

/ New /
Challenges for Europe in a Changing World ///
Knowledge - a key tool for a Better Europe

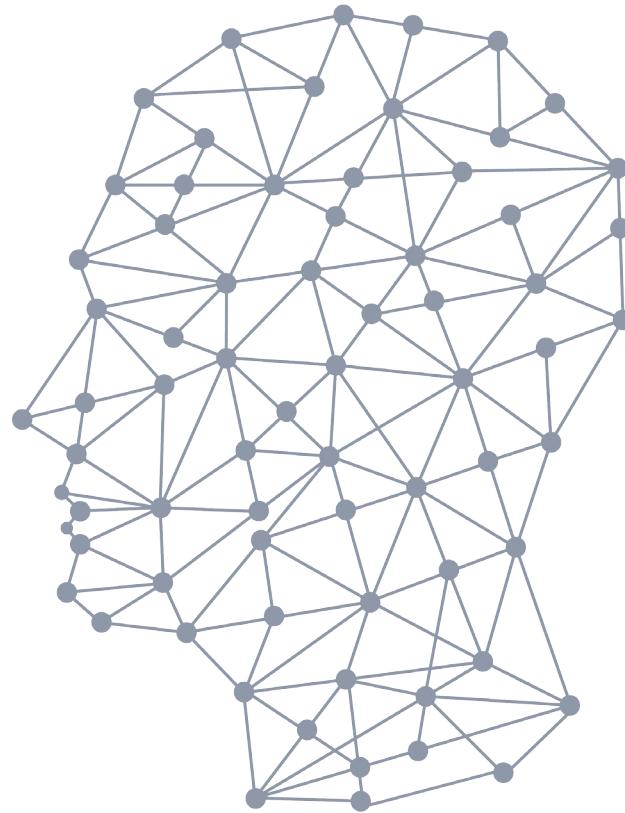


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Challenges for Europe in a Changing World ///
Knowledge - a key tool for a Better Europe
edited by

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SUMMARY



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INTRODUCTION

In the last century, Europe has changed drastically. In the 20th century, Europe has experienced two devastating world wars and a sharp political division, but it was also a century of reconciliation and integration, which led to the creation of the EU and increasing economic prosperity and political stability. Everything was set for an ever deeper and better Union, with ever deeper and better relations with its neighbors. The violent conflicts in the Balkans in the last decade of the 20th century, the acute economic crisis in the first decade of this century and finally the political tensions and serious crisis in Ukraine were loud wake up calls. It is painfully evident that Europe is facing a variety of internal and external challenges, which require thorough analysis and strategic thinking, but at the same time a vigorous and clearly articulated action. Nevertheless, and despite all its difficulties, Europe still remains a role model of peace, stability, prosperity and democracy on a global scale. By creating new models of cooperation, more social equality and democratic, participatory and reasonable consensus, Europe can surely maintain its leading role and provide inspiration and stimulus for the countries willing to become members of the European family or looking to acquire democratic and functional standards based on the European model.

However, we are all aware that Europe is now at a turning point. The mentioned internal challenges, as well those arising from the global economic competition and political crises all across the globe require urgent, deep and comprehensive analysis and action by the European Union and its Member States, as well as all those willing to embrace European values and standards. In this process, there is a wide consensus that knowledge needs to be the key to success, we will only be able to define and carry out the needed actions and reforms if we are equipped with enough relevant knowledge, competence and skills. Consequently, the Centre for Advanced Studies - South East Europe (CAS-SEE), the University of Rijeka and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia organized an international conference "(New) Challenges for Europe in a Changing World/Knowledge- a key tool for a Better Europe", aiming to discuss the possibilities of enhancing the creation and exchange of knowledge about the EU through international cooperation, as well as to discuss at high level the challenges, which lay ahead of Europe in the upcoming years. The conference was held at the University of Rijeka, at the University Campus, on October 20th and 21st, 2014.

The leading experts both from the academy and policy makers, the leaders of governmental institutions and non-governmental organizations, ambassadors, students and journalists exchanged their experiences and ideas about various topics that the scientific research and education in the domain of European studies needs to embrace. It was stressed that we are in the process of searching for a new narrative for Europe where the roles of policy makers, academia and media are crucial as well as the (trans)formative power of European and International Studies as the framework of their joint venture. The ongoing crises hit many European

countries causing social imbalances and political tensions. The future of the entire European project depends in the highest degree on appropriate strategies and actions for growth and jobs. Only knowledge, competences and better valorization of scientific research, development of innovation policies and smart specializations can deal with financial and new institutional challenges. It was registered that the states of South-east Europe/Western Balkans have a clear European perspective, but there was also growing euro-skepticism among citizens in these regions as well as in the whole of Europe. The participants exchanged their ideas about what kind of knowledge diffusion strategy wins citizens' attention and support for the EU.

Finally, we concluded that the vision and mission of the European Interdisciplinary Studies should appeal to thinking outside of existing boxes that can encourage young people to participate in knowledge diffusion and the process of energizing EU integration, European values and standards. Innovative EU studies need to be a catalyst for enthusiasm and commitment for reinvigorated European Integration based on the European culture.

From the impressive list of participants manifested in the conference program attached at the end of this brochure, we decided to ask five of them, five prominent experts and distinguished leaders with remarkable experience in European issues for their views both on general issues about Europe and more specific issues about the scientific researches and education in the European area. We are grateful for their thoughts, which they shared with us.



VESNA PUSIĆ

Prof. Vesna Pusić, PhD, vice president of the Government of Republic of Croatia and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs in the Government of Republic of Croatia. Vesna Pusić was born in Zagreb on March 25th 1953. She earned her doctor's degree in sociology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb, in 1984. She has been employed at the Department of Sociology at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Zagreb since 1978, and she has been a Full Professor since 1988.

QUESTION

Europe has always been a concept full of different meanings and connotations. Beyond its mere meaning in geographical terms, that of a continent; the scope of our wishes, imaginations and expectations projected into Europe is enormous. What does Europe mean for you?

For me, Europe represents positive values, which we all know as “European values”. Values like freedom, tolerance, rule of law, solidarity, to name just a few... These values are not present in their fullest sense in any of the member states, and in a way they represent a utopia, an ideal we all strive for and which is, basically, the rationale behind the project of European integration.

REPLY

Looking from the perspective of the countries in the region, including Croatia, Europe has always been either the promised land for realization of our wishes and expectations or the imagined Other. In any case, Europe has always been a contested issue within the national boundaries of Southeast European nations. How do you see the state of mind regarding Europe in the region nowadays? Do we still expect too much from Europe?

QUESTION

Croatia started the process of EU integration, not because people expected the problems to be resolved by the European Union, but because of the road to the EU itself. The process of EU accession is a structured experience in state building, of at least fifteen or twenty states. This is, in fact, a blueprint for building institutions, a shortcut to build your own state, because you don't have the luxury of going through decades and decades or centuries of slowly building the structures of your institutions and waiting for them to start functioning in the broader environment.

REPLY

The other important aspect of the road are negotiating chapters, in case of Croatia, the famous 35 chapters. A lot of difficult things to ne-

gotiate, but at the same time an opportunity for reframing politics and the task of politicians; the switch from „heroic“ politics to politics with a task of securing better quality of life for citizens. And in that sense, the whole experience of accession to the EU has much broader effect than the reforms that you have to go through. In the Western Balkans, from where you have the first post-conflict or post-war member of the EU, this experience also means a speedy exercise in changing the context and the meaning of politics.

QUESTION

Europe as a continent and a mental map is nowadays confronted with major challenges. New authoritarian challenges paired with questioning of basic democratic values are posing a threat to the vision of Europe as a peace project. Are we heading toward a new era of conflicts in Europe? Will Europe once again manage to emerge from the crisis stronger?

REPLY

Europe is witnessing the rise of more and more popular movements aimed at discrimination against minorities, ostracising of some groups within societies, and these new ideas are increasingly taking on within the European institutions. In time when the key debate within the EU is between the federalists and the advocates of greater subsidiarity i.e. greater autonomy, the real issue is, in fact, how to maintain and advocate, champion and promote the values of the original Europe and develop them further in times of populism. Especially in the situation where the most sensitive part of Europe, and that is Southeast Europe, is joining the European Union. This issue is posed not only to the states wanting to join the EU, but also to the actual member states.

Croatia has joined the EU in 2014. All other countries of the so-called Western Balkans are still in the process of moving towards the membership in the EU, which in the best possible case will last at least until 2020, and for some other countries even longer. What does a long time in the EU waiting room mean for the Western Balkans? Which challenges is this posing to the fragile democracies? And what can be done by the EU and the countries themselves to speed up the process?

QUESTION

A stalemate in the process, as proven, can have detrimental effects on fragile national institutions. It is, therefore, extremely important for the process to remain ongoing. Moreover, it is a matter of long-term stability, not just for the Region, but for all of Europe. The context of EU integration is constantly changing and, therefore, the process itself has to adapt to new circumstances (in the same way that, for example, when Croatia was joining the enthusiasm wasn't the same as it was in mid-2000). The key is, I believe, in a more proactive approach to the process; the EU and the countries in the accession process have to cooperate more closely on the fulfilment of criteria, because it's in everyone's interest. The logic of the process should move from passive to active conditionality. This, of course, does not mean lowering the criteria in any way, since that would defeat the whole purpose. The process carries with itself the transformative power that gradually increases the stability and functionality of the state - the key interest of all of the countries in the region, but also of the EU.

REPLY



VEDRAN MORNAR

Prof. Vedran Mornar, Minister of Science, Higher Education and Sport in the Government of Republic of Croatia. Vedran Mornar was born in Zagreb in 1959. He earned his doctor's degree in computing from the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing (FER), University of Zagreb, in 1990. He was the dean of the Faculty from 2006 to 2010. He was promoted to Full Professor in computing at the Department of Applied Computing in 2003.

QUESTION

What is your opinion of the concept and organization of European Area of Higher Education and European Research Area? Namely, there is a vast variety of practices, including different HE and scientific traditions in European countries. Do you think that it is realistic to expect the implementation of common policies?

Education policy belongs to sensitive policy areas because of its diversity across countries, its complexity and interconnectedness with other social policies and its characteristic of being able to generate social, cultural and economic consequences. This is why the EU Open Method of Coordination proved to be an excellent EU governance tool. On one hand, it is a compromise between the desires for common action, while on the other hand, it supports the autonomy in sensitive policy areas.

REPLY

As a new EU Member State, Croatia participates actively in the open method of coordination, and benefits from peer learning which contributes to evidence-based policy making. If we take a historical perspective, the process of cooperation among EU Member States has generated a large set of reforms at the national level.

Although these reforms were primarily aimed at easier comparability of education systems across Europe, they have also introduced new approaches in education. Education and training policies are still very diverse across the EU, but it may be argued that a convergence has started to evolve. This is demonstrated by the shift to the evidence-based policy making and the learning outcomes approach.

Reforms that needed to take place in order to create the European Higher Education Areas were connected directly to the nationally sensitive issues, such as the structure of higher education systems and quality assurance. We believe that the focus should be on the enhanced use of Bologna tools. For example, the potential of European Qualifications

Framework has not been fully explored in its role as a tool for validation and recognition of skills and qualifications. If the EQF would be taken forward within the area of validation and recognition of skills and qualifications, it might lead to the creation of mutual trust in qualifications systems and quality assurance arrangements between the EU Member States. Consequently, the EU could aspire to automatic recognition of all qualifications for all purposes within the EU area of qualifications and both learning and working mobility might become a reality.

Developing higher education in the wider European area means not only taking into account the diversity of the national systems and institutional practices, but recognizing them as an advantage. Although all countries refer to the same documents of the Bologna process, solutions for individual, smaller issues can be resolved differently at the national level. To conclude, the general goals are the same, but a path to their achievement is not strictly defined, and each country has freedom to decide how to achieve them.

European Research Area (ERA) is a unified research area open to the world, based on the internal market in which researchers, scientific knowledge and technology circulate freely. Well-functioning, unified and coherent ERA is an integral part of the Innovation Union with a goal to strengthen the knowledge base in Europe, attract talent and investment. Although much has already been achieved, further efforts of the Member States and research stakeholders are needed to make the ERA fully operational.

Completion of ERA remains a gradual process and it is up to the Members States and research stakeholders, in close collaboration with the Commission, to strategically coordinate and align their national strategies and research programmes and activities, aiming at better joint tackling grand societal challenges and implementing the necessary ERA reforms in order to:

- accelerate structural reforms of national systems and strengthen progress monitoring based on robust data provided by Member States,
- intensify our efforts to raise the quality and impact of public spending on research and innovation in accordance with national and regional strategies,
- further synchronize national and European roadmaps on research infrastructures and to further pool financial commitments for the development of research infrastructures,
- foster “mutual policy learning” initiatives, including peer reviews as well as any other initiatives allowing for a better understanding of the impact of policies.

QUESTION

The mobility of researchers and internationalizations of studies are the most important principles in European policies in HE and in Human Resources Strategy for Researches. What would you describe as major advantages and obstacles of mobility and the internationalization of study programs?

REPLY

Relevant conclusions adopted by the Council of Ministers invite the Member States of the EU to enhance quality of education through mobility and cross-border cooperation. Measures proposed by these conclusions refer to removing obstacles to mobility, notably enhanced recognition of student mobility by using Bologna tools (ECTS, Diploma Supplement, and European Qualifications Framework).

Internationalization should be in the focus of every national education policy. It is important to develop all aspects of internationalization: mobility of students and teachers, internationalization of study programmes, digital learning, as well as strategic cooperation and partnership of higher education institutions aimed at building institutional capacity.

The Strategy for Education, Science, and Technology of the Republic of Croatia was adopted by the Croatian Parliament on 17th October 2014. It includes the goal of ‘internationalization of higher education and its integration into the European and Higher Education Area’. This goal refers to increasing outgoing and incoming mobility of students and teachers, encouraging modules offered in foreign languages, increasing the number of joint degree programmes with eminent higher education institutions and increasing foreign academic staff at HEIs.

The Strategy sets the indicator of 10 per cent of outgoing student mobility until 2020 (currently 1 per cent), and 5 per cent of incoming student mobility (currently 0,05 per cent). These data show that in comparison with other EU Member States Croatia has a very modest student mobility. Main obstacles relate to lack of resources (e.g. Erasmus is a major mobility instrument, but Erasmus grants do not cover all costs related to a period of studying abroad) and partial recognition of ECTS earned during mobility).

Although Erasmus+, a EU programme for education, training and sport, is a very important financial instrument for internationalization of higher education, it will not be sufficient for reaching the mobility indicators set by the Strategy. Another financial instrument are the so-called Programme Agreements concluded between the Ministry and higher education institutions. Their aim is strategic, stable, long-term, evidence based, centrally managed by rectors, performance based funding of public HEIs. The three-year pilot programme agreements were concluded for the first time in 2012. Since the budget line refers to student tuition fees, all the goals are related to teaching and studies. The Ministry and higher education institutions agreed on a set of national strategic objectives. Higher education institutions could also choose the objective of internationalization of higher education. These pilot funding agreements cover approximately 10 per cent of funding from the State Budget, they are result-oriented and present a first step in introduction of full-funding agreements.

Further internationalization of higher education will contribute significantly to the vision of the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports to

build ‘a globally-competitive, high-quality, accessible and sustainable system of education and training, harmonised with the labour market needs and society as a whole.’

Major advantages of mobility and internationalization of studies are upgrading the quality of higher education system, notably through training of teaching and non-teaching staff and development of new curricula based on learning outcomes.

Mobility of researchers is directly bringing new ideas, knowledge and networks for the researchers and creating high quality values. Removing barriers to the mobility of researchers is one of the Croatian national priorities. It is also among priorities of European Research Area focused on improving researcher skills for inter-sectorial mobility, e.g. by encouraging innovative doctoral training approaches. The Ministry has recognized importance of creating a strong generator of researchers to support the development of an effective labour market for researchers in Croatia by connecting industry and the scientific community.

The International Fellowship Mobility Programme for Experienced Researchers in Croatia – NEWFELPRO is a fellowship project of the Government of the Republic of Croatia and the Ministry of Science, Education and Sport. The project is co-financed through the Marie Curie FP7-PEOPLE-2011-COFUND programme. Its total value is 7 million Euros, out of which 60 per cent is financed from national sources. Expected project duration is from 2013 until 2017. In total, 83 fellowships are available through the aforementioned fellowship schemes.

NEWFELPRO project presents an additional strategic effort by the Government of Croatia to invert the negative trend towards brain drain phenomenon. The long-term objective of the MSES NEWFELPRO project is to raise the presence of research-qualified individuals by providing them with new opportunities to gain relevant international experience, and thus contribute to the further development of international scientific networks.

The programme is also intended to increase international incoming mobility of talented researchers by providing them with an opportunity to work in a country that has a very good potential to offer new positions for researchers, in both academic and private R&D institution.

How do you see the place of the SEE region in the context of European HE and scientific institutions and practices? The perceptions of HE institutions in this region are often situated on the spectrum from very conservative and isolated to formally open but substantially inert. How can this institutional gap be bridged?

Other EU member states have given to Croatia a more prominent role in the EU enlargement process than to other countries of the SEE region. Therefore, the Ministry of Science, Education and Sports of the Republic of Croatia provides active support to ministries of education in the SEE region. An example of this support were three consecutive events organized in September 2014 in Zagreb related to recognition of higher education qualifications and the role of European and national

QUESTION

REPLY

qualification frameworks in recognition. These events were organized as peer learning combined with peer review since it has been widely recognised as an efficient tool to both building up one's own competence and creating more comprehension of other systems.

The topic of mutual recognition of qualifications among countries of the region should be high on the national education policy agenda, since fair and fast recognition of qualifications is a prerequisite for regional mobility for the purpose of employment, as well as for the purpose of continuation of education.

The overall strategic framework for supporting the SEE region is the *South East Europe Strategy 2020*, one of macro-regional strategies of the EU, adopted by the ministers of economy in 2013. It includes a chapter on 'Education and Competences'. A coordinator of this chapter is the Education Reform Initiative of South Eastern Europe. Its Governing Board is composed of representatives of all ministries of education in the region. ERI SEE contributes to facilitating cooperation among countries in the region by joint activities related to agreed regional set of goals and objectives.

There is a need for more enhanced cooperation at the education policy level between the countries in the region and some ERI SEE countries should be more involved and take a stronger role in shaping this co-operation. Furthermore, some countries in the region should be more active in the activities of the Bologna Follow-up group (BFUG) and in its Working Groups. For example, Slovenia and Croatia are chairing a regional BFUG Working Group on Recognition of Qualifications in SEE.

MSES has directed its efforts to supporting SEE region to removing obstacles to recognition of qualifications and increasing regional mobility. Implementation of national qualifications frameworks and proper use of all Bologna tools will lead to the development of a mutual trust, which is a precondition for achieving the Bologna aims of comparability in the standards and quality of qualifications in Europe. European Qualifications Framework is at our disposal as an instrument for making recognition easier and more transparent and all governments should secure legislative framework in which the national qualifications framework would be a key instrument for recognition of foreign qualifications.

In reference to regional cooperation in research, Croatia participates in the Western Balkans Regional R&D Strategy for Innovation for the period 2014-2020 with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Kosovo and Albania. The WISE Strategy is envisioned to become integrated as the research pillar of the *South East Europe Strategy 2020*. It should serve as a platform for continued policy exchange, public policy dialogue, capacity building and policy advocacy. The exchange of good practice, based on the successful implementations of R&I policies will be derived from the Croatian example and will aim at raising the levels of openness of the institutions while promoting the international visibility agenda.

Its role will be of a monitoring, evaluating and developing character as the WISE Strategy and the subsequent Action plan envision the implementation of the following programmes:

- Research excellence fund
- Networks of excellence
- Technology transfer programme
- Early stage start-up.

Desired outcomes are aligned with the *Europe 2020 Strategy* goals through the improvement of the research base and conditions for research excellence, promotion of the research-industry collaboration and technology transfer, enabling the business investments and start-ups, as well as general strengthening of governance in the area of R&I policies.

Alongside *Europe 2020 Strategy*, which is the key strategy implemented in all MSES programmes and initiatives, a number of projects aim to accomplish synergies with the *South East Europe (SEE) 2020 Strategy* and *EU Strategy for the Adriatic and Ionian Region and EU Danube Strategy*.



PERO LUČIN

Prof. Pero Lučin, PhD, Rector of the University of Rijeka. Pero Lučin was born in Rijeka in 1962. He became a doctor of medicine at the School of Medicine, University of Rijeka in 1986. He earned his doctor's degree in biomedicine from the School of Medicine, University of Rijeka in 1991. He was promoted to Full Professor in Physiology and Immunology at School of Medicine, University of Rijeka in 2001.

Which forms of knowledge and competences about Europe/EU would you describe as most important for citizens of EU, which for institutional management/leadership and which for the opinion makers (media, NGO, PR and alike)?

QUESTION

REPLY

Organization, instruments and practices for diffusion of ideas, innovation and knowledge do not respond to the needs of societies any longer. Rapidly changing technologies for communication open a dynamic space for the diffusion of ideas, and knowledge is becoming instantly available. The structure of European societies, including educational systems, are constructed for diffusion of knowledge according to the settings of the 20th century. This also includes structure of the political system, participation of citizens in decision-making processes, understanding the democracy and allocation of public resources. Institutions, such as universities, are organized according to the needs of knowledge-diffusion principles and the political system of the 20th century. They are rigid, slow in adaptation and represented as a part of the structure that use public resources in order to maintain the structure of the society based on the political establishment.

QUESTION

According to your opinion, what are the optimal modes of diffusing knowledge about European (institutional) culture-based competences and knowledge?

REPLY

In the last decade, development of communication technologies and devices for accessing knowledge entered into the advanced exponential phase. Nowadays, more than three billion of brains are connected to the Internet and have instant access to knowledge via mobile devices at any time and any place. In fact, these brains are absorbing existing knowledge, generate new and share it instantly, closing the circle of rapid expansion. Thus, knowledge is available anywhere; the diffusion pathways are no longer confined to institutions, including universities.

New pathways, which circumvent the traditional structure (traditional means the structure of the late 20th century), are emerging and rapidly evolving. At the current stage of development, it appears that this rapid evolution of the diffusion network is amorphous and not very well structured. In fact, it seems that it is structured by itself. 20th century principles shaped institutions are not able to respond properly and drive the processes of the knowledge diffusion, including economic development. The unstructured network of diffusion of knowledge is, at the same time, becoming the platform for the diffusion of ideas and values, which mainly disrupts political processes and challenges all values of the society.

In addition to the enormously rapid development of the communications technologies and the amorphous knowledge-diffusion pathways, human brains adapt to these changes. Although the principles of these adaptations are poorly understood, scientific evidence that new generations of people are different are emerging. Current research of connectome, one of the largest research project in the world, suggest that the human brain adapt its neural network according to inputs from outside experiences. Thus it is clear that neural networks of new generation of people, who are exposed to the enormous amount of data and experiences from the beginning of their lives, will be different as an ordinary process of physiological adaptation (neuroplasticity). This generation of people is already entering universities and is becoming an important contributor to the political processes. Accordingly, this generation of people has expectations from the institutions, including universities and other institutions of the educational system, which are supposed to respond to their needs.

QUESTION

What is the proper aim of the concept and organization of European Area of Higher Education and European Research Area? Namely, there is vast variety of practices, including different HE and scientific traditions in European countries. Do you think that it is realistic to expect the implementation of common policies?

REPLY

One of the most important roles of universities in the 21st century societies is construction of the social network for the diffusion of knowledge, innovations and values in the society. Social networks require a broad range of competencies that should be developed through training at universities, and these competencies should be in the essence of every programme at universities, including regular study programmes and life-long training. In fact, university should be a place with open gates for continuous upgrading of social networking competencies. Development of the knowledge-diffusion social network through universities is essential for sustainable economic growth since it requires a homeostatic and balanced development of intellectual, social and creative capital. Therefore, universities should undergo a series of brisk transformations in order to be able to respond to the needs of 21st century people. These transformations should be carefully planned and supported by extensive public investments. This is especially important for universities of South East Europe.



Jo SHAW

Jo Shaw, Director of the Institute of Advanced Studies, University of Edinburgh. Jo Shaw holds the Salvesen Chair of European Institutions and is the Director of the Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities at the University of Edinburgh. She has been Dean of Research and Deputy Head of the College of Humanities and Social Science until December 2013. Before coming to Edinburgh in 2005, Shaw was Professor of European Law and Jean Monnet Chair at the University of Manchester, as well as Director of the Jean Monnet Centre of Excellence.

Europe has always been a concept full of different meanings and connotations. Beyond its mere meaning in geographical terms, that of a continent; the scope of our wishes, imaginations and expectations projected into Europe is enormous. What does Europe mean for you?

QUESTION

REPLY

I'm a legal scholar by training, and so I come at the task of understanding the EU via an understanding of overlapping and interrelated legal orders, and via the principles of constitutional pluralism. One of the reasons that the EU remains a controversial issue within politics and society is not just that it is complex in its decision-making and seems remote, but also because it challenges national sovereignty. Especially in states that have recently recovered or acquired something like 'full' national sovereignty, the idea of giving this up again to the EU can be controversial. This is certainly the case in many newer Member States where the initial euphoria of being members of the EU has worn off. And likewise in older Member States, especially where certain groups feel that they have been victims of austerity and the financial crisis, and think that the EU might have exacerbated their problems (because they associate it with globalization) there are strong Eurosceptic strands in popular opinion.

For myself, aside from the issue of plural legal orders, which remains an enduring research puzzle that has kept me going for more than thirty years, the EU retains an important function as a reference point for how you solve interstate problems peacefully. The EU might be messy, but on the whole, it seems to work. That's why I remain attached to it, despite all the difficulties, and in the event of an in-out referendum in the UK would certainly campaign for the UK to remain a Member State.

QUESTION

Europe as a continent and a mental map is nowadays confronted with major challenges. New authoritarian challenges paired with questioning of basic democratic values are posing a threat to the vision of Europe as a peace project. Are we heading toward a new era of conflicts in Europe? Will Europe manage to emerge stronger from the crisis once again?

I think that the events in Hungary, which has seen many problematic revisions to its constitution, not to mention an authoritarian turn in government, have caught many people by surprise. Many people were perhaps overcomplacent that post 1989 liberal democracy was really settling down throughout the European continent, bar a few trouble spots in the far East. I read that the US government is surprised that the EU and its politicians appear so sanguine about Hungary, but then we shouldn't overstate the capacity of the EU actually to address a problem such as this. It does seem to me that ongoing engagement with the Hungarian government, with its academia, and with its opposition groups as well, is one of the most important things that we as 'ordinary' Europeans can contribute to this difficult situation. Realistically, the EU lacks legal and constitutional measures for challenging Member States such as Hungary that are at times breaching liberal constitutional principles, which is why it seems often as if the only thing that the EU has done about Hungary has been to challenge the measures on the retirement of judges.

REPLY

Returning to the issue of austerity, it also seems that we are at a moment in history when we need to be highly vigilant about the rise of the far right and other authoritarian forces, that feed on people's despair at drops in their living standards, and raise xenophobia and a hatred in particular of immigrants as a plausible alternative way of dealing with these insecurities. We still live, in Europe, under the shadow of the Second World War, the holocaust and the other atrocities committed between 1939 and 1945. We should not be sanguine that these things could never happen again if we are not vigilant in protecting our liberal constitutional principles, including at the EU level.

QUESTION

Europe is quite often equalled with the European Union. The latest developments in Ukraine have demonstrated the limits of the EU in terms of common policy towards the neighbourhood. Obviously, there are many Europe(s) in town. Are the boundaries of the EU the future boundaries of Europe? What shape is the rest of Europe outside the EU taking?

REPLY

It's important not to conflate continents, or geopolitical regions, with the EU as such. There are already many different overlapping and concentric circles of membership within the European continent, with bodies such as the Council of Europe, not to mention the variable geometry that exists within the EU (think Schengen and the euro). Because the EU is understood as a process, and as an enlargement process, it has been natural for different countries to seek a European future, and it is dangerous to form relationships with them (e.g. Turkey or Ukraine) on that basis, and then dash the people's hopes.

QUESTION

Croatia has joined the EU in 2014. All other countries of the so-called Western Balkans are still in the process of moving towards the membership in the EU, which in the best possible case will last at least until 2020, and for some other countries even longer. What does a long time in the EU waiting room mean for the Western Balkans? Which challenges is this posing to the fragile democracies? And what can be done by the EU and the countries themselves, to speed up the process?

REPLY

Croatia has joined the EU in 2014. All other countries of the so-called Western Balkans are still in the process of moving towards the membership in the EU, which in the best possible case will last at least until

2020, and for some other countries even longer. What does a long time in the EU waiting room mean for the Western Balkans? Which challenges is this posing to the fragile democracies? And what can be done by the EU and the countries themselves, to speed up the process?

The mobility of researchers and internationalizations of studies are the most important principles in European policies in HE and in Human Resources Strategy for Researches. What would you describe as major advantages and obstacles of mobility and the internationalization of study programmes?

For Croatia, now part of the EU, there are tremendous opportunities for mobility, but that doesn't solve the problem that there are far too many stable or 'tenure-track' positions across Europe for all the well qualified researchers with PhDs who are seeking them. Support for early career researchers and postdoc fellows is one of the most important functions that an organisation such as the Centre for Advanced Studies can take on. But equally, we need to support those early career researchers who will not realistically get jobs in academia to find other useful outlets for their abilities and their strong transferable skills. It sometimes seems to me that we obsess too much about mobility, and don't focus enough on the issue of supporting early career researchers to achieve stability in their working lives. We are turning whole generations of young researchers into effective nomads and this is bad for family life and also – quite often – even for mental health. For the researchers from the other Western Balkan states the problems lie also with visa restrictions in some states, and the obstacle of getting a work permit to work in an EU country. This can be an insurmountable obstacle for some.

QUESTION

REPLY



ERHARD BUSEK

Erhard Busek, Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe. Erhard Busek was born in Vienna in 1941. He is a politician from the Christian-conservative People's Party (ÖVP). He is Coordinator of the South-Eastern Cooperative Initiative (SECI) and Chairman of the Institute for Danube Region and Central Europe. From January 2002 until June 2008 Busek served as Special Co-ordinator of the Stability Pact for South Eastern Europe, the last person to hold the position.

QUESTION

Europe has always been a concept full of different meanings and connotations. Beyond its mere meaning in geographical terms, that of a continent the scope of our wishes, imaginations and expectations projected into Europe is enormous. What does Europe mean for you?

Europe is a reality. Especially concerning the approach to globalization.

REPLY

Looking from the perspective of the countries in the region, including Croatia, Europe has always been either the promised land for realization of our wishes and expectations or the imagined Other. In any case, Europe has always been a contested issue within the national boundaries of Southeast European nations. How do you see the state of mind regarding Europe in the region nowadays? Do we still expect too much from Europe?

QUESTION

It very much depends on the region itself; what they are expecting, what they are doing and in which way they are cooperating. I think the question that should be raised is what they are expecting from themselves!

REPLY

Europe as a continent and a mental map is nowadays confronted with major challenges. New authoritarian challenges paired with questioning of basic democratic values are posing a threat to the vision of Europe as a peace project. Are we heading toward a new era of conflicts in Europe? Will Europe manage to emerge stronger from the crisis once again?

QUESTION

Obviously, we are confronted with the area of conflicts in Europe, maybe with the beginning of World War III. If Europe is aware of this situation, it might be stronger, if not, it will be marginalized. The international organisations and also the Europeans are not the strongest in this process in the moment.

REPLY

QUESTION

Europe is quite often equalled with the European Union. The latest developments in Ukraine have demonstrated the limits of the EU in terms of common policy towards the neighbourhood. Obviously, there are many Europe(s) in town. Are the boundaries of the EU the future boundaries of Europe? What shape is the rest of Europe outside the EU taking?

REPLY

The limits of the European Union are coming out of the basic treaties. The Commission is not able to act like a government. Also, we do not have an army, which can be an equivalent for war security in the context of Europe. The boundaries of the European Union shall go further on enlargement. Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and surely the rest of South-east Europe shall be a part of the European Union. This is a process, which might last a bit longer.

QUESTION

Croatia has joined the EU in 2014. All other countries of the so-called Western Balkans are still in the process of moving towards the membership in the EU, which in the best possible case will last at least until 2020, and for some other countries even longer. What does a long time in the EU waiting room mean for the Western Balkans? Which challenges is this posing to the fragile democracies? And what can be done by the EU and the countries themselves to speed up the process?

REPLY

The waiting room for the European Union should be used for reforms. This is one of the main mistakes of the region: they are waiting for the European Union to do something, but they should do something by themselves. It is also true for democracy. I think that science plays a very important role. Also, we should keep an eye on the role of religions.

What is your opinion of the concept and organization of European Area of Higher Education and European Research Area? Namely, there is vast variety of practices, including different HE and scientific traditions in European countries. Do you think that it is realistic to expect the implementation of common policies?

QUESTION

Concerning Higher Education more has to be done. The fact that the European Union has no real direct responsibility on this subject is a mistake. It is necessary to create cooperation in Europe, but also in the region. If there is a will, there will be a way.

REPLY

The mobility of researchers and internationalizations of studies are the most important principles in European policies in HE and in Human Resources Strategy for Researchers. What would you describe as major advantages and obstacles of mobility and the internationalization of study programmes?

QUESTION

The universities and higher education institutions are not yet trained on mobility and internationalisation. They have to develop not only a programme, but also a capacity to do it.

REPLY

How do you see the place of the SEE region in the context of European HE and scientific institutions and practices? The perceptions of HE institutions in this region are often situated on the spectrum from very conservative and isolated to formally open but substantially inert. How can this institutional gap be bridged?

QUESTION

- REPLY In the context of European Higher Education the region has to do more. Are the universities of the region really European? In their setting and convictions? If these questions are answered, it will become quite clear how we can bridge the institutional gap.
- QUESTION According to your opinion, what are the optimal modes of diffusing knowledge about European (institutional) culture based competences and knowledge?
- REPLY I am in favour of even more Europe in the institutional culture. There shall come some proposals from Southeast Europe as to what the European Higher Education has to do.
- QUESTION There are many European studies all over Europe. What European studies do we need in Croatia and in the SEE region? How do you see the mission, vision and organization of study programs that promote competences aimed at more successful functioning within the European Union?
- REPLY In Croatia, you need studies about the whole of Europe and also about capacities, which are linking the universities of the region. It is also necessary to train the administration of the different governments and inform them that they are able to join EU activities.
- QUESTION Which forms of knowledge and competences about Europe/EU would you describe as most important for citizens of EU, which for institution-

al management/leadership and which for the opinion makers (media, NGO, PR and alike)?

It is necessary to have a general knowledge about Europe. It starts with history and geography and ends with the question of mutual understanding. Reconciliation and also describing the European narrative is a beginning.

According to your opinion, what is the target audience that we should strive to attract to European culture based programs? And why?

On different levels of culture it is necessary to have all citizens as a target. The universities are a special chapter, which has to be realized. If not, then the universities have no role into the society.

EU is predominantly perceived by SEE citizens as a source of desirable financial resources acquired through EU funds and programmes instead of as a common cultural and social area. How to change the predominant perception of the EU as a bureaucratic mastodon, which threatens sovereignty, habits and traditions?

Only focusing on financial resources of the EU is wrong. It is necessary for the SEE citizens to look at their own resources, which only they can provide. Also they have to look to the problem of brain circulation. Criticism on the EU as a bureaucratic mastodon is right, but the bureaucratic mastodon also exists in the countries of Southeast Europe. First at all, what has to be changed in the different countries should be defined.

REPLY

QUESTION

REPLY

QUESTION

REPLY



(New) Challenges for Europe in a Changing World Knowledge – a Key Tool for a Better Europe

INAUGURAL CONFERENCE
of the EUROPEAN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES
October 20th – 21, 2014

University Campus Trsat, Radmilo Matejčić 5

Organized by CAS SEE, University of Rijeka and
Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Republic of Croatia

In the last century, Europe has changed drastically. In the 20th century, Europe has experienced two devastating world wars and a sharp political division, but it was also a century of reconciliation and integration, which led to the creation of the EU and an increasing economic prosperity and political stability. Everything was set for an ever deeper and better Union, with ever deeper and better relations with its neighbors. The violent conflicts in the Balkans in the last decade of the 20th century, the acute economic crisis in the first decade of this century and finally the crisis in Ukraine were loud wake up calls. It is painfully evident that Europe is facing a variety of internal and external challenges, which require thorough analysis and strategic thinking, but at the same time a vigorous and clearly articulated action. Nevertheless and despite all its difficulties, Europe still remains a role model of peace, stability, prosperity and democracy on a global scale. By creating new models of cooperation, more social equality and democratic consensus, Europe can surely maintain its leading role and provide inspiration and stimulus for the countries willing to become members of the European family or looking to acquire democratic and functional standards based on the European model. Can the European policy-makers successfully define a new narrative for Europe? What is the role of media in the process of defining a new narrative of EU? Can the transformative power of European and International Studies deliver substantive results in regions like South East Europe?

Concept by Snježana Prijović-Samaržija, CAS SEE University of Rijeka and Hrvoje Marušić, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Republic of Croatia.

October 20

REGISTRATION, 9.00 – 9.20

OPENING WELCOME, 9.20 – 9.30

Pero Lučin (Rector, University of Rijeka)

Hrvoje Marušić (Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs, Republic of Croatia)

1st Panel – European and International Studies: New Challenges for Europe in a Changing World 9.30 – 11.00

Moderators:

Vedran Džihidić (Director, CAS – SEE) and Petar Bojanić (Director, CAS – SEE)

Keynote Speakers:

Joseph H.H. Weiler (President, European University Institute, Florence)

Sleepwalking Again? Europe and the End of the Pax Americana 1914-2014.

Paolo Magagnotti (President, European Journalists Association – The Communication Network)

European Public Space and Media in the Framework of Interdisciplinary European Studies

Hrvoje Marušić (Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs)

The transformative power of European Integration

Snježana Prijović-Samaržija (Vice Rector, CAS SEE, University of Rijeka)

What competences and learning outcomes European interdisciplinary studies need to disseminate in social, political and economic context of Europe?

COFFEE BREAK, 11.00 – 11.30

PRESENTATIONS, 11.30 – 12.00

Center for Advanced Studies-Southeast Europe, Sanja Bojanić (Executive Director, CAS – SEE)

Educational programs of the Croatian MFEA:

a) **The Centre of Excellence, Mirna Vlašić Feketija** (Advisor to the Minister, Coordinator of the Centre)

b) **International Postgraduate University Study on Diplomacy, H.E. Dr Mladen**

Andrić (Director for Diplomatic, European and Predeployment Training, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs); Nikolina Herceg Kolman (Advisor in the Office of the Minister)

2nd Panel – What are European studies? What European studies we need in the context of Western Balkan Countries/ South East Europe? 12.00 – 14.00

Moderator:

Vjeran Pavlaković (University of Rijeka)

Keynote speakers:

Hans-Ake Persson (University of Roskilde)

European Studies as a Field of Knowledge theoretical, methodological and practical reflections

Christopher Lamont (University of Groningen)

Academic Engagement through Research and Teaching: Europe and Beyond

Jo Shaw (Law School, Edinburgh University)

How can studying the law contribute to the interdisciplinary approach to European studies

Christer Persson (Malmö University)

An educational proposal for changing European society – a master's program covering public sector, private sector and NGOs

Discussants:

Nenad Miščević (CEU, Budapest)

Predrag Šustar (Dean of Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka)

LUNCH 14.00 – 15.3 HOST, PERO LUČIN (Rector, University of Rijeka)

3rd Panel – European Interdisciplinary Studies: financing and funds issues 15.30 – 17.00

Moderator:

Sanja Bojanić (CAS SEE)

Keynote speakers:

Boško Nektarijević (Balkan Security Network, Belgrade)

European funds and programs between institutional culture deficits, adequate competences and demanding procedures

Ines Marinković (WBC-INCO.NET, Zagreb)

Western Balkan Regional Research and Development strategy for Innovation

Matija Derk (Assistant Minister, Ministry of Regional Development and EU Funds)

Using ESIF to support competitiveness and innovation: Integrated approach

Discussants:

Heri Bezić (Dean of Faculty of Economics, University of Rijeka)

Nataša Jakominić Marot (Head of Department for EU projects at University of Rijeka)

Aleš Lipnik (University of Primorska, Science and Research Centre, Centre for Cooperation with Economy, Koper)

October 21

WELCOME COFFEE, 09.30 – 10.00

Welcome: Ivo Josipović (President of the Republic of Croatia) *Video Message*

Zlatko Komadina (Head of Primorsko-Goranska County)

Vojko Obersnel (Mayor of Rijeka)

4th Panel – Main session: European Interdisciplinary Studies -mission, and vision in the context of SEE, 10.00 – 12.00

Moderator:

Snježana Prijović-Samaržija (CAS-SEE)

Keynote speakers:

Pero Lučin (Rector, University of Rijeka)

Vedran Mornar (Minister of Science, Education and Sports, Republic of Croatia)

Vesna Pusić (First Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs)

COFFEE BREAK 12.00 – 12.30

5th Panel – Challenges ahead: Panel discussion with ambassadors, 12.30 – 13.30

Moderator:

Hrvoje Marušić (Assistant Minister, Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs)

Keynote speakers:

H.E. Branko Baričević (Head of the European Commission Representation in the Republic of Croatia)

H.E. Keiji Ide (Japanese Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia)

H.E. Michèle Bocoz (French Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia)

H.E. David Slinn (British Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia)

H.E. Henrik Ofstad (Norwegian Ambassador to the Republic of Croatia)

LUNCH 13.30-14.30 Host: Zlatko Komadina (Head of Primorsko-goranska County)

6th Panel – Reinventing the European Project – What Europe? What SEE? What Democracy?

14.30 – 16.30

Moderator:

Hedvig Morvai (European Fund for the Balkans)

Keynote speakers:

Erhard Busek (Institute for the Danube Region and Central Europe – IDM Vienna)

EU, Europe and the World

Haki Abazi (Program Director, Western Balkans Rockefeller Brothers Fund)

What will make an EU project a unique, successful and sustainable model: 1. Enlargement Unfinished Business; 2. Compliance: right balance between sovereignty

and shared responsibility; 3. Model of participatory democracy

Discussants:

Senada Šelo Šabić (Institute for Development and International Relations)

Elvio Baccarini (Member of the Steering Committee of the European Society for Analytic Philosophy)

Vjekoslav Perica (Chair of History Department, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka)

Nikola Petković (Department of Cultural Studies, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka)

Daniel Mondekar (Chairman of European Affairs Committee of the Croatian Parliament)

Svein Mønnesland (Professor of Slavic Studies, University of Oslo)

7th Panel – The Trends 2020: European Interdisciplinary Studies: courses and modules

16.30 – 18.00

Moderator:

Sonja Licht (Belgrade Fund for Political Excellence)

Keynote speakers:

Alfred Steinherr (Sacred Heart University, Luxembourg)

The content of the economics/finance dimension of the interdisciplinary master in European studies

Maja Vehovec (Institute of Economics Zagreb)

SSH - cross-cutting issues

Discussants:

Nada Bodiroga Vukobrat (Faculty of Law, University of Rijeka (Jean Monet Chair)

Veronique Charlety (Head of European Governance Department, European Affairs Directorate, ENA)

Conclusions and closing remarks 18.00

DINNER 19.00 Host, PERO LUČIN (Rector, University of Rijeka)

Impressum

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