015	2 029	2 034	2 014	2 012	1 980	1 968
Cyprus +	12	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	31	(:)	(:)
Latvia +	103	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	125	(:)	(:)
Lithuania+	136	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	211	(:)	(:)
Luxemburg+	2,5	3,0	3,0	(:)	(:)	2,7	(:)	(:)	(:)	5,0	(:)
Hungary +	331	354	391	422	436	439	432	414	398	389	382
Malta +	7,4	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	10,0	(:)	(:)
the Netherlands+	504	517	527	543	565	580	590	602	619	651	780
Austria+	265	224	230	239	244	253	261	285	308	350	362
Poland+	1 775	1 906	1 983	2 044	2 118	2 146	2 147	2 166	2 150	2 149	2 080
Portugal+	388	397	401	395	381	367	367	377	373	384	396
Slovenia+	92	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	114	(:)	(:)
Croatia+	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	(:)	135	(:)	(:)
Slovakia+	144	152	158	165	181	198	218	230	235	235	226
Finland+	280	284	292	300	306	309	309	310	297	304	308
Sweden+	358	383	415	430	427	423	414	407	423	455	464
UK+	2 067	2 241	2 288	2 247	2 288	2 336	2 363	2 330	2 415	2 492	2 492

Source: Author's own compilation based on Eurostat; Yearbook 2004. The statistical guide to Europe. Office for Official Publications of the European Communities, Luxembourg 2004; *Students enrolled by type of institution* as well as OECD <http://stats.oecd.org/Index.aspx?DatasetCode=RENRL#>, [18.07.2014].

The educational, economic and social success of Scandinavian countries makes us take a closer look at their model of development and recent reforms carried out in higher education. But before starting a discussion on solutions introduced there, the existence of a different type of educational funding, assigned to the Anglo-American model, must be noted. It is important to realize, that these two types of funding have common features. Anglo-American model is determined by significantly lower taxation, which limits the involvement of the public funds in the field of academic education. It is compensated by private funds, which provide considerable finance to higher education, including the research, which due its predominantly universal character contribute to R&D. The Scandinavian model means very high taxes, that allow significant public expenditure on higher

education, which becomes more accessible and more affordable to a greater number of young people. As far as the area of research is concerned, a strong link between science and economic growth, typical of R&D model is emphasized, which makes it similar to the Anglo-American model.

In recent years, the Nordic policy has been influenced by several political factors, globalization and the economic crisis in 2007. As far as political factors are concerned, first all the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process must be mentioned. The former has admittedly suffered a spectacular failure, but for many years it has been shaping the policy on higher education and scientific research. However, a declaration signed in 1999 in Bologna has had an even greater impact on the European academic education. The Bologna process has been an attempt to consolidate the European Area of Higher Education, by means of various tools, including: introducing two-cycle model of studies and the system of accreditation, standardization of student assessment, promotion of students' mobility¹⁶. As a result of globalization, access to international education has become widespread and a strong factor of competitiveness between universities has appeared. On the other hand, the economic crisis has forced the search for extra-budgetary sources of financing higher education.

The Scandinavian countries are a good example of how budget constraints can be minimized so that neither universities nor young people enrolled in higher education did not fall victim to the tensions in the world economy. In its further part, this paper still concentrates on the Nordic region, however it particularly deals with the reforms undertaken in two countries of the European Union, i.e. Denmark and Sweden and a non-EU country – Norway.

1.3.1. Denmark

In 2007, a reform of higher education, resulting in reorganization of 26 academic institutions, was introduced in Denmark. The following types of academic institutions were established: schools of general studies – three schools per one million inhabitants; specialized universities and scientific research centers. In the initial transition period these newly formed entities were provided with increased public funding, which was vital to the success of the reform¹⁷. Then, since 2010, measures have been taken to strengthen the external financing, whose objective is to maintain a high overall level of expenditure on academic education at a reduced level of public spending. For this purpose, a system promoting active, entrepreneurial attitudes has been developed, and the Ministry of Science, Innovation and Higher Education, using specially developed system, has been providing financial rewards to these academic institutions, which manage to obtain the greatest amount of external funds relative to their public funding. Schools of

¹⁶ A. Wesołowska, *Proces Boloński i powstanie Europejskiego Obszaru Szkolnictwa Wyższego*, „Rocznik Integracji Europejskiej”, No. 7, 2013, pp. 379-384.

¹⁷ S. Carney, *Reform of higher education and the return of 'heroic' leadership: The case of Denmark*, „Management Revue”, Vol. 18, Iss. 2, 2007, pp. 178-182.

higher education have been given far-reaching freedom as to spending public funds, which has resulted in greater independence from state authorities.

Initiatives, which support external funding for universities, have proven to be important for the development of entrepreneurship of both academic institutions and research centres as well as individual academics. This approach to research funding has contributed to increasing the practical use of research and relating it to knowledge-based economy. The resulting innovations are used in business and social life. At the same time, danger posed by the long term dependence on external financing, i.e. threat to the autonomy of the university, has been taken into account. Therefore, it has been concluded, that it is important to secure long-term public funding, which will enable priority research in areas, that are not directly applicable for companies and which are not attractive to external stakeholders.

Among the Nordic countries, Denmark has the greatest educational ambitions. Reaching the objective of 95% of young people completing secondary school, 60% completing higher education, and 25%, gaining a master's degree is its current purpose. The state has the world's most developed system of scholarships and support system for students studying abroad. The latter group i.e. the Danish studying abroad is relatively small; in 2011 for instance, of the 50,000 Scandinavian students taking academic courses outside their native country only 7% were from Denmark. These figures have been one of the main reasons for adopting by the government a strategy for the internationalization of academic education. The two-direction measures have been introduced: on the one hand, the aforementioned financial security for the Danes studying outside the country, on the other, increasing the number of foreign students studying in Denmark. Students in the latter group are subject to high quality requirements combined with the system of incentives encouraging future graduates to remain in Denmark (the concept of attracting international talent)¹⁸.

The reform (permanent) initiated in 2007, has already produced the first positive results: the level of graduates' educational preparation for work has been raised. Those, who completed studies according to the reformed system as first, are more responsive to labour market needs, which is evidenced by the highest in the European Union and world employment rates of people with higher education.

1.3.2. Sweden

In Sweden, as in other Nordic countries, higher education has so far been financed largely with public funds. However, the reform of the tax system reducing the state's dependency on fiscal policy has resulted in reducing the availability of those resources. This has forced a more rational approach to expenditure management and made therein academic institutions look for new sources of income. The Ministry of Education has called academic communities to begin university mergers. A lot of effort has been made to ensure that the merging process, supported by budgetary

¹⁸ J.P. Myklebust, *New plans to attract and retain talented non-Europeans*, 22 April 2014 <http://denmark.blogs.v-axis.com/?p=380>, [19.07.2014].

resources, was the result of bottom-up initiatives, rather than administrative orders. The state's acknowledgement of the independence of academic centers is not only the result of deeply rooted sense of autonomy associated with higher education institutions, but it is a sign of pragmatism and the belief, that self-governing institutions maintain a high level of performance in completing their mission, as well as they are better partners in economic and social life.

At the same time, the diversification of income sources is considered an important factor in ensuring the autonomy of the research and the educational process. In the case of Sweden, the transition of the education funding system has been a process, which has gradually been employing external resources, losing the financial dependency on state. Now, in addition to public funds, it can be supported by companies and individuals, who are offered benefits resulting from a system of tax credits, in exchange for financial participation in research. However, the state still feels responsible for the education of its citizens, and these changes, which are constantly evolving, are far from being a sharp departure from the current model of financing higher education. Furthermore, it is presumed, that the introduced changes will make it possible to reward these academic institutions, which represent not only scientific, but also other achievements, which can be measured using relevant criteria. Also these entities, which provide innovative solutions implemented at local, regional and national level and in selected enterprises, will be promoted, which is the so-called premium for innovation¹⁹.

Swedish academic education process is not competitive any longer, due to free studies for all, which so far has been its hallmark. In the autumn of 2011 tuition fees for students from outside the European Union and European Economic Area (excluding Switzerland) were introduced. The Government took the view, that higher education should be attractive to others due to its quality and good conditions for studying, not just because it is free of charge. Identifying areas, in which Sweden is a scientific leader in a global scale is another factor contributing to the quality of higher education. First of all, this is the research in the field of environmental technology, in particular the neutralization of toxic emissions in the production and manufacturing processes. Also research at the highest international level is conducted in the field of nanotechnology, involving several large Swedish companies (75% of the funding of this research), which maintain close cooperation with the scientific community. However, state authorities are not released from securing funds for basic research (a minimum of 1% of GDP per year, and 1.04% as for 2012 is allocated to this purpose), and budgetary resources are still the guarantor of the public academic education.

1.3.3. Norway

Norway is a country with a relatively short academic tradition - the first

¹⁹ Higher education in Sweden. Status report, Universitets Kanslersämbetet, Swedish Higher Education Authority, Stockholm 2013, <http://www.uk-ambetet.se/download/18.1c251de913ecec40e780003403/annual-report-2013-ny.pdf>. [18.07.2014].

university was founded in the early nineteenth century. This rich, not very populous country has three types of higher education institutions: universities, specialized university institutions and university colleges. The problems and the reforms related to higher education are the same as in the other Nordic countries: the way of financing higher education and the threats to the autonomy of the university resulting from it, knowledge-based practice, utilitarian approach to research, the internationalization of academic education. Norway has a friendly for students, motivational scholarship system, based on non-repayable and repayable student loans, of unprecedented height and very favorable repayment options. Therefore, the communication from the minister for higher education in 2010, that the economic downturn would have its consequences also for higher education came as something of a shock. In 2012, the government planned to lower expenditures for research, i.e. departure from introduced in 2006, science funding system, which both worked well in practice and was positively evaluated by the academic community as well as greatly contributed to the strengthening of basic research. This trend was successfully reversed quite quickly (budget 2014) by diverting surplus funds from oil exploitation to research.

An important issue discussed in the Norwegian academic environment is the demand for the introduction of tuition fees for students from outside Europe. It is suggested, that the practice used so far has failed to target relevant groups. The idea of tuition fees, widely discussed – also in the parliament – evokes extreme views. From the postulate of rejection and a radical change in the current system to the opinions expressed by the most influential Norwegian academics highlighting, that Norway needs more foreign students than they need Norway as a place for their education. Decentralization or consolidation of national research potential as well as recognizing the importance of academic institutions as key factors in the further development of the country are frequently addressed issues in public debates. Comparing the scale and pace of reforms in Norwegian higher education to other Scandinavian countries, it should be noted, that the overall good financial condition of the state does not enforce far-reaching changes in the adopted model of higher education.

The currently implemented reforms in academic education in the Nordic countries have several common features. First, they have been carried out since the 2010s. Secondly, they have been responsive to the international competition in higher education. Thirdly, they intend to either maintain today's level of autonomy or even grant academic institutions with more independence, for instance by diversifying their funding. These reforms have been implemented in the belief, that research and universal access to quality higher education is a decisive factor in the knowledge-based economy, which guarantees maintaining the prosperity of the Nordic societies²⁰.

²⁰ J.P. Myklebust, *SCANDINAVIA: Private funding key to autonomy drive*, „University World News”, 08 January 2012 Issue No 203, <http://www.universityworldnews.com/article.php?story=20120108085803443>, [19. 07.2014]. More on higher education reforms, see also: *New trends in*

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Abstract

The existing organizational structure of higher education in Europe has been formed on the basis of academic traditions of the last two centuries. Scandinavian universities are a part of these traditions being European leaders in public expenditure on higher education, both in relation to GDP and in absolute amounts spent on a person studying. The process of reform of higher education in the Nordic countries has been affected by political factors (Lisbon Strategy, the Bologna process), globalization and the economic crisis. The latter has forced the diversification of financing education through its openness to extra-budgetary sources. This does not mean, however, releasing the state from responsibility for financing higher education, and indeed it still remains its main donor. At the same time, the authorities acknowledge the autonomy of university, devote a lot of effort to make higher education universal, strengthen the links between science and business practice. The Scandinavian model of academic education remains a model for other European countries, and to their own people it is a guarantee for further development.

Skandynawska edukacja akademicka w europejskim modelu szkolnictwa wyższego

Istniejąca struktura organizacyjna uczelni wyższych w Europie została ukształtowana na bazie tradycji uniwersyteckich ostatnich dwóch stuleci. Wpisują się w nią uniwersytety skandynawskie, które są europejskimi liderami w publicznych nakładach na edukację wyższą zarówno w relacji do PKB jak i w kwotach bezwzględnych przeznaczanych na osobę studiującą. Na proces reform szkolnictwa wyższego w krajach nordyckich wpływ mają czynniki polityczne

(strategia lizbońska, proces boloński), globalizacja i kryzys gospodarczy. Ten ostatni wymusił dywersyfikację finansowania edukacji poprzez jej otwarcie na źródła pozabudżetowe. Nie oznacza to jednak zdjęcia odpowiedzialności za szkolnictwo wyższe z państwa, które cały czas jest jego głównym donatorem. Przy czym władze szanują autonomię uczelni, działają na rzecz powszechności wykształcenia wyższego, dbają o powiązanie nauki z praktyką gospodarczą. Skandynawski model edukacji akademickiej pozostaje wzorcem dla innych europejskich państw, a dla własnych społeczeństw jest gwarancją dalszego rozwoju.

Artur Życki, PhD. hab., professor of the Jan Kochanowski University in Kielce, Poland.