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The Reform of Higher Education in Lithuania and the Actualities of National Security

The paper emphasizes that higher education[1] is becoming a factor of national security by producing conditions for development of society and the state; countries that have developed higher education the most are highly developed and secure. The relationship of the middle class as the most important national security agent to higher education and the status of the public good of the latter are emphasized separately. The primary problem lies in the fact that it is the disproportions in the development of higher education that determine the increasing gap between developed and developing countries. Backwardness is a factor in the loss of national security. Critical assessment is given to the inconsistently prepared higher education reform which from the instrument of the projected strategic breakthrough turned into a crawling-out-of-difficulties process. Causes of such a situation can be discerned not only in the indefiniteness of the national interests of a small and far from strong state in the European space of research and studies under formation as well as in the globalization-induced uncertainty, but also in the lack of corresponding competences, disregard of experts, and short-term party interests. The article summary states that contradictory and inadequate political decisions in terms of the needs of national security in the area of research and studies are pernicious not only to higher education itself, but become a cause of the backwardness and insecurity of society and the state. A strategy for consecutive and gradual reforms is presented as an alternative to radical and, therefore, ineffective reforms.

Introduction: the Problem

To guarantee national security, a combination of knowledge, power, and wisdom is necessary and it is inconceivable without the contribution of higher education. Since the middle of the 20th century, the tendency of the growing dependence of national security on scientific research, high technologies, and university studies has been observed. The truthfulness of the statement is easy to substantiate with just a cursory examination of the national security

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[1] Here higher education is understood as the unity of scientific research and university studies. The presented analysis is based on the approach grounded on the unity of scientific research and studies. Research is the foundation of university studies, whereas studies are the process of the socio-economic dispersion of research as well as of its reproduction; at the same time, research and studies are a variable not only of a qualified labor force, but also of the social structure of the society.

structure: internal security – economic sufficiency, healthiness, social and political stability; external security – military, geopolitical, ecological, economic, informational security. If national security is defined in terms of dynamics, then its conception is supplemented by concepts of society and state development. Regarding the issue of the significance of higher education to national security, we will notice that the most developed and secure countries are those that have developed higher education, countries where higher education is the public good. An abundant middle class, making up approximately two-thirds of society members, testifies that higher education is truly a mark of public "goodness". Representatives of the middle class are marked by the capability to sustain themselves on what they earn; professionals live on what they earn, yet, in modern societies, people can become professionals only having obtained higher education. It is the middle class that is most interested in the accessibility of higher education. The middle class is the indicator of higher education as the public good.

The primary problem lies in the fact that it is the lack of higher education development that determines the increasing gap between developed and developing countries. Backward countries are the ones that are losing their national security. Advanced-development countries have created the productive system "research – high technologies – qualified personnel resources – new product – welfare and security". This chain makes its owners – societies and states – competitive civilization agents not only in terms of economic and military power, but also in the sense of social capital. Higher education has achieved the trajectory in which not only new knowledge systems are created, but also new economic and social structures of the society are constructed. With knowledge having become the essential production factor, both the nature of labor and the way of human life change. Thus, higher education is not a singularly cognitive construction – it is a social, economic, and security category.

The national security of Lithuania is the security of a small and far from strong[2] country. The society is awash with discontent and mistrust; the shortage of both economic and social capital is felt. In terms of national security we lack the middle class, the characteristics of which are inseparable from competences and professionalism granted by higher education. External challenges to security are not decreasing; on the contrary – they are becoming more complex. Ecological hazards, economic crises, geopolitical pressure, and a variety of reactions to a country at war are far from a complete list of external challenges. The need arises to actualize the issue of both external and internal security and identity and power relation.

In Lithuania, a prolonged and ineffective discussion is under way: some

[2] The strength of a state is defined as: 1) administrative capability of state institutions to implement (not just to adopt) decisions also taking into consideration negative results of the consultations with citizens; 2) economic and military potential. The first component calls for additional explanation: even a very weak state can declare that it defends human rights, but it can do nothing in a case of the violation of human rights; political rights and civil freedoms are meaningless without substantial support by the state (Ch. Tilly. Democracy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, p. 15-16).

state that the system of higher education has wasted itself and is incapable of carrying out its mission; others acknowledge the limits of the higher education system, yet associate them with the disunity and inconsistency of the state higher education policy. By the way, all concerned agree that the reformation of higher education is necessary. But such a result of the discussion is not sufficient. It is mandatory to "obtain" one more result, i.e. to agree on a method and means for reformation of higher education such that new knowledge could be applied.

Though research and studies in Lithuania are now defined by reformation categories, it is not yet possible to say that higher education could already be defined by success categories, particularly by categories that could indicate such a flow of knowledge which becomes the basis for national identity and power. The situation of higher education in Lithuania can be defined as contradictory: the declared priority of research and studies is not being implemented and separate changes in higher education are as of now called its development. If higher education in Lithuania had not been reformed by 2008 because of the lack of will of certain political forces, it does not mean that later it can be reformed in whatever way by efforts of will of other political forces.

Therefore, how can a small and far from strong state create a major higher education component indispensable for guaranteeing a greater national security?

1. Three Sequences of Facts

1.1. Possibilities for a Small and Far from Strong State in Developing Higher Education

The statement that in modern societies, knowledge economics, the distribution and redistribution of knowledge, and not assets have become the most important internal policy issue sounds trivial. However, the question of how to generate the flow of such knowledge that would produce something to distribute and redistribute sounds far from trivial. Research, particularly the fundamental one, is not possible due to the cognitive flight of thought alone; large and long-term investment is necessary. The state of Lithuania allots little means for scientific research and studies. A still smaller portion of such means is allotted by the private sector. Lithuania can be attributed to the number of countries that develop scientific research in a limited way. The indicators – whether they are scientific publications or patents or, finally, a portion of GDP allotted for research – do not meet the criteria of the states leading in the area of research. 0.6 – 0.8 per cent of GDP is designated for research. Meanwhile, for the financing of research, Ireland allots 1.83 per cent, Czech Republic – 1.32 per cent, Finland – 3.52 per cent and the average of the EU is 1.94 per cent of

GDP.[3] In Europe, we are side by side with our neighbors Poland and Latvia as well as Greece, Portugal, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria. Lithuania is aware of economic possibilities for developing research.[4] But there is no justification for the ineffective use of meager means. Studies, without developed scientific research, cannot qualitatively fulfill their functions.

The ties between research and the world of activity in Lithuania are weak because industry largely remains at the level of low and medium technologies and has no need for the application of scientific research; corporate scientific research centers are not built. The situation is partly accounted for by the structure of Lithuania's GDP, for example, in 2009, public administration and social services constituted 21.2 per cent, industry – 20 per cent, trade – 16 per cent, real estate – 15.7 per cent, transport and communications – 15 per cent, construction – 6.3 per cent, agriculture – 2 per cent, financial mediation – 1.8 per cent, hotels and restaurants – 1.3 per cent.[5] It seems there is no reason to make claims for universities because the economy needs more drivers than IT specialists. In Lithuania, the application of high technologies generates 4–6 per cent of GDP. The situation is completely explained by the fact that the business portion in the financing of research in Lithuania constitutes only 13 per cent or 3–5 times less than in the countries leading in this area.[6] A serious hindrance to the application of research is a factual absence of a research institute within Lithuanian industry. Under such conditions, the institutions of research and studies cannot find common language with the world of activity.

If research is the means to solve problems that cannot be overcome by the available experience, consequently, a shortage of scientific research signifies if not civilization-related backwardness, then at least a lack of reflexivity. At the same time it means that civilization problems are not solved in Lithuania and in the long run might not even be formulated. There are already people argumentatively claiming that the research policy in Lithuania does not reflect global challenges.[7]

1.2. Higher Education Policy without Single Priorities

After a more careful analysis, the declaration of higher education priority has become a phenomenon of self-deception and conceals irreversible processes of the Lithuanian higher education backwardness. There are abundant argu-

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[3] Bakanauskas A., Kvedaravičius J., Lydeka Z., Pačėsa N., Zakarevcičius P. *Žinių visuomenės formavimas: patirtis, problemos, perspektyvos.* Kaunas, Vytauto Didžiojo universiteto leidykla, 2008, p. 13.

4 See for example: Z. Norkus. Apie mokslo pažangos ekonomines ir etines kliūtis ir ribas. *ATHENA,* 2006, Nr. 1, p. 50-69.

[5] Statistics Lithuania, Vilnius, 2009.

[6] Bakanauskas A., Kvedaravičius J. et al., 2008, p. 13.

[7] Augustinaitis A. Mokslo valdymas globalizacijos sąlygomis: prioritetų koordinavimo ir administravimo priemonės. The Final Report of the Project. Vilnius, 2008, p. 20. At: http://www.smm.lt/smt/docs/eksp_stud/ Galutine%20MRU%20ataskaita%20MSF.pdf

ments for the statement that Lithuania has no integral state policy on research and studies: there exists only preparatory reasoning, copying of European priorities without linking them to the resources of scientists and means, and a collection of uncoordinated documents containing priority lists that are not identical. The situation is "standard", Lithuania lacks strategic management.[8] The situation has been thoroughly explored by a group of scientists from Vytautas Magnus University.[9] The vagueness (indefiniteness) of priorities is a result of the absence of dialogue between higher education and state institutions as well as attempts to politically control research at one time or another. The organizational structure of higher education in Lithuania is also not clear. The distribution of competences among the Ministry of Education and Science, the Lithuanian Research Council, and the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences in solving national issues of higher education management is not obvious (for example, the Lithuanian Research Council prepares a document for the distribution of slots of master-degree studies for universities according to study areas, whereas the Council of Higher Education has become a "personnel department" for the formation of University Councils).

At the height of the reformation of higher education, the structural support of the EU was distributed without taking into consideration the development needs of research and studies. Lithuania allots for research and studies a relatively smaller portion of means from the EU structural funds than Estonia, Slovenia or Latvia. Lithuania follows the same direction that has led Portugal and Greece nowhere because they have also allotted the bulk means of the structural funds for the development of infrastructure, but not human resources. To tell the truth, the mentioned figures and the directions of development do not markedly single out Lithuania from many other countries of the world: all states, beginning with No. 31 on the list of countries in the world, do the same.

1.3. National Security without the Development of Internal Resources

Concentration on the role of the EU and NATO concerning the external security of Lithuania is insufficient argument for caring less about the internal national security resources. It should be pointed out that the data supplied in Section 1.1. testify that being unable to define Lithuania as a country of high development, we have no arguments to define it by using categories of backwardness. Lithuania is a "catching-on" country, i.e. a country that has internal resources for development, but needs external assistance for their activation. Thus, we emphasize that security guarantors are not exceptionally external: we have internal security resources that must be activated and augmented.

Unfortunately, the situation is becoming threateningly similar to "third

[8] *Laurėnas V., Smilga E.* Strateginio efekto problemos Lietuvoje. *Tiltai*, 2005, 4: 1-9.
[9] Bakanauskas A., Kvedaravičius J. et al., 2008.

world" countries. Not only the economic, but also the academic emigration is increasing. Although the number of academic community members leaving Lithuania is relatively small (3–4 per cent), we have no arguments to ground the claim that it should not keep increasing in the near future. Those shaping the policy of higher education, supporters of a radical research and studies reform, have persuaded society that research and studies in Lithuania are allegedly very backward. Meanwhile, they themselves failed to propose a suitable reform scenario and did not manage to find the human and financial resources necessary for that. The reaction of society was instantaneous with resulting academic emigration. The academic emigration merging into a single flow with the economic emigration threatens Lithuanian society and the state with growing backwardness, the scope of which can in the long run equal that of "third world" countries. Lithuania has yet no middle class or "social relatives" class which becomes a guarantor of many things (stability, civil society, democracy, security) only when it constitutes 60–70 per cent of society members: the double emigration hinders the institutionalization of this class even more. Only 19–22 per cent of the people are representatives of the middle class.[10] The most problematic thing is the fact that it is the potential representatives of the middle class that emigrate. The hope that emigrants will return of their own accord, recovery of intellectuals through the international network of research and studies, is of little comfort – an academic community of this type does not become a systemic component of Lithuanian society and the state.

The stimulation of research and studies by only market measures is rather the satisfaction of private interests, having little in common with national interests of Lithuania; the state and society might remain without professionals of separate directions. Without national experts on energy, separate countries and cultures, dubious for national security political decisions in the areas of energy and defence have already been taken.

2. Analysis and Discussion

It is pointless to discuss the issue that research and university studies in Lithuania should be reformed. The discussion should focus on why research and studies included in the list of national priorities make no headway. Is it because they have reached natural internal limits in their development or because these limits have been reached as a result of undervaluation of the role of research and studies in influencing social and economic development as well as national security? The discussion should also focus on whether the chosen means for reformation are adequate for the problems being solved, and whether the lack of effectiveness of the chosen means has been predetermined by

[10] Pajuodienė G.M., Šileika A. Lietuvos gyventojų socialiniai sluoksniai (viduriniosios klasės beieškant). *Pinigų studijos,* 2001, Nr. 3, p. 59-81; Gečienė I. Discourse on the Middle Class in Post-Communist Context. *Sociologija. Mintis ir veiksmas.* 2005, Nr. 2, p. 75-85.

an erroneous assessment of the situation concerning what is worth-reforming in higher education in Lithuania and the world. Answers to these questions will impact a more precise answer to another question: how or in what way could research and studies in Lithuania actually be raised to a higher stage of development? The question whether the development of research and studies has crossed a critical limit beyond which there are no possibilities to reform higher education in Lithuania productively should not be avoided either.

The research of Lithuanian higher education in different contexts including national security is becoming more intense of late.[11]

2.1. Higher Education in Lithuania – between the State Policy and Political Control

2.1.1. Definitions of State Higher Education Policy and Political Control

There is no shortage of people thinking that science develops only according to its own internal logic and in conformity with the laws characteristic of it. Thus the freedom of science and its independence from the surrounding world is stated. At the same time, it should be pointed out that most scientific hypotheses, theories, and models emerge under the influence of economic, social, political, and security factors. In this sense, science is not an independent value. Science is a system in one or another form integrated into society; it is its own institute associated by instances of feedback. It is possible to claim that the development of science depends on how much the culture of a concrete society is open to scientific ideas.

Higher education is controlled in order to seek certain political objectives. Political interference is possible in all cases when problems of the functioning of society or its separate subsystems arise, the problems for the solution of which require scientific analysis. But such political interference in research as well as studies can be of a dual nature.

On the one hand, it is state policy[12] or long-term and consistent attention to specific products of research and studies which help solve concrete problems of environment protection, energy, healthcare, education, transport, etc.. State policy on research signifies interference even in internal scientific processes,

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[11] Augustinaitis A., 2008; Bakanauskas A., Kvedaravičius J. et al., 2008; Edler J. Atviro koordinavimo metodo mišriosios politikos ekspertų grupės įvertinimo ataskaita. Šalies ataskaita: Lietuva. Vilnius, 2007. At: http://www.smm.lt/smt/docs/eksp_stud/CREST%20ekspertu%20ataskaita%20lietuviskai%202007%2007%2011pdf;
Leonavičius V. Dėl aukštojo mokslo sociologijos objekto. *Andragogika,* 2011, Nr. 1, p. 105-118; Lietuvių tauta: būklė ir raidos perspektyvos / Strateginių studijų centras ir Pilietinės visuomenės institutas. Vilnius: Versus aureus, 2007; Lietuvos mokslo politika Europos kontekste. V. Daujotis ir kt. Vilnius: Justitia, 2002; Samalavičius A. Universiteto idėja ir akademinė industrija. Vilnius: Vilniaus pedagoginio universiteto leidykla, 2010; Viliūnas G. Naujoji žinių paradigma ir mokslo valdymo sistemos pokyčiai. *Informacijos mokslai,* 2006, Nr. 37, p. 9-21.

[12] Here policy is given the meaning of the expansion of possibilities and activity fields.

believing that in such a way the choice of scientific research problems and the formation of new scientific study areas can be accelerated. At the same time, this does not mean regulation or control of cognitive scientific processes or the restriction of academic self-governing. Yet, this can mean the rearrangement of the organizational structure of research. This kind of influence on research is acceptable, particularly when the objective of the regulation and control of research is determination of the relationship between the internal scientific product – the new knowledge – and its application. Such political interference is rather confirmation of the "genetic" relationship between formation of the political agenda and affairs in the academic world.

The state policy on research and studies includes:

- a political dialogue with the institutions of research and studies;
- determination of the priorities of research and studies of the state;
- assurance of financing for research and studies;
- state orders for specialists and technologies;
- optimization of the organizational structure of state research and studies institutions;
- training of scientists;
- accountability of the institutions of research and studies;
- social guarantees of scientists.

On the other hand, the regulation and control of the academic world may not coordinate with the inherent principles of the development of research and studies, violate them, and thus, hinder the functioning of this important sphere of society and the state. Such a situation usually arises in two cases. First of all, it surfaces because the very preparation of state policy on higher education requires a certain scientific potential. State institutions, individual politicians, and functionaries often lack the knowledge necessary to make decisions and try to compensate for this by "political will", administrative resources, and "free play of market forces". In such a case, attempts are most often made to deny that research itself shapes the attitude of politicians and society to problems the solution of which calls for scientific methods. In the other case, it is attempts of a concrete political regime to apply specific products of research and studies to the life of society and the state while implementing dominant interests and ignoring public interests. Since political regimes change relatively often, the political control of research and studies is short-lived and inconsistent.

The political control of research and studies, opposed by the academic world, manifests itself in:

- restriction of the autonomy of the institutions of research and studies;
- absence of transparency in financing research and studies;
- publication of biased data on the state of research and studies;
- regulation of the content and order of studies;
- representation of political forces in the management of institutions of research and studies.

The condition for the elimination of the success and political control of the state policy on higher education is a constant political dialogue between universities, other centers of research and studies, and state institutions, as well as the ability of the latter to understand and assess the peculiarities of academic organizations.

2.1.2. The Assessment of the Reform of Research and Studies

In assessing the reformation of research and studies, it is necessary to single out defining levels of its causes, preparation to implement, and the first results. We choose the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania as an original "denominator" of the analysis of these three levels.

The Law on Science and Studies (further – LSS) has become the most serious reality of the development of Lithuanian research and studies. Two considerations of LSS in the Constitutional Court within half a year of its adoption testify that the reformation of higher education in Lithuania began in a problematic way. It is becoming clear that this law contradicts the Constitution. On 28 October 2009, the Constitutional Court provided arguments for the claim that LSS is somewhat an instrument of the political control of research and studies. The functions of university councils are qualified as incompatible with the university autonomy principle and, in this sense, contradict the Constitution. On 12 December 2009, the Constitutional Court provided arguments for the claim that LSS can restrict the Constitutional right of advanced students to free education. However, intellectuals of liberal views ignored the decisions of the Constitutional Court.[13]

There are alternatives for the statement that LSS has been prepared to enhance the political control of higher education. The first alternative – the compilers and legislators of the Law simply lacked competence in the area of higher education. In separate cases, the Law ignores objective conditions of experimental research and training of scientists, periodicity of studies processes; the initiators of the reform demonstrated insufficient orientation in the development of cognitive, demographic and other internal processes of research and studies in space and time. The second alternative – the initiators of the reform literally identified the reflexive reconstruction of higher education with its reformation. In general, the reconstruction of reality is the privilege of younger generations. It seems that the leaders of the current generation "divide" research and studies "into separate pieces" (because only in this way can they perceive the whole) and then try to "fit the pieces" to again form a whole, but, as usual in such cases, they are left with "superfluous parts" and nothing is improved.

Even prior to the reform, it was possible to discern several of its contra-

[13] The position of the Ministry of Education and Science on the constitutionality of the Law on Science and Studies of the Republic of Lithuania (30 April 2009 No. XI-242). 13-01-2010, No. SR-07-03-01.

dictions or the unbalanced situations of the reform causes, objectives, means, or terms.

The reformation of higher education in Lithuania was delayed though discussions had been going on for a decade. The preparation for the reform was long, but it started hastily, without having formed a consistent state policy on higher education. The reform prerequisites were not precisely defined: the systems of research and studies as allegedly degraded; the investment in science and studies as ineffective; the number of students as groundlessly high; the profession of a scientist as unattractive to the best; the stimuli for the quality of studies as non-existent.[14] The final self-persuasion of radical reformers to start the reform in 2009 was the statement that Lithuania would face the threat of intellectual bankruptcy[15] if the reform of higher education were not to start as soon as possible.

Persons noticing that the indicators of Lithuanian research have come close to those of separate "third world" countries do not see that in recent years, Lithuania has come even closer to the "third world" according to other indicators as well.[16] We are lagging behind not only in the areas of patents and scientific articles, but also in direct foreign investment and the export of manufactured goods produced by applying particularly advanced technologies.

Political means were resorted to in order to prove a very low quality of studies to instigate public discontent. The latter failed to manifest itself; all the interested parties – students, parents and employers – assessed the quality of studies in Lithuania as average, consequently corresponding to the level of the socio-economic development of society. The report of international experts publicized in 2007 defines the state of Lithuanian research and studies as average.[17] Taking into consideration the indicators of Lithuania's economic development, this is a totally understandable situation. But most important is the fact that other means and deadlines, not those applied in a catastrophic situation, are truly necessary. Meanwhile, the inadequately – only negatively – assessed state of higher education in Lithuania was followed by an inadequate vision of reform.

The unrealistic assessment of the state of research and studies in Lithuania is not the outcome of time shortage. The methodology of radical appraisers is permeated with the principles of market fundamentalism. It is only the

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[14] Delay is disastrous: the state of science and studies of Lithuania. March of 2009. The Ministry of Education and Science. At: http://www.mokslas.lt/files/uploaded/nepatenkinama_mokslo_ir_studiju_bukle.pdf (30 06 2009).

[15] The reform of science and studies. Presentation. The Ministry of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, 2009. At: http://www.mokslas.lt/files/uploaded/mokslo_ir_studiju_reforma.pdf. (30 06 2009)

[16] According to the GDP per capita in 2008, Lithuania ranked 50th in the world (data by the IMF); the nearest members were: Hungary (18,500 USD), Antigua and Barbuda, Estonia, Poland, Croatia, Equatorial Guinea (16,850 USD), Lithuania (15,800 USD), Russia (15,050 USD), Gabon, Libya, Latvia, Chile, Argentina, Lebanon, Malaysia, Mexico, Botswana (13,400 USD). In 2009, according to the GNI, Lithuania (11,870 USD) was ranked 68th (PB data) and was not yet added to 66 high income state and territories (more than 11,905 USD per capita).

[17] Edler J., 2007.

pragmatists of the Free Market Institute and low technology businesses who understand the idea that Lithuania has too many students and therefore, people, with higher education. In the age group of 25–34, 38.9 per cent of Lithuania's inhabitants have higher education (ISCED 5-6) (8th–9th place in the EU), in the age group of 35–44 – 28.1 per cent (12th place in the EU), in the age group of 45–64 – 23.9 per cent (9th place in the EU).[18] These figures cause optimism only at first glance. If we strike from these numbers persons who finished college (previously known as post-secondary schools) the greater part of which, in terms of studies content, has nothing in common with higher education, we would find a problematic situation – about 18 per cent of the population with a higher university education. This figure is close to the number of the middle class representatives in Lithuania. It is another matter that the structure of work places in Lithuania is in inverse proportion to the tendency of the population's education; working places, corresponding to the nature of work in the information society, constitute the majority.

It is not even the afore-mentioned figures that testify to the absurdity of the statement about the surplus of people with high education diplomas in Lithuania; it is absurd as to its definition because it means that Lithuania could have too many innovations and too much development and security. Graduates from universities and colleges should be treated not only from the point of view of the labor market, but also from that of social union (cohesion); it is they who are the key resource of the Lithuanian middle class – the guarantor of the stability of society and the state.

It is also worth mentioning that the course of how Japan is overcoming the ecological catastrophe is defined not only by the traditional culture of the country, but also by the level of higher education of the population of the country.[19]

In the area of university management reformation, heed was not paid to the fact that Western universities undergo reformation because they cannot in the environment of new challenges, concerning activity effectiveness, adapt the populist academic democracy created by the events of 1968. Here, the populist academic democracy means the situations when students gain the right to point out to professors what and when to teach and who should lead academic subdivisions, to freely choose study subjects and to decide for themselves to what qualification degree their study plans correspond. At the end of the 20th century, the reorganization of the "universities of all groups" to "academic universities" governed by professionals began. Self-governance of Lithuanian universities had not yet crossed this line of the (un-)controllability of academic organizations. At the same time, the governance of academic organizations becomes more complex and requires more management competences. Due to this

[18] The Bologna Process in Higher Education in Europe. Key indicators on the social dimension and mobility. Eurostat, 2009, p. 215.

[19] In Japan, 34 per cent of the population has higher education. Japan strives to increase the portion of the population with higher education diplomas in the nearest future to at least 40 per cent.

reason, scientists and lecturers often get into conflicts with the administration of their organizations. The LSS has not improved the situation; on the contrary, by granting more powers to the administration and proposing more freedoms to the academic community, it has created an explosive mixture.

In the radical vision of the Lithuanian higher education reformation, we can recognize four distinctly expressed motives: reengineering of the academic culture; new public management; the so-called "student's money basket" (state-financed study slots); and uninterrupted economic growth and its unavoidable financial contribution.

A particularly strong motive is that of reengineering or a complete eradication of the memory and experience of the past and creation of a completely new academic culture. However, scientific research indicates that a new corporate culture never surfaces in an empty place and does not become "sterile".[20] Unfortunately, Lithuania belongs to those countries in which there exist historical premises and political motives *a priori* not to value the continuity of activity. In the case of Lithuanian higher education organizations, reengineering attempts arouse their partly inadequate reaction to definitions of a new autonomy. A complete rendering of higher education institutions state-owned property is a recent past; therefore, the academic community is very sensitive to any proposal to (just) discuss the issues of higher education autonomy and take autonomy for granted.

Problems of the governance/management of universities and science institutes are actualized in the reform in such a way that it is possible to believe that "management will save the world". Human, financial, and material resources become insignificant in the background of new public management. The new management relates perfectly functioning organizations to market principles and presses the conviction that democratic representative governance is restricted. Thus, it is not coincidental that the reformation of Lithuania's higher education is related to the restriction of the role of internal representative structures in research and studies institutions and to the strengthening of external structures' and rector's individual governing. The experience of Austria, Finland, Germany, and other countries, where the greatly overestimated activity of university councils has not justified itself and the quality of university councils is deteriorating, is being ignored.[21]

The regulating purpose of the "student's money basket" has also been foreseen from the positions of the new management: free movement of students should determine "redundant" programs of studies, even separate universities. The experience of other countries in applying the "student's money basket" proves that in such a case, entire professions become "redundant". Only radical

[20] Koulopoulos T. M., Frappaolo C. Knowledge Management. Capstone Publishing Ltd, 1999; Pollitt Ch., Bouckaert G. Vie ojo valdymo reforma. Lyginamoji analizė. Vilnius: Algarvė, 2003.

[21] Das Leitbild Demokratische und Soziale Hochschule. Vorschlag für die Hochschule der Zukunft. Hans Böckler Stiftung. Düsseldorf: Setzkasten GmbH, 2010; Duderstadt J. A University for the 21st Century. An Arbor, Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 2000.

reasoning can hope that students will optimize the network of universities in Lithuania. This does not altogether correspond to the two attributes of research and studies development: erudition and academic movement of students. The number of "student money baskets" does not reflect the scientific capability of the university, only the public opinion formed in one way or another with respect to it. The distribution of "student money baskets" to groups of study programs, moreover, guarantees of it "as long as one lives", restrict not only the accessibility of studies, but also the possibility for students to change study programs.

The principle of "student money basket" satisfies separate individual interests, but it does not satisfy public interests. The experience of the Netherlands – a rich country – shows that loans decrease higher education accessibility to those who choose, but not the "pragmatic" studies: art, languages, education, etc., whereas students from low-income families practically do not apply to the banks and rather choose some additional work activity and thus considerably lower their study achievements. The present student body of Lithuania does the same when they find themselves in the same situation.

The more effective the economic indicators of university reformation, the more problematic are the social consequences. By becoming market participants, universities lose the status of the instrument of social cohesion. The requirement of the economic usefulness of studies doubtless creates a financial basis for a better quality of studies, but in this case, universities lose the "social aspect" and higher education accessibility problem becomes very acute. Under stricter budget saving conditions, problems mentioned by universities are called "immaterial".

The model of the enhancement of higher education quality is particularly contradictory; fewer students and fewer institutions of research and studies would allegedly mean the allotment of more means for the individual student and the scientist. Is that sufficient for the success of the reform? That "fewer" developing into the "more" is, at best, a direct perception of the quality of higher education "in itself". But higher education is a powerful instrument of the formation and reproduction of the society social structure. In high development countries, universities are "factories" of the middle class. The significance of higher education lies in the fact that by granting qualification, it also grants advantages of the use of social and economic possibilities; therefore, it is that area of society in which social groups fight for policies and superiority.[22] Modern society will always be for the accessibility of higher education. In a peculiar way, the reform crosses higher education out from the list of good public things, legitimizes the reproduction of social inequality and intensifies the issue of internal security.

It is necessary to assess one more context of the higher education reform. The development of higher education is expensive; competitive research and studies are very expensive. The reform of higher education was prepared while

[22] Bourdieu P., Passeron J.-C. Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture. London: Sage, 2000.

orienting towards economic growth. The latter, as it is well-known, has become problematic not only in Lithuania and not only in the nearest perspective. The economic depression has unpredictably disturbed the plans for the financial provision of the reform. The structural support of the EU is of great help, but parallel to this, it is necessary to take up learning to live under conditions of permanently limited economic growth as well as see Lithuania in complex economic positions.

At the same time, it should be pointed out that higher education is being reformed in all of Europe. But tendencies of scientific research and development of studies in Europe and Lithuania are totally different (Table 1).

Table 1. **Dominant tendencies of higher education development in Europe and Lithuanian realities**

European tendencies*	Lithuanian realities
1. Determination of scientific research priorities	Scientific research priorities are too general and in no way define the place and role of Lithuania in this labor division (cooperation).
2. Enhancement of research financing and diversity of its sources.	The enhancement of research financing and diversity of its sources is not taking place. Business cannot become a true source of research financing because in Lithuania only one out of five enterprises conducts scientific research. In Finland, Italy or the Netherlands such enterprises make up 70 – 75 per cent.
3. Enhancement of the scope of scientist training.	The scope of scientist training is not growing. The number of state-financed slots for doctorate studies in 2010 covered 60 per cent of the level of 2009. This contradicts the EU support when enterprises of high technologies employ scientists. In 27 countries of the EU, there are on average 6,500 researchers per million inhabitants, whereas in Lithuania – 4,000. Therefore, not only the scope of the training of scientists and other researchers is diminishing, but also the perspective of real cooperation between science and business.
4. Establishment of competence centers.	The establishment of competence centers has begun without the enhancement of the scope of scientist training and specification of scientific priorities. The open access of the integrated valleys of science, studies and business will be a genuine problem because the number of those seeking to make use of the most modern scientific research infrastructure will not be too large; we are threatened with a shortage of human resources.

* Compiled according to: The mobilization of the European intellectual elite: by creating conditions for universities to comprehensively contribute to Lisabon strategy. European Commission's Communique. Brussels, 2005; London Comumuniqué. Towards the European Higher Education Area: responding to challenges in a globalised World. 2007 May 18. London, 2007.

5. State impact encouraging the development of higher education sector.	The sector of higher education is being truly downsized. There have been attempts to save the situation by re-qualifying post-secondary schools meanwhile expecting from them, for example, the German *Fachhochschulen* effect. But colleges in Lithuania have not become real participants of the system of higher education (first of all because of the near-sighted state policy on scientist training, actually on their deficit policy). Foreign experts also noticed the uncertain status of colleges in Lithuania.**
6. Aspirations for the harmony of studies accessibility and quality.	The quality of studies is sought at the expense of studies accessibility. Downsizing of state-financed slots of studies and absence of economically sound studies loan system separate the numerous lower class of Lithuania from higher education by financial means.
7. Renouncement of state monopoly and establishment of private universities, disappearance of boundaries between state and private universities.	State monopoly is formally renounced, but equivalent private universities are actually not established and the ones that do function are small and not competitive.
8. Commercialization of universities, a possibility to get bank credits, conclusion of agreements with industrial corporations, creation of commercial programs.	The commercialization of universities is restricted (in essence, it is not taking place) by refusing to grant them the ownership of the land and real estate, by prohibition to borrow and automatically decide the issue of the investment in scientific research and studies. What is left are commercial programs which, in a poor country, are not accessible to the major part of the population.
9. Ever decreasing state interference in the activity of research and studies institutions, liberalization of higher education system, granting of greater autonomy to universities.	Statements about the "ever decreasing state interference in the activity of research and studies institutions, granting of greater autonomy to universities" are nothing else but declarations. Universities cannot even admit students independently. The inversely proportional dependence between the financing of research and studies and the extent of the autonomy of universities is observed.

A part of the indicated differences is explained by real differences in Lithuanian possibilities. It is not real to consider a Western-type financing of scientific research and studies in Lithuania. Yet it is impossible to rationally explain why the "great reform" does not grant research institutes and universities the right to independently invest in scientific research and studies.

** Edler J., 2007, p. 10.

While reasoning about the tendencies of higher education development in Europe, we should not get the impression that there everything functions fluently. There the wish of universities to have more autonomy is also articulated; it is as well necessary to strengthen the "poles of the knowledge triangle (research, studies and innovations)".

To complete this part of the analysis with a compilation of the unexpected results of the Lithuanian higher education reformation:

- incompatibility of LSS with other laws hinders universities and research institutes from carrying out changes necessary for their future and disturbs their governance;
- selection of university council members is spontaneous;
- university studies have become less accessible increasing the inequality of the accessibility of higher education;
- academic emigration has increased;
- the principle of the "student money basket" eliminates separate directions of studies, consequently, the would-be professionals of these directions;
- scientific potential has remained scattered without the amalgamation of universities and joining of state research institutes to universities;
- the optimization of the number of research and studies institutions has become a means to get additional financing, but not a direct goal for enhancing the quality of research and studies;
- research and studies institutions – the experimental systems – are ignored while new ones are being established duplicating their functions;
- the reform has neither simplified nor accelerated investment in the higher education system;
- students' admission, loans for studies and grants, legal status of higher schools, reorganization of governance, merging of higher schools and other issues related to the implementation of the reform are not coordinated and wreak havoc in research and studies as well as in state governance institutions, but worst of all – cause confusion in society.

The compilation of unexpected and surprising reform results is so great that it is possible to claim that the reform has failed. To tell the truth, knowing its pre-history leaves no room for surprise; radical criticism of higher education has developed into equally radical science reformation mistakes. It is well-known that unsuccessful reforms are in most cases the result of imposed change. A change is effective, i.e. turns into development, when a consistent and reasonable state policy is prepared. The unbalanced mixture of reform causes, goals, means, and deadlines determined its narrowness and, in some cases, even its harmfulness.

2.2. A Variant of the Scenario of Lithuanian Higher Education Development

After what has happened to the "great" research and studies reform, only a gradual, but urgent change process is possible. A "total reform" was resorted to though its causality and the consistency of means had not been properly assessed; mistakes were made – the elimination of which is now only possible by making consistent efforts.

The well-known academic authority of the previous age Karl Raimund Popper, guided by the principle of situational rationalism, substantiated *piecemeal* engineering possibilities; he juxtaposed the conception of partial consecutive and stage-based changes to Utopian engineering, marked by a perfect advance moral goal and stimulated by the conviction that this goal is inevitably achieved in a single stride. "Social life is so complicated that few men, or none at all, could judge a blueprint for social engineering on the grand scale; whether it be practicable, whether it would result in a real improvement …"[23] Applying operationalism to this universal, let us resolve, first of all, to attain a state where the relative part of the population with higher university education does not decrease any more and the assumption that Lithuania will become a bachelor-training country in the future is not grounded.

The situation in Lithuania's higher education is dangerous because the consequences of failures can cause irreversible processes of backwardness in Lithuania. To prevent this from happening, it is more reasonable to design partial and consecutive reform measures provided by the human and financial resources of the higher education reformation. Only in this case is it possible to discover how to coordinate and adjust to one another the most important processes (governance, investment, innovations, movement of students and teachers, university network organization, etc.). Only in this case is it possible to achieve the point where LSS could be coordinated with other laws of the Republic of Lithuania and not contradict them. Designing a gradual mode of reform is all the more reasonable because in case of separate failures, they are localized, making losses simpler and cheaper to rectify. In such a case, the principle stating that the solution of concrete failures is of greater virtue than knowing what the greatest final good is should be followed. Common sense dictates that it is prudent to take small steps and learn from little mistakes. Such steps are sensible if they are made in the direction set by the integral and strategically orientated policy of higher education.

These are possible steps of an effective higher education reformation, i.e. development (not only a change):

- agreement on the development priorities of higher education at the level of political and expert systems;
- reorganization of higher education governance;
- organization of strong universities;
- search for compatibility of higher education accessibility and quality.

[23] Popperis K. R. Atviroji visuomenė ir jos priešai. Vilnius: 1998, p. 165.

2.2.1. Agreement on the Development Priorities of Higher Education at the Level of Political and Expert Systems

It is not easy—if possible at all—to coordinate the opinion of experts with the democratic form of policy formation; most likely, this is an ongoing process. It is even more complicated to accomplish it in unstable democratic countries where a change of government most frequently determines cardinal changes in policy. Lithuania belongs to these countries.

Research and studies institutions have the "inherent right" to decide what scientific research and studies they will conduct. State policy does not annul it, but it expresses the "inherent right" of the state to allot budgetary appropriations for particular directions of scientific research and studies. The attitude of society toward higher education has a great impact on this. In the case of private financing, the academic community cannot undertake activities that seem of importance to it either. In most research directions, the needs for research financing have drastically increased; the variety of financing sources is increasing correspondingly. The state has long stopped being the only financing source of education, though frequently is the largest source. In Lithuania, this source will absolutely remain the largest even in the distant future. This, in its turn, predetermines too great a dependence of research and studies institutions on the state.

We have no illusions that in a democratic system, the opinion of experts cannot be discussed. But in democracies it is possible not to abstract political decisions from conclusions of experts and not to grant power of decision-making to non-professionals. Democratic policy should not be held hostage to the disregard of authorities. Expert decisions generally follow strict research argumentation and are separated from the conflict of interests. Meanwhile, politicians are "positioned" between the ambitions to essentially find the best ways for the solution of public problems and the acknowledgement that such decisions are not reached objectively, but must be found on the basis of argumentation, grounded on the conflict of interests.[24]

We have presented these well-known ideas in order to once more emphasize that in Lithuania the normative environment of higher education should not develop without the participation of expert systems that ruling politicians are trying to eliminate. Expert systems should not be confused with "expert groups" created while looking for a counterbalance to experts. Aside from everything else, the system of higher education is special in that it is an expert system. However, this is not a sufficient counterargument over the tendency when the development of research and in part studies is more and more dependent upon politicians and society – the tax payers – and upon whether they will want to pay for research discoveries and studies. Scientists-experts themselves should be perfect negotiators while competing for research financing.[25]

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[24] Albaek E. Ekspertizė ir viešoji politika: keisti sugulovai. Vilnius: Eugrimas, 2004, p. 49-57.
[25] Norkus Z., 2006, p. 62.

Accord is necessary concerning:

- possibilities of fundamental research;
- level of technologies;
- support for humanities and social sciences;
- student flows in separate areas of studies.

The priority of state investment in higher education, highlighted in Leuven (2009), at the meeting of ministers responsible for higher education from the countries of the Bologna process,[26] cannot be practically implemented in Lithuania. This means that with the creation of the united European space of research and studies and knowing scientific research financing possibilities in Lithuania, Lithuania will inevitably become an academic province unable to conduct fundamental research while individual Lithuanian scientists will work in European research centers.

The potential of small states to develop "great" research is limited. In such a case, state research policy is only the encouragement of individual scientists and separate research cells to participate in the international scientific research network. These scientists or research cells have meager possibilities to become the "nuclei" of the scientific research network or structures initiating and coordinating corresponding research and science disciplines. Most often efforts are pooled for the research of national culture. In order not to become a country of only applied scientific research, it is necessary to create attractive legal and financial-economic conditions for the establishment of foreign fundamental research centers (their branches) in Lithuania.

One priority group of higher education development should be from the list of the united research and studies space of the EU. These priorities should reflect the perspectives of the development of Lithuania and work for the future of Lithuania, but simultaneously function as the export of new knowledge. The second group of priorities should be adapted to the closest interests of Lithuania. In this sense, the landmark for research (and studies) in Lithuania can only be medium-level technologies. Several niches of high technologies (biotechnologies, IT, laser production) do not predetermine the nearest perspectives of Lithuanian industry. Lithuania is a country of small and medium enterprises (generating over 65 per cent of GDP) and low technologies (products produced by applying high technologies make up only 3 per cent of the export, employees – 2.5 per cent). Authoritative analysts understand the situation and have created a corresponding discourse:

> The predominant in Lithuania conviction that knowledge economy is created by branches of high technology industry has a negative impact. Economy based on high technologies is rather an exception than a rule. The cooperation of Lithuanian research and business in making innovative processes more active should cover not only industry

[26] The Bologna Process 2020 – The European Higher Education Area in the new decade. Communique of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education, Leuven and Louvain–la–Neuve, 28-29 April 2009.

branches of high technologies but also traditional ones. Experience indicates that there are no low technology industry branches; there are only low technology enterprises incapable of assimilating innovations. Even in such countries as Denmark low technology industry dominates. The system of innovations should transfer the cooperation of research and business to the level where enterprises applying both low and high technologies are involved.[27]

A wide-ranging discussion[28] about the role of the humanities and social science should be highlighted, from the point of view of our analysis, as a process that has formed the actualization mechanism of the identity. The linking of the identity and national security by a real connection will be more successful depending upon the broader development of the humanities and social sciences as well as corresponding university studies.

Among small European states, Lithuania distinguishes itself by a relatively small number of students in the humanities, natural science, mathematics, computer science and the arts. At the same time, in Lithuania there are relatively many students in social sciences and engineering. (In Europe, the number of social sciences students is relatively larger only in Latvia, Cyprus, Bulgaria and Turkey; in engineering – more students only in Finland, Romania and Portugal).[29] On the one hand, such student flows in Lithuania weakly correlate with identity actualities of Lithuania; on the other hand, they contradict the demands of the dominant medium-level technologies. Attempts to reduce the state-financed number of social science students in 2010 is only the result of the reduction of the state-financed number of places in general and has nothing in common with the redistribution of student flows. Meanwhile, for example, the relative number of students in natural science, mathematics and computers remains inadequate for the declared development tasks of corresponding areas.

2.2.2. The Reorganization of the Governance of Higher Education

In the last decade of the 20th century, in most European countries, the reformation process of higher education governance began. The governance of universities in separate countries varies; however, common tendencies can be discerned.[30] Processes of granting universities autonomy (and not only in the academic sense), their "denationalization" and governance liberalization are under way. By the way, making universities autonomous is not a given. People are often apt to forget that academic autonomy is inherent; the community, whose essential value is the truth, is autonomous *ad hoc* and this autonomy

[27] Bakanauskas A., Kvedaravičius J. ir kt., 2008, p. 250-251.
[28] See, eg.: Samalavičius A., 2010.
[29] Eurostat. *Students in tertiary education*, Briusel, 2006.
[30] Changing Patterns of Governance in Higher Education. Education Policy Analysis. OECD, 2003; Kohler J., Huber J. (eds.). Higher Education Governance between Democratic Culture, Academic Aspirations and Market Forces. Strasbourg: Counsil of Europe Publishing, 2006.

cannot be abolished because knowing is inseparable from its subject. Modern universities are in compliance with such an agreement for which they would be accountable to society and responsible for their scientific research and studies programs while the state would carry out the strategic governance of the entire higher education system.[31]

The example of the Netherlands represents well university governance reformation attempts of the continental European countries. (At the same time, the Netherlands is also an opposite example – there still remains a great inequality in the possibility to attain higher education; the reaction of the student body to this situation is well-known). In the Netherlands, the institutes of the external and internal university control were reformed first. At the internal level, the functions of supervision and executive university governance performed respectively by the Council of Observers and the Executive Committee, made up only of university representatives, are separated. The external university control is executed by the National Education Inspection and Accreditation Committee. These institutes control the quality of studies, effective use of resources, and equality of education accessibility. The Central Finance Institute controls the transfer of state monetary resources to universities. "Denationalized" universities are granted property rights for buildings and equipment, can obtain credits, decide how many employees to hire and under what terms, and determine which and how many students to admit to studies. "Denationalized" universities themselves establish agencies-mediators for dealing with general matters and making agreements with state bodies. The governance of universities in the Netherlands has become even more liberal than in the homeland of university autonomy, i.e. Great Britain, particularly knowing that there, after the year 1992, the scope of regulation of the higher education system has increased (a greater responsibility for a part of budget expenditure): greater attention is paid to the regulation of the number of students and their distribution to study directions; greater attempts are made to control scientific research directions.

In Lithuania, these means of higher education regulation are relevant:

- The redistribution and delimitation (non-duplication) of the competencies of the Ministry of Education and Science, the Lithuanian Research Council, Lithuanian Academy of Sciences, and the Council of Higher Education; the authorization to work on the tasks of the preparation of the national higher education policy (determination of the priorities of scientific research and studies, optimization of the national university network, argumentation of state budget appropriations);
- Granting the "student money basket" a competitive indicator significance that would preclude it from becoming the only and decisive factor determining the fate of study programs. Otherwise, while following in

[31] The mobilization of the European intellectual elite: by creating conditions for universities to comprehensively contribute to the strategy of Lisbon. European Commission's Communique. Brussels, 2005.

the footsteps of the demographic tendencies and emigration, we will, in general, remain scientists without clear direction. Scientists with certain direction are absolutely necessary not only for the execution of scientific research and studies, but also for the formation of national interests and state policy in order to implement them. The network of universities should be optimized by applying state policy means;

- The adaptation of the councils of universities and research institutes to solve governance tasks of academic organizations and preparation of the inventory of council members' competencies as well as specification of their nomination order;
- Supplementing the research and studies governance structure by agency-mediators established by universities and research institutes themselves. Agency-mediators are established not with the status of "state agent", to whom the Government or the Ministry of Education and Science delegate a portion of their authorization, but with the status of "university agent" to whom universities transfer a part of their autonomy.

At present, two main university governance models exist in the world. One model is marked by institutional and financial autonomy, based on the principle of economic rationalism and a close relation with the world of activity with strong self-governance and indirect state control. The second model distinguishes itself by the hierarchy of university governance, strong state regulation (most often by direct ministerial regulation), weaker relations with the world of activity and larger state orders. It is sensible to call the first model Anglo-Saxon and the second – European-continental. The American higher education system is one of the most decentralized in the world; in essence, there is no national system. There universities would rather coordinate their actions by competing among themselves. The USA is the only country where, during the last two to three decades, no consistent state intervention in the governance of universities has taken place. The distinguishing attribute of the Anglo-Saxon model is the delegation of ministerial functions to specialized agency-mediators. In Great Britain, collegiate institutions, the largest of which are the "*Universities of Great Britain"* and the *"Association of Colleges,"* represent universities in the dialogue with authorities.

The elections of university rectors, causing lots of emotion and in no less degree, problems, are not, in fact, a principle issue. The rector could be elected in the college of electors composed of university Council and Senate members. The recall of the rector would be possible if this were the decision of the Council and the Senate separately. In general, it is more important to foresee a common competence of the Council and the Senate for the solution of the issues significant for university life.

The governance of research and studies institutions should be multi-layered (scientists, teachers, students, etc.) and multi-stage (the Council, the Senate, the rector), but in any case, dominated by professionals in certain areas.

2.2.3. The Organization of Strong Universities

In the Glasgow conference of EUA in 2005, the importance of strong universities in creating a strong Europe was highlighted.[32] The attributes of strong universities are responsibility and openness, constant improvement of the governance activity of research and studies, adequate financing, and autonomy. At the meeting of higher education ministers from the countries of the Bologna Process in London in 2007, the significance of various, adequately financed, autonomous and accountable universities was also emphasized.[33]

In Lithuania, we hear rather often that we need a "world-level" university. But it is more sensible to consider the alternative of just "good" universities known to many countries around the world. This alternative presupposes the specialization of scientific research and a corresponding consolidation of scientists in 5–7 state universities, 2–3 of which would be club members among the ranks of the 300–500 best world universities. Small, but rich and strategically coordinated Denmark has five universities in the ranks of 500 world universities and they are almost equally distributed in each hundred. Vilnius University has the possibility to cross the threshold of the club of best world universities in the near future. Other amalgamated Lithuanian universities could aspire to positions on the list of the 1,000 best world universities. So far, Lithuanian universities are recognized only according to *Ranking on the Web* criteria. We remind critics stating that the aspirations raised are of little importance that the process of the amalgamation and merging of universities is under way in the world; therefore, such aspirations of Lithuanian universities should be beyond doubt. It would be a Danish analogue (besides the above-mentioned, four more Danish universities rank on the list of 1,000 best world universities). The assumption about at least one Lithuanian university getting on the list of the first 200 world universities would be quite real; the largest Lithuanian universities have at their disposition consolidated budgets of 200–300 million. In Lithuania during recent years, a total of 800–900 million LT per year is allotted to the development work of scientific research and technologies. The annual budgets of the leading world universities amount to billions and in some cases are 2 to 3 times larger than the budget of the Republic of Lithuania. It is more reasonable for Lithuania to have some high class universities ranking above average than to consolidate the entire academic potential into two or three large ones[34] that will still be unable to compete for leadership in the world and Europe.

Scientific research potential in Lithuania can be enhanced by choosing another way. To achieve the recognition of Lithuanian universities in the world, it is necessary not only to merge universities, but to extend the process

[32] Glasgow Declaration. Strong Universities for a Strong Europe. 3 rd EUA Convention, 31 March – 2 April 2005, Glasgow, 2005.

[33] London Comumuniqué., 2007.

[34] A separate case is Slovenia where the entire higher education potential is pooled in two universities: Ljubljana (60 thousand students) and Maribor (21 thousand students).

of attaching state research institutes to universities. The continuous distribution of Lithuanian research potential in universities and research institutes cannot be called rational. But the tolerance of state research institutes is a smaller problematic situation than non-establishment of corporate research centers. Are Lithuanian corporations truly devoid of possibilities to initiate and finance scientific research? It is probable that the establishment of integrated research, studies, and business channels in Vilnius, Kaunas and Klaipėda will enhance the potential of universities and improve relations between research and business.

2.2.4. The Aspiration for the Compatibility between the Accessibility of Higher Education and Quality

With university studies having become a mass phenomenon in modern countries, the gap between the accessibility of higher education and quality has increased. It is worth mentioning that the more qualitative the academic organization, the more closed it is and the greater its requirements and competitions. The greatest problem is how to coordinate the authoritativeness of knowledge (the expertise) with democratization (mass character); how to achieve that knowledge could at the same time spark public debates and would be applied by professionals.[35] The quality of studies lays the foundations of professional competencies, whereas the accessibility of studies – the foundations for the sharing of knowledge and social harmony. In seeking greater quality, the accessibility is inevitably decreased, i.e. inequality increases. The requirement for quality can cross the line beyond which the separation of a portion of society members and reproduction of social inequality begin.

The territorial concentration of higher education for geographically small Lithuania is not the greatest concern. It is much more important to evaluate whether the rejection of the territorial dispersion of universities would help us become major or minor leaders of certain scientific research and studies and, with only a slight rise in the standard of living, would guarantee, in the social sense, equal accessibility of higher university education.

Since higher education plays a considerable role in the strengthening of social harmony and reducing instances of its inequality, students should reflect the territorial and social variety of the society in all stages of their development in higher schools and should have possibilities to complete their studies without dependence on their social or economic status. This would correspond to European tendencies.[36]

The research and studies of a small state will inevitably "work" in broader than national markets. In Lithuania, as a member of the EU, there are no

[35] Calhoun C. The University and the Public Good. *Thesis Eleven*, N. 84. February, 2006. P. 8-9.
[36] London Comumuniqué, 2007; The Bologna Process 2020 – The European Higher Education Area in the New Decade., 2009.

grounds for the concern that graduates of higher education institutions will find no employment in other EU countries. We should be concerned about the fact that the qualified labor force from other countries does not choose Lithuania. Restricting the accessibility of studies by the demands of the internal economy market, we risk the limitation of the intellectual society potential which, by the way, is necessary not only in the production of society assets, but also in personal lives of society members when aspiring towards greater self-expression. The accessibility of studies should not be measured by the criteria that maximizes only economic profit. Thus, problems of the quality of studies should not be solved at the expense of the limitation of their accessibility. They must be solved without lowering higher education standards (to the extent that is possible in the environment of mass higher education) and by encouraging students to overcome them.

Conclusions

The current state of higher education in Lithuania does not completely satisfy the needs of national security. It is insufficient to say that higher education in Lithuania is developed or undeveloped in compliance with the possibilities of a small and not strong state. In 2010, we must state that discontent with the state of Lithuanian higher education is determined by the contradictory LSS and the higher education reform that is not going smoothly; research and studies have not been reformed timely and properly. Because of that, the institutionalization of the middle class – the most important national security agent – is facing difficulties. Losses of the development of Lithuania because of the ineffectiveness of the higher education system reform are a most genuine danger to national security. At the same time, it is necessary at the level of state strategy to define higher education as a factor controlling national security, whereas the state policy, concerning scientific research and high technologies as well as university studies, should be perceived as a condition for the welfare, trust and cooperation, and stability – the primary guarantors of internal security. In such a case, it would be possible to create external security preconditions, testifying to the preparedness of society and the state for external challenges: whether it be a natural disaster or a geopolitical or military calamity.

That the development of Lithuanian research and studies is hindered by the lack of consecutive and consistent state policy is not the principle conclusion of the conducted research. It becomes principle only when we add that the preparation of the argumentation-based, consistent and long-term state higher education policy is failing not only because of the indefiniteness of the national interests of a small and far from strong state in the European space of science and studies under formation, as well as in the globalization-induced uncertainty, but also in the lack of corresponding competencies, disregard of experts, and short-term party interests.

The formal declared part of higher education policy (*politics)* and its real practical part (*policy)* have little association. The political control of frequently changing party forces has become the alleged link between the two inadequately constructed policy parts. Its result is a change without development and, at the same time, one more area of life in Lithuania has become less coordinated. The incredible breakthrough, projected by the supporters of a radical reform, has turned into the obvious getting bogged down, predicted by consistent critics. Now the difference between higher education reform rhetoric and actions is clear. The analysis of the latter is a truly sobering occupation. A part of the consequences of the reform – let us just remember the academic emigration and the ignoring of the training of certain directions specialists – can be qualified as stopping the development of Lithuania and, in part, dissociating higher education from the needs of national security.

The years of the reform have created a new situation in the higher education of Lithuania. Certainly, this situation calls for comprehensive analysis. The viewpoint that the current higher education of Lithuania can be developed by way of consecutive gradual reforms and still remain for the public good is worth considering.

April 2011