

THE MARKETIZATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN HUNGARY

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It is my argument that the reform of Hungarian higher education is subordinate to a larger neoliberal agenda involving the marketization of public services and is driven by the international financial community through the policies of the World Bank and the European Union. Specifically, the five most frequently cited goals of the reform of Hungarian higher education (the integration of state-run higher education institutions; increased institutional autonomy; the increased mobility of students, faculty and graduates between nations, institutions and levels of education; the continued massification of higher education; and the implementation of western quality assurance practices) serve one of two principal ends: the introduction of cost recovery mechanisms in the provision of social services and the transition to a knowledge-based economy (the former championed by the World Bank, the latter by the European Union). Lamentably, Hungarian policy makers seem more concerned with the interests of the international financial community than the well being of the Hungarian population. Consequently, the potential benefits of the restructuring of Hungarian higher education cannot be meaningfully evaluated without also considering the largely deleterious impact of the marketization of what was once considered a public service.

Keywords: autonomy, cost recovery, European Union, higher education, Hungary, integration, knowledge-based economy, marketization, massification, mobility, quality assurance, reform, World Bank

Preface

I have attempted a full review of the English and Hungarian language literature on the state of Hungarian higher education (HE) immediately prior to and since the transition from State Socialism to a parliamentary democracy and market economy.¹ An exhaustive search of English and Hungarian language peer-reviewed journals and academic publications identified a total of seventy articles on the state of Hungarian HE published since 1979 by fifty separate authors representing the perspectives of European policy insiders, ministerial appointees, university rectors, department chairs, World Bank (WB) consultants and academics

intimately involved in the reform process. While all seventy articles discuss some combination of goals, policy actors, policy instruments and challenges involved in the reform of the HE sector, I have chosen, for the sake of simplicity, to categorize the articles according to the five most frequently cited goals of the reform process: (1) the genuine *integration* of state-run higher education institutions (HEIs); (2) increased institutional *autonomy*; (3) the increased *mobility* of students, faculty and graduates between nations, institutions and levels of education; (4) the continued *massification* of HE; and (5) the implementation of western *quality assurance* (QA) practices. In addition to these five most frequently cited goals of the reform process, I have chosen to categorize the remaining articles (i.e., those articles not clearly addressing one of the first five goals) according to the infrequently cited ideal of (6) *equity* in the provision of HE. While this approach entails an unavoidable degree of redundancy (since no one article discusses a single goal in isolation from the rest), I believe the six categories provide a representative synthesis of the most frequently cited issues in the policy literature without unduly distorting the authors' positions by fragmenting their interrelated observations and arguments.

1. Integration

Writing in nine articles, authors Tamás Kozma, Theresa Agovino, Árpád Balogh, Károly Barakonyi, Ildikó Hrubos, Gábor Mezősi, Wolfgang Mitter and János Setényi address various aspects of the regional integration of state-run HEIs mandated by Hungarian law and funded by a World Bank (WB) loan in the late 1990s. Specifically, the authors focus on the return to a multi-faculty university, the competing interest groups and ministries involved in the financing and operation of HEIs in Hungary, the conspicuous exemption of élite Budapest universities from the ostensibly mandatory consolidation process, the lack of equivalency between identical degrees offered by universities and colleges, the role of workforce mobility in the integration process, the simultaneous diversification and homogenization of HEIs, the history of institutional mergers in Debrecen and Szeged, the role of the reform wing of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (MSZMP) in the initial decentralization of HE in the 1980s, and finally a case study of the merger of teachers training colleges in Békéscsaba.

An early effort by the Hungarian government to consolidate the HE sector occurred with the return to a multifaculty university in the late 1980s. As author Tamás Kozma explains, the return to a full-scale, or multi-faculty university model threatened the parallel hierarchies and interest groups at the various ministries involved in the financing and operation of HEIs in Hungary (Kozma 1990: 385). In fact, several ministries² had vested interests in parallel, and some would

argue redundant, bureaucracies in the administration of the HE sector. Domestic support for full-scale universities has been strongest at the regional level, where county authorities stand to benefit most from the integration process (386). Because genuine institutional autonomy implies financial as well as administrative independence, the sector's continued dependence on state support for the majority of its budget makes genuine institutional autonomy unlikely in the near future. As Kozma explains, "autonomy is a two-edged sword" (386). By consolidating the power distribution within institutions, autonomy has the capacity to suppress legitimate, internal reforms just as effectively as it insulates institutions from politically motivated, external interventions. It is for this reason, Kozma argues, that the implementation of greater institutional autonomy in the HE sector should occur only once the political profile of the sector has been reformed. Rejecting the unilateral, authoritarian approach to reform as politically unrealistic, Kozma advocates the empowerment of faculty and student bodies within the HE sector as a means of tilting the balance of power within institutions in favor of reform (387). Ultimately, however, Kozma concludes that the power structure within HE simply mirrors the power structure that funds it. While the percentage of students studying outside of the major academic centers of Budapest, Debrecen, Pécs and Szeged grew from 9% to 34% between 1950 and 1988, the geographic decentralization of the sector was accompanied by the duplication of library and information services, laboratories, administration and staff resources, all of which had a negative impact on cost efficiency (387). According to Kozma:

the small size of many institutions and their outmoded facilities raise unit costs. Of the 82 higher education institutions with full-time students, 27 have enrollments of less than 300, and only five have more than 2,500 students (Kozma 1990: 388).

The ratio of students to staff has also been criticized as generous to the point of inefficiency (388). Specifically, a student to staff ratio of six to one was quite common in Hungarian HE at the beginning of the 1990s. By comparison, student to staff ratios of 15 to 1 were not uncommon in Western Europe during the same period. According to Kozma, however, the education of students is only one of the functions of HE in Eastern Europe: it also diverts challenges to the political status quo by coopting the country's intelligentsia into a manageable system of inducements and disincentives (383 and 388).

Ironically, the stability of the Hungarian university system has proven to be the greatest obstacle to the integration process. In an article on the integration of Hungarian HE, author Theresa Agovino reports that, as a result of political pressure, Budapest universities succeeded in exempting themselves from an ostensibly mandatory consolidation process (Agovino 1999). While the bulk of the funding for the integration plan came in the form of a 150 million dollar loan agreement

reached with the World Bank (WB) in 1998, the 1998 election of a center-right coalition government delayed the introduction of tuition fees in HEIs required under the WB agreement. Although bank officials bemoaned the policy change, they expressed hope that it would be possible to reintroduce a tuition fee once a workable system of student loans was introduced. According to György Geréby, a philosophy professor at Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) and advisor to the Ministry of Education (OM) under the previous Socialist administration, mandatory tuition is a key element in the decentralization of Hungarian HE, without which institutions will continue to be characterized by the lack of both accountability and autonomy.

Another unexpected outcome of the integration process has been to increase the internal complexity of HEIs. Writing on the Bologna Declaration (BD) and HE, author Árpád Balogh argues that formal integration has fundamentally altered Hungary's state-run HEIs, with the geographic dispersion and internal complexity of the newly formed institutions offsetting whatever economic advantages were gained from the mergers (Balogh 2002: 114–16). In conclusion, Balogh questions whether a Bachelor of Science (BSc) degree offered at a college can really be considered equivalent to a BSc offered by a university. While it is conceivable that the recent trend to renovate colleges as universities may have side-stepped the question of formal equivalence, it is doubtful that a BSc from a college, or even a recently formed university, will be as marketable as a BSc from an established university.

It is important to remember, however, that the regional integration of HEIs is one part of a larger political, legal, economic and cultural integration process occurring within the European Union (EU). Writing in a 2002 article, author Károly Barakonyi argues that the formation of a common market, the European Community (ECom) and the EU constitute attempts to create a politically, legally, economically and culturally integrated community capable of matching the economy of scale enjoyed by the United States (Barakonyi 2002b). Despite the potential benefits of a regional community, Barakonyi warns that integrative, harmonizing and protectionist measures often run counter to the interests of individual nations. Following the successful resolution of the economic and legal issues facing the EU, the lack of workforce mobility remains the most important barrier in the realization of genuine integration.

Paradoxically, the regional integration of Hungarian HEIs has led to the simultaneous diversification and homogenization of HEIs. In an article on HE in Hungary, author Ildikó Hrubos argues that differentiation and diversification are processes integral to the structural changes accompanying the integration of HEIs (Hrubos 2002/2003: 56). Hrubos claims that the distinctions between the various branches of HE are being blurred as a consequence of reforms, although competition between institutions for students reaches a critical point when the majority of

income at HEIs became tied to enrollment figures in the form of tuition or capita-tion grants from the central budget.³ Simultaneous to the processes of differentia-tion and diversification, budgetary restrictions have encouraged the rationalization and homogenization of the nation's higher education system:

In practice, governmental control leads to homogenization rather than actual diversity. The accreditation and quality assurance processes that accompany indirect control have a centralizing effect and approve systems with similar requirements (Hrubos 2002/2003: 58).

As Hrubos explains, differentiation and homogenization are by no means mu-tually exclusive processes, nor is it impossible for different sectors and levels of organization within HE to move in entirely different directions. Even as late as the 1990s, Hungarian HE remained an élite activity involving a tiny fraction of the population, with as little as 10% of secondary school graduates admitted to HE (59). Between 1990 and 2000, however, the total number of students admitted to HE showed a threefold increase, jumping from 102,387 to 327,289 students. Al-though the massification of HE in Hungary occurred only in the 1990s (some three decades later than in the United States), the diversification of its institutions was a process that began in earnest in the 1950s and reached its peak in the 1970s when the network of state colleges was developed, following which the number of HEIs fluctuated between 54 and 58 until 1989, when the number jumped initially to 77 and again to 91 in 1992. Just prior to the restructuring of the entire system of HE in 1999 the number of HEIs in Hungary reached a high of 89 (59).⁴ According to Hrubos, the unprecedented multiplication in the number of HEIs can be attrib-uted to the expansion of the private and religious sectors. Specifically, Hrubos notes that the 1990s saw the establishment of 28 church-based and 6 private HEIs (60). This trend was characterized by diversification at both the sector-level (be-tween public and private and religious and secular institutions) and in the size and quality of individual institutions. By 2000, the private-sector (both religious and secular) accounted for nearly 8% of total enrollment in HE. While the article tracks a significant shift in the proportion of students enrolled in colleges versus universities (with the percentage of students attending colleges rising from 49% in 1990 to nearly 62% by 2000), she argues that the most significant change in Hun-garian HE in the 1990s was the growth of non-traditional forms of education (from distance learning to correspondence and evening courses) (61). In fact, the tremendous growth in the number of non-traditional learners (increasing at nearly three times the rate of regular learners between 1990 and 2000) seems to support this claim. Although these changes represent the diversification of HE, the growth in the number of regular learners (traditional, full-time students) was fairly even between colleges and universities. By 2000, some 67% of regular and 33% of cor-respondence students were attending Master of Arts (MA) and Doctor of Philoso-

phy (PhD) programs established after 1990. Significantly, Hrubos notes that the extensive changes that occurred as a consequence of the restructuring of HE in Hungary during the 1990s make the comparison of statistical data problematic (63). As Hrubos explains, statistics do little to track the diversification of content within given sectors and types of HE, and therefore neglect what is arguably the most important measure of the quality of HE. Chief among the factors leading to the homogenization of HE in Hungary was the nationwide integration process begun in 1996. According to Hrubos, this rationalization process was particularly burdensome for the institutions involved, because it coincided with the dramatic expansion of the HE sector (64). The integration process reduced the number of state universities from 25 (of which 6 were Arts and Sciences and 19 professional universities) to 17 (4 of which are Fine Arts universities with the remaining 13 falling into the category of the *universitas*, an institutional structure loosely modeled on the American university). The process also involved the integration of 52 state colleges into 13 institutions of roughly the same size. In total, the number of HEIs in Hungary was reduced from 77 to 62. While Hrubos notes that this integration process has had a homogenizing effect on HE as a whole, she argues that it has often had the opposite effect within individual institutions, resulting in a remarkable degree of differentiation and diversification. In conclusion, Hrubos argues that the primary beneficiary of these changes has been the non-university sector, as reforms have effectively blurred many key distinctions between the two types of institutions. Universities, however, can be expected to do everything within their power to guard their traditional prestige and are likely to resist admitting otherwise qualified undergraduates from the non-university sector into their graduate programs (67).

In addition to the regional integration of Hungarian HEIs, the introduction of competitive funding mechanisms and accreditation requirements have also had a homogenizing effect on HEIs. In an article on recent developments in Hungarian education, authors Tamás Kozma and Gabriella Zsigovits explain that, prior to the political transition of 1989–90, the Secretariat of the Central Committee (KB) of the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (MSZMP) was directly responsible for appointing or approving key positions in education, while the Ministry of Culture (KM) was responsible for setting the annual number of students to be admitted to HE on the basis of workforce forecasts (or plans) developed by a national planning office (Kozma et al 2002/2003: 4). Citing Ildikó Hrubos, the authors claim recent trends in HE are paradoxically characterized both by processes of diversification and homogenization (7–8). Homogenization can be observed both as a consequence of competition between HEIs and as the predictable outcome of the national accreditation system (8). The deliberate attempt to consolidate tertiary education in Hungary, begun in 1996 in the form of a formal integration process, has had the paradoxical effect of increasing the degree of homogenization between

competing institutions, while at the same time significantly increasing the degree of heterogeneity within individual institutions.

Much of the political momentum behind the regional integration of Hungarian HEIs came from the universities in Debrecen and Szeged. Writing in the *Journal of Geography in Higher Education*, authors Gábor Mezősi, László Mucsi and Ábel Garamhegyi describe the consolidation of formerly isolated colleges and universities in Szeged and Debrecen into single, integrated institutions, as well as the curricular reform of Hungary's Geography programs in response to the changing market for geography graduates (Mezősi et al. 2001: 11). While Hungarian universities produced world class geographers in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the focus of Hungary's Geography programs was shifted to teacher training following the Second World War. The decline in demand for secondary school Geography teachers and the increasing demand for professional geographers (especially in the field of urban planning) led the authors to develop and implement a new, professional Geography curriculum at the University of Szeged in 1993 (12). As of 2001, each of Hungary's five largest universities (located in the cities of Budapest, Debrecen, Miskolc, Pécs and Szeged) had a Geography department. In addition to these five university programs, there were an additional four Geography programs at colleges. All told, Geography students represented 1.2% of the total student enrollment for HE in Hungary in 2001 (13). While there were only 200 to 250 professional geographers employed in Hungary in 2001, there were an additional 1,200 to 1,400 geographer teachers employed as primary and secondary school teachers. The attempted merger of Hungary's state-run HEIs in 1999 started a consolidation process "of heretofore separate colleges and universities in Szeged and Debrecen into single, integrated institutions" (Mezősi et al. 2001: 13). As the authors explain, their curricular reforms represent:

a response to the changing educational, economic and political conditions in Hungary. They involve a renewal of content and form as well as greater awareness of the need to prepare students for professional careers and to market their skills among employers [...]. The Hungarian government planned to increase the number of students at the universities, but not to increase the size of teacher training programmes. This policy decision, along with a real increase in market demand for geographers, suggested only one solution: a programme of education for professional geographers (Mezősi et al. 2001: 13–14).

As of 2001, nearly 800 students were enrolled in professional Geography programs, while an additional 800 were training as Geography teachers (14). In conclusion, the authors recommend that their reforms serve as a model for curricular reform in other East Central European states that have undergone a transition from state socialism to parliamentary democracy and a market economy (21).

In certain respects, the regional integration process can be considered to be a response to the fragmentation of the HE sector. Writing in a 2003 article, author Wolfgang Mitter discusses the social and economic changes that led to the functional and institutional fragmentation of HE in East Central Europe following the disintegration of State Socialism in the late 1980s (Mitter 2003: 75). Specifically, the article focuses on: (1) the decentralization of state services; (2) the privatization of state resources; and (3) structural and curricular integration. As Mitter explains, it would be problematic to assume that the region underwent a single social, political and economic transformation (76). According to Mitter, there are six issues integral to the transformation debate: (1) the distinction between transformation and *transition* (although used unsystematically in policy debates, Mitter argues that transformation denotes volitional systemic change, whereas transition implies involuntary or accidental change; (2) the totality of systemic change (involving the market economy, democracy and civil society); (3) the gap between the anticipated and actual transformations (i.e. between the initially euphoric expectations and the ultimate degradation, fragmentation and destabilization of transformation processes); (4) the teleological assumption that transformation automatically entails progress; (5) the abstraction of a single monolithic transformation from a diverse group of historically unique national transformations; (6) the assumption that educational policy and policy-makers are subservient to the interests of political parties (77–79). Continuing, Mitter notes that the transformations that occurred in the 1990s have been characterized both as an expression of the globalization process as well as non-violent revolutions (81).⁵ While the support of the reform-wing of the ruling Hungarian Socialist Workers Party was indispensable in passing the 1985 Education Act mandating the decentralization of Hungary's educational system, Mitter notes that the Act also served to consolidate the position of the KM vis à vis competing ministries (81–82). Discussing the period of political transformation, which followed the events of 1989–1990, Mitter surveys four alternative transformation models: (1) Eberhard Sandschneider's 1995 model derived from systems theory and political science, which posits five progressive phases of transformation (political upheaval and dissolution of the old system followed by the introduction, stabilization and consolidation of a new system); (2) César Birzea's 1996 model of educational transformation describing the three (potentially overlapping) processes of deconstruction, stabilization and reconstruction; (3) Janusz Tomiak's 2000 model identifying six distinct phases in the transformation process (the destruction of the old order, the formulation of alternative visions of the future, the struggle between alternative visions, a political impasse arising from the piecemeal introduction of reforms, a deepening crisis resulting from a political stalemate, and the eventual imposition of a new order); and finally (4) Vjacheslav Karpov and Elena Lisovskaya's 2001 model derived from the 1789 French and 1917 Russian Revolutions,

hypothesizing radical and conservative phases characterized by their degree of instability and innovation (83–85). Addressing the privatization of state resources, Mitter explains that:

decentralisation policies were stimulated but also hampered by budgetary constraints. In general, the introduction of market-bound policies resulting in austerity measures exerted a detrimental impact on the finance of education (Mitter 2003: 86).

While the decentralization of Hungary's primary and secondary education systems did not attempt the introduction of mandatory tuition fees, HE policies have:

tended to authorize universities and their equivalents (polytechnics etc.) to charge fees from students who have failed admission within the annually fixed quota due to lower achievements in their entrance examinations (Mitter 2003: 86). [...] the introduction of market-oriented principles into educational policies was accepted as a desirable approach to eliminating the rigid bureaucracies of the collapsed communist regimes [...]. When entering into alliances with anti-democratic ideologies, patriotism and nationalism act as the dominating interference factors against the challenges of modernisation and globalisation (90–91).

The low status of the non-university sector has proven to be an additional impediment to the integration of theoretically complementary institutions. Based on the findings of a 1994 case study of the attempted reform of a regional teacher training college in Békéscsaba, author János Setényi attempts to identify key issues in human resource development and the modernization of the non-university sector in Hungary (Setényi 1994: 25). Specifically, Setényi argues that teacher training colleges located outside of Budapest have suffered from low enrollment figures as a consequence of their lack popularity (relative to the status of the university sector) and the overproduction of secondary school teachers. As Setényi explains, the 1994 introduction of tuition fees and per capita financing was projected to lower the ratio of teachers to students, to reduce the increasing demand for HE and to eliminate programs not directly serving the needs of the labor market:

the mapping of social challenges, mission statements and the institutions' actual functioning revealed a deep educational crisis in the region. The inherited legitimation of existing institutional activities was being challenged by the social, political, financial and academic changes taking place (Setényi 1994: 28).

Despite the budgetary crisis faced by the research center of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) located in Békéscsaba, the center:

found other factors delaying the seemingly obvious step of this centre being merged with the college. The main reason for its isolationist policy lay in its opinion of the non-university sector as an academically weak, undesirable partner (Setényi 1994: 28).

WB regulations precluding inter-institutional cooperation have also tended to lead to institutional redundancy (29). According to Setényi, this “functional fragmentation” was not adequately addressed by policy-makers. As Setényi explains, responses to institutional crises have typically taken one of three directions: (1) the rationalized integration of institutional policies into a regional-level plan; (2) escapist innovation or institutional hyperactivity (typically found in institutional environments with access to outside sources of funding where the balance of power between interest groups all but precludes radical change); and (3) spontaneous privatization (illicit economic activity typically rationalized by the inadequate income of state employees) (29–31). According to Setényi, internal conflicts arose around curricular reforms threatening to redistribute the balance of power within the institution (32). Because rectors are elected for relatively short, three-year terms, there is a tendency for the professorate to favor “informal coalition building, short-term and low-risk policies and permanent equilibrium seeking” (Setényi 1994: 33). Interestingly, Setényi notes that:

when the political changes of 1989 made society more cost-sensitive and labor market-oriented, the increasing and uncontrolled fragmentation of educational functions and institutions led to educational and financial crisis [despite which] all attempts to open up the college to the needs of local and regional society [...] faced relatively strong opposition backed by academic positions based on the ‘continental’ notion of institutional autonomy (Setényi 1994: 35).

In conclusion, Setényi writes that one of the most significant discoveries of the case study was “the gradual emergence of a new concept of autonomy in Hungary, which – following the American pattern – combines academic freedom with accountability management” (Setényi 1994: 28).

2. Autonomy

Writing in eleven articles, authors Károly Barakonyi, Marta Gutsche, Gábor Halász, Mikolaj Kozakiewicz, Tamás Lajos, Judit Lannert, Anthony Morgan, Katalin Rádli and Géza Sáska discuss the ideal of institutional autonomy as it has evolved over the last twenty years. Specifically, the authors describe the model of the medieval university, the paucity of historical evidence of autonomy at Hungarian universities, aborted reforms in HE during the last decade of State Social-

ism, the impact of the 1985 Education Act on institutional autonomy, the politicized funding of the 1956 and Twentieth Century Institutes, the questionable future of institutional autonomy in a market-driven HE sector, a brief overview of research funding practices, the role of WB loans in the decentralization of HE in Hungary, and finally conflicting demands for greater autonomy from competing HE stakeholder groups.

Not surprisingly, the ideal of academic autonomy has varied considerably over time in response to changing political and economic circumstances. Writing in a 2004 article, former University of Pécs rector and WB consultant, Károly Barakonyi argues that the initial changes in Hungarian HE following the 1989–1990 regime change represented a return to the outdated educational policies of the Horthy Era, rather than the adoption of contemporary Western educational practices, thus delaying much needed structural reforms (Barakonyi 2004a: 513). Specifically, Barakonyi employs the model of the medieval university in support of his policy recommendations. As Barakonyi explains, the current structure of European universities can be traced back to the medieval university and the limited authority and short tenure of university rectors, once appropriate to the administration of medieval universities, have proven ill-suited to the administration of contemporary institutions. Continuing, Barakonyi notes that the emerging European Higher Education Area (EHEA) harkens back to the international student body of medieval universities, just as the less challenging curriculum of the community college had its precedent in the relatively low level of education provided to the majority of university students at the Collège de Sorbonne in thirteenth-century Paris.⁶ Even the widespread use of English has a precedent in the use of medieval Latin. Of the sixty-seven HEIs operating in Hungary before the First World War, two (in Budapest and Kolozsvár) were universities, one (in Budapest) was a technical university, three were state- and seven church-run law schools. In addition to these, there was also one academy of Fine Arts, one of Economics, one of Mining and one of Forestry, a veterinary school, four schools of economics and 46 religious studies schools. University instructors enjoyed the status and security of government employees and the universities were theoretically under the direct supervision of the Ministry of Education (OM), although the role of the government was primarily limited to strategic planning. As the rector of Erzsébet University, Ödön Weszely explained in a 1929 address:

such organizational reforms as, for example, how many schools a university should have, who should be represented on university councils, who should elect the rector, how private teachers and teacher's aids should be represented in university governance, and how students should be involved in all of this, how student bodies should be organized – none of these questions touch the heart of the university, and may therefore be resolved in whatever fashion proves

most expedient under the given circumstances (Weszely 1929 in Barakonyi 2004a).

As Barakonyi observes, Weszely's conception of HE makes no reference to the needs of society or the role of education in the competition between nations. As Barakonyi explains, the roughly 10,000 students enrolled in HE in Hungary in 1896 had nearly doubled to 18,206 students by the First World War. Thus, the rate of enrollment in HE in Hungary was 9.6 students per 10,000 inhabitants, significantly lower than in Austria and Germany, which boasted enrollment rates of 16.5 and 14 students per 10,000 inhabitants. Between 1895 and 1914, the total number of teachers in Hungary grew nearly 60%. While the First World War witnessed a 55.3% drop in attendance, the percentage of women continuing on to HE actually increased. By the second half of the 1920s, the number of HE students stabilized around 16,000, although 1,800 of these were Jewish students studying abroad after being prevented from attending Hungarian HEIs under Hungary's 1920 Numerus Clausus Law. Despite increased demand for graduates from medical, engineering, agricultural and economics schools, the government chose not to limit the large numbers of students attending law schools. By 1938, HE enrollments dropped from 16,000 to less than 14,000 students. While the total number of students in Hungarian HE increased with the territorial expansion following the Vienna Awards (in 1938 and 1940), the figure represented a decrease in the percentage of the total population. Following the Second World War, HE enrollments grew significantly, with enrollment for the 1947–1948 academic year 133.4% greater than before the war. As Barakonyi explains, political considerations commonly took precedence over academic qualifications in the appointment of university professors during the pre-war years. Among the fundamental questions debated in Hungarian universities at the turn of the twentieth century were the definition and practice of academic freedom (*tanszabadság* or *Lernfreiheit*). Although the separation of practical and theoretical education was proposed during this period, the HE policies of Minister of Education, Kunó Klebelsberg focused more on cultural decentralization and the formation of a "European" intelligentsia. Although critical of Hungary's inefficient network of HEIs (burdened with parallel institutions and a large number of small colleges), Klebelsberg's plans for institutional integration were left unrealized. Following the Second World War, a number of reforms swept through the HE sector, some anticipating the reforms involved in the Bologna Process (BP). As historian Andor Ladányi writes in his 1999 contribution to the history of Hungarian HE, *A magyar felsőoktatás a 20. században* [Hungarian higher education in the twentieth century], the separation of vocational training from academic research, the vertical integration of higher education and the establishment of institutions offering shorter courses of study were all reforms considered in the years following the

Second World War (Ladányi 1999 in Barakonyi 2004a). As Barakonyi explains, neither the organization nor the administration of HEIs was regulated by law under the Dual Monarchy, despite the concerted efforts of József Eötvös and Ágoston Trefort to pass a HE bill. Instead, the organization of the university in Budapest followed regulations published by the Monarchy for universities (*Az egyetemi hatóságok szervezési szabályzata* [The organizational regulations of university governance]). Because Hungary's remaining universities were established by ministerial decree, they exercised little actual autonomy in questions of hiring, research and finance. In addition, the OM also dictated the curricular and examination guidelines to be followed by the universities. While "universities enjoyed virtually no independence in financial questions," they were able to exercise a great deal of independence in their internal organization. Unfortunately, university leadership was often characterized by a lack of managerial expertise: university councils in particular were viewed as an extraneous layer of bureaucracy, doing little more than increasing the administrative burden of the universities. Chief among Klebelsberg's unrealized reforms were: (1) limiting bureaucratic and ministerial influence over HE; (2) advancing the principles of self-governance and institutional autonomy; and (3) granting universities corporate status. The construction of the universities in Debrecen and Szeged and the development of the Collegium Hungaricum⁷ redirected funding that might have otherwise have gone to Hungary's remaining HEIs⁸ (which received less financial support in 1927 than before the First World War).⁹ The commitment to cultural decentralization (as witnessed in the priority given to the development of regional universities) left HEIs in Budapest severely underfunded until the end of the 1920s, when university funding practices were reorganized at the recommendation of Zoltán Magyary. The improvement was temporary, however, as the Hungarian economy and the higher education budget were soon crippled by the worldwide economic depression. According to Barakonyi, the degree of autonomy enjoyed by universities at the turn of the twentieth century was considerably less than today: although in principle the universities were dedicated to the pursuit of "pure science," this ideal was rarely realized in the absence of adequate financing. Addressing the state of Hungarian HE following the 1989–1990 regime change, Barakonyi argues that the understandable desire to eliminate the influence of state socialism from higher education led to the regrettable reinstitution of the system of HE in operation in the 1950s. As Barakonyi writes, the level of autonomy granted to universities under the 1993 Higher Education Act represented a considerable reduction in ministerial authority, but did little to modernize Hungary's system of HE. Specifically, he argues that the successful reform of HE will first require the reevaluation of such topics as: (1) institutional autonomy; (2) the relationship between institutions and the state; (3) state control of higher education strategy; (4) the legal status of HEIs (as non-profits, public corporations or private

enterprises); (5) the involvement of extra-academic voices in HE strategy (on advisory boards); (6) the composition and competence of university senates and executive councils (IT) and their relationship with advisory boards; (7) the representation of student interests in higher education strategy; (8) the election, responsibilities and powers of the leadership of HEIs (rectors, deans and departmental chairs); (9) the corollaries of the massification of HE; (10) the role of mandatory tuition fees; (11) the review and reorganization of the relationship between schools and departments; (12) the development and introduction of curricular reforms; and finally (13) the review of the roles, structure and financing of elite and mass forms of education. Citing the largely ineffective integration of the HE sector, Barakonyi warns that genuine structural reform will be all but impossible under current university leadership.

Writing in a 2004 article, Károly Barakonyi argues that the ideal of university autonomy is typically invoked by the opponents of the reigning political party despite the paucity of history evidence of academic or financial autonomy at Hungarian universities (Barakonyi 2004b). Specifically, Barakonyi argues that the minimal autonomy exercised by Hungarian universities prior to the Second World War was all but eliminated in first years of Communist rule. According to Barakonyi, autonomy is exercised as an organizational principle, operational mechanism and method of self-governance. Thus, true self-governance entails organizational, administrative and financial autonomy. Continuing, Barakonyi differentiates between: (1) *original* and (2) *derivative* autonomy (i.e., between autonomy derived from the common good versus autonomy devolved from state power), as well as between (3) *institutional* and (4) *academic* autonomy (or *Lehr- and Lernfreiheit*). In addition, Barakonyi explains that there have been two major factors limiting the role of autonomy at Hungarian universities: (1) the weakened position of the Humanities and (2) the increasingly practical orientation of HEIs. As Barakonyi explains, central financing, workforce planning and the massification of HE have all increased the role of government in HE. In addition to these national-level trends, such extra-governmental organizations as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) have attempted to incorporate HE policy into their long-term development strategies. As Barakonyi reports, the 1990s witnessed a gradual decline in government spending on HE: as the government gradually devolved its obligations to HEIs the neo-liberal logic of cost recovery, its policies had the side-effect of increasing institutional autonomy. As Barakonyi explains, there is a major struggle taking place as the authorities, the universities and the public attempt to renegotiate their respective roles in the restructuring of HE:

the debates that took place under the banner of 'increased autonomy' are only a prelude to the real reform of higher education. At the same time, the growth in autonomy has been accompanied by the introduction of in-house evaluations and external quality assurance practices (Barakonyi 2004b).

Hence autonomy is now predicated on some form of accountability (via internal and external quality assurance (QA) mechanisms). As representatives of the business community once excluded from HE policy have succeeded in involving themselves in HE policy, there has been a gradual shift in focus from input to output measures in QA practices. While the 1993 Higher Education Act granted state-run HEIs a great deal of autonomy (guaranteeing institutions greater freedom in matters of research, education, operations and hiring), it also set definite limits on university rights. Specifically, the Hungarian Parliament has reserved the right to found, restructure and close HEIs. As Barakonyi explains, the lack of financial autonomy at Hungarian universities is not surprising since strategic financial decisions are made by boards of regents or trustees (representing political and business stakeholder groups) at western universities. Remarkably, Hungarian university students actually enjoy a greater degree of autonomy and representation in policy decisions than their counterparts at western universities. As Barakonyi explains, the restructuring of Hungary's HE sector reflects a fundamental misunderstanding of the concept of institutional autonomy. Although the 1993 Higher Education Act limits the right to found, restructure and close universities to the Parliament, the administration initially called upon universities to manage their own mergers. Given the universities' hostility towards the mandatory integration policy as a violation of their autonomy, it is no surprise that they felt no obligation to comply with the wishes of the OM. Following years of fruitless negotiations, the Hungarian Parliament finally issued a decree requiring the integration of state-run HEIs. Despite formal compliance with the decree, the majority of HEIs never truly integrated or consolidated redundant departments and courses. Despite the widespread assumption at Hungarian universities that individual administrative branches are also entitled to a certain degree of autonomy, Barakonyi argues that this interpretation of academic freedom is all too often invoked to protect the arbitrary policies of departmental tyrants. In practice, it can prove less difficult for students to transfer from one institution to another than between two departments at the same institution. Increasingly, researchers are finding financial support linked to applied (and not basic) research. The principle of student autonomy is similarly limited by such factors as: (1) the massification of HE; (2) the involvement of senior professors with PhD and not Bachelor of Arts (BA) students; (3) the overcrowding of universities; (4) overspecialization; and (5) the vertical division of HE into two sub-sectors (of colleges or universities). While largely unsuccessful, the WB reforms of the 1990s did contribute to the

reformulation of HE policy objectives. In conclusion, Barakonyi argues that the ideal of institutional autonomy has become one of the most effective barriers to the modernization of Hungarian HE.

Surprisingly, the initial call for institutional autonomy came from within the OM. Writing in an article on changes in the Hungarian education system, author Marta Gutsche explains that, although the reform process was actually begun well before the transition to a parliamentary democracy and a market economy, it was clear that the Communist Party leadership was unsupportive of comprehensive educational reforms (Gutsche 1993: 5). In 1985, however, the OM published a number of reform proposals, addressing in particular the overly ideological nature of education policy. According to Gutsche, this position paper served as the basis for the subsequent policies adopted by the OM under the 1989–1990 tenure of Ferenc Glatz.¹⁰ Among the initiatives proposed by the OM under Glatz were an increase in teachers' salaries, the elimination of the state monopoly on education (including the introduction of private schools and the reopening of various confessional schools suppressed under the Socialist system), the development of a national basic curriculum,¹¹ the introduction of English and German language instruction, and the retraining of Russian language teachers. During the transitional period, Ferenc Gatzó, who had played a key role in drafting the 1985 Education Act, was assigned by the coalition government to oversee the drafting of a new education act.

In retrospect, it is clear that the 1985 Education Act had a tremendous impact on the autonomy of Hungarian educational institutions. In an article on school autonomy and the reform of educational administration in Hungary, author Gábor Halász explains that the 1985 Education Act was a major turning point for educational administration in Hungary (Halász 1995/1996: 57). Specifically, Halász explains that the act was intended to increase the autonomy of individual schools by decreasing the previously considerable administrative and political control exercised by the state over the educational system. According to Halász, the 1985 Act was above all a concession to the long-time demands of teachers and educators for a coherent national education policy. Nevertheless, public debates preceding the enactment of the new law suggest that the government's response fell far short of expectations. According to Halász, the law was an attempt by the state to free itself from its budgetary obligations: "the policy of school autonomy as an alternative to the previously demanded school reform was seen as a negative response". As a consequence of the negative character of the policy, the policy had a number of shortcomings. Specifically, Halász mentions the failure to clearly define the concept of autonomy, the failure to articulate a plan for the interdependent system of governance to be shared by the state, schools, local communities and parents, and finally the failure to anticipate the legal and educational outcomes of the changes. In practice, increased autonomy meant increased responsibility, a

greater workload and more staff meetings, which predictably met with little enthusiasm on the part of most teachers. Nevertheless, as schools gained increasing autonomy, it became reasonable to hold individual institutions responsible for the outcome of school-level decisions. The fundamental change introduced with the policy of school autonomy was to focus oversight mechanisms on outputs instead of inputs. As Halász explains, state agencies were charged with developing specific criteria with which to assess student achievement, instead of developing and supervising the introduction of curricular content and methodology. This initiative was criticized by teachers and educationists as incapable of evaluating other, less tangible, but equally important dimensions of student achievement. Nevertheless, Halász notes that the policy of school-level autonomy had a number of important consequences, including the open acknowledgement of differences in quality between schools, as well as the general absence of collective parental involvement in schools. As Halász explains, "it is difficult to persuade parents to become members of school advisory bodies, probably because they see these as not having enough decision-making power" (Halász 1995/1996). This lack of parental participation is not entirely unwelcome in all quarters, however, as many teachers fear parental activism will politicize the operation of schools. Typically, parental involvement has occurred on an individual and not a collective level, with parents tending to shop around for a new school for their child when dissatisfied instead of attempting directly to influence the policies of a particular school. It is important to note that the principle of school autonomy was first implemented in Hungary during a period when the role of the state in education was coming under increasing criticism as being ideologically biased. Thus, initial conceptions of complete autonomy from any form of central control have proven problematic under a Parliamentary Democracy ostensibly representative of widespread public support. In conclusion, Halász argues that the lack of a clear consensus on the question of centralization and decentralization is characteristic of post-Socialist education policy. Specifically, he argues that "movements with populist tendencies and that stress national unity are not in favor of a decentralized system".

The need for greater financial autonomy at Hungarian research institutions is evident in the politicized funding of the 1956 and Twentieth Century Institutes. In 1999 the center-right ruling coalition led by Viktor Orbán and the Alliance of Young Democrats (Fidesz) cut 80% of the budget of the 1956 Institute, a research institute established by the previous coalition government (Agovino 2000b). The following year, the government budgeted \$840,000 to support the newly founded Twentieth Century Institute.¹² As Theresa Agovino explains in an article from the year 2000, the membership of the two institutes is highly politicized, with György Litván, a founding member of the 1956 Institute, also a prominent member of the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ) and Mária Schmidt, the current director of

the Twentieth Century Institute, and one of Viktor Orbán's closest advisors. According to Litván, "The decision to cut funding was cynical and political" (Litván in Agovino 2000b). Specifically, Litván has argued that the funding cuts made by the Fidesz-led coalition were a cynical attempt to rehabilitate Hungarian history by suppressing the role of Reform Communists in the 1956 revolution. According to Attila Várhegyi, an official in the Ministry of National Cultural Heritage (NKÖM), the government was reluctant to continue funding an institute so closely tied to the interests of a single political party.

In addition to decreasing the financial autonomy of HEIs, the marketization of HE promises to transform the ideal of academic autonomy. In an article on educational pluralism in Central and Eastern Europe, author Mikolaj Kozakiewicz argues that change is the only constant in the region's national education systems (Kozakiewicz 1994: 25). He suggests, therefore, that research should focus not on a static description of the current state of education, but rather on the trajectory and probable result of changes in the region's educational systems. While the article reports that education in Hungary has traditionally been characterized by the Humboldtian ideals of *Lehr-* and *Lernfreiheit*, a shift to a market-driven model of education suggests that academic autonomy may soon become a thing of the past as immediate financial realities take precedence over more abstract principles. In conclusion, the article reports that the transition from a single-party to a multi-party system "has exacerbated latent conflicts of interest within the educational establishment".

In practice, the theoretical autonomy of HEIs has often been limited by arbitrary and erratic funding practices. Writing in an article on HE reform in Hungary, author Tamás Lajos argues that, due to past funding practices, researchers at universities in Hungary enjoy a considerable comparative advantage over researchers working at the institutes of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA) (Lajos 1993: 403).¹³ According to Lajos, the rapid development of non-university HE in Hungary in the 1960s and 1970s was in reality little more than the overhaul of Hungary's postsecondary technical school system (404). During this same period, the Hungarian government adopted policies giving priority to applied research in HE. While the priority given to research and development tended to discourage basic research by sanctioning contract-based relationships between academic researchers and low-level industry, the infrastructure of the sector nevertheless benefited from the cooperation. Continuing, the article cites the establishment of the National Fund for Scientific Research (OTKA)¹⁴ in the mid-1980s as improving the position of university researchers relative to the research institutes of the MTA. Partly as a consequence of changes in the national funding system, and the HE sector now represents the majority of the country's research capacity. Although the Higher Education Development Fund (FFA) was established in the second half of the 1980s in order to finance structural reforms beyond the capacity

of the state budget for HE, the actual use of the fund failed to target the needed reforms. Following the establishment of the FFA, the Hungarian government began negotiating a WB loan (404–405). During this same period, two key stakeholder groups formed as the Hungarian Rectors' Conference (MRK) and the National Higher Education Advocacy Association (OFESZ), representing rectors and university students (405). Following the aborted FFA reforms, a grassroots reform process was initiated to anticipate the challenges of European integration. While little actual progress was made in preparing Hungary for its EU accession, the reform movement did succeed in further consolidating the position of HE vis à vis the MTA. Among the major factors impeding the restructuring of the HE sector in the 1980s, Lajos cites the resistance of individuals and institutions within the sector, the government's inability to enforce its policy decisions, and the precarious balance of power within the political establishment. The demand for institutional autonomy increased in the late 1980s in the wake of politically colored attempts by ministries to consolidate their hold on the sector. The introduction of the Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies (TEMPUS), an external assistance scheme targeting human resource development, in the early 1990s, further improved the position of HE vis à vis the research institutes of the MTA. According to Lajos, the democratic election of university representatives has resulted in an increasingly conservative university leadership. Specifically, Lajos claims that mediocre technocrats have been elected to positions of leadership because their conservative approach makes them the least controversial candidates:

the average level of competence and creativity has not increased and conservatism has been strengthened (especially at larger and more prestigious HE institutions) in comparison to the situation in the late 1980s. Furthermore, in contrast to the not very competent leaders of universities and ministries of that time, who were too weak to stop the innovations, the new conservative leaders are much stronger and more effective in hampering and frustrating the transformation processes (Lajos 1993: 405–406).

According to Lajos, the widespread resistance within universities to the genuine reform of HE, as witnessed in the election of conservative leaders and the near universal failure of grassroots reforms, is the understandable response to evaluation procedures which will entail greater responsibility and less autonomy (406). According to Lajos:

this is not just the basic attitude of the less talented, less efficient educators whose present positions or jobs might be endangered by a quality assessment that would be a part of a restructuring process. Internationally recognized academics belonging to the top layer of staff are also interested in maintaining this non-demanding university environment where they can work freely (Lajos 1993: 406).

Among the failed reforms of the early 1990s, Lajos cites: (1) the attempted consolidation of HE policy and administration within the OM; (2) the effort to involve Academy institutes in the provision of HE; and (3) the attempt to harmonize research and development with HE. According to Lajos, the government's failure to reform the higher education sector is due in part to the emergence of a patron-client system (407). While the pressure to restructure HE has forced such stakeholder groups as university rectors and students to adopt the rhetoric of reform, in practice their actions have served to maintain the *status quo*. According to Lajos, the rectors have entered into a tacit *quid pro quo* agreement with the government and the MTA, wherein the MRK backs government policy and the government does nothing to threaten the privileges enjoyed by the two systems of institutions: the HE sector and the research institutes of the MTA.

Another barrier to genuine institutional autonomy has been a pattern of severe underfunding. Writing in a 2006 article on the impact of structural reforms in post-socialist Hungary, authors Judit Lannert, György Mártonfi and Irén Vágó argue that the institutionalization of market forces in the educational sector is a legitimate goal, which has enjoyed widespread political support (Lannert et al. 2006: 71). Specifically, the authors argue that between 1994 and 1998 and since 2002 the market-driven educational policies of the Free Democrats (SZDSZ) were adopted because they "were advantageous for the political class and the interest groups that are higher in social hierarchy and central to the political process" (Lannert et al. 2006: 71). While the authors note that the principle of cost recovery in the form of tuition fees has been studiously avoided by Hungary's political elite,¹⁵ they nevertheless argue that such a policy would shift the cost of HE from the general populace to those directly benefiting from HE. Although the authors conclude that Hungary's transition to a market economy was basically successful, they also note that the rapid change has resulted in increased socioeconomic inequality (72). The privatization of a significant percentage of the Hungarian economy, however, has led the Fidesz-led opposition to argue that such public services as the national railway, healthcare and power systems should be protected from future privatization. While the authors note that HEIs are typically characterized by a high degree professional autonomy, they argue that chronic underfunding and the decreasing size of incoming age cohorts have undermined what little financial autonomy they might otherwise enjoy. As the authors explain, neo-liberal reforms have yet to penetrate the HE labor market, with teaching staff enjoying the relatively greater job security of public employees (73). The article also claims that such interest groups as trade unions have acted to impede the free action of market forces in the HE sector. According to the report, the increased demand for education in the 1990s was a result of the growing demand for skilled labor and the widening gap in expected earnings between individuals with different degrees of educational attainment. While the real earnings of college graduates

saw a three-fold increase between 1968 and 1998, the authors note that the increased return on HE was still less than that of vocational education. According to the report, the percentage of the population graduating from secondary school in Hungary showed considerable growth during the 1990s: rising from 30% in 1990 to nearly 40% in 2001. Despite the documented increase in school attainment in Hungary, the authors argue that increased access has been accompanied by decreased equity, as the relative quality of educational services has tended to reflect parents' socioeconomic status (83).

Perhaps the greatest assault on the autonomy of Hungarian HEIs has been WB support for the adoption of western governance practices. Writing in an article on the adaptation of the American model of advisory boards in Hungarian HE in the early 1990s, Citizens Democracy Corps (CDC)¹⁶ volunteer and WB consultant, Anthony Morgan argues that such reforms represent a challenge to the bimodal distribution of power that evolved between the state and the professorate in the late 1980s:

the decentralization that boards represent runs counter to bureaucratic ministry control and threatens the newly found power of institutional senates (Morgan et al. 2000: 423).

The implementation of advisory boards has also proven to be a highly politicized process, as boards have been seen as an instrument of both greater political input in HE as well as a potential buffer between the state and the university. According to Morgan, the original impetus for the introduction of lay boards in Hungarian HE was a report on governance structures co-authored by Derek Bok of Harvard in his capacity as a CDC representative in the early 1990s (424). It was only in 1997, however, with the negotiation of a \$150 million loan agreement with the WB, that the Hungarian government attempted the large-scale implementation of advisory boards at the national and institutional level. Under the terms of the 1997 WB loan, the Hungarian government committed to the rationalization of the HE sector (by observing the principle of cost recovery by shifting the cost of education onto the public in the form of mandatory tuition fees, and by mobilizing non-state funding sources through partnerships with industry). Specific policy instruments utilized in the reform included the regional consolidation of institutions and the introduction of normative financing practices and mandatory tuition fees. The significance of the WB loan was magnified by a history of chronic underfunding in HE as well as increasing social and political pressure to expand access to HE. As a consequence, institutions were highly motivated to meet the conditions stipulated for WB funding and mandatory state contributions to capital investments. Although advisory boards were implemented at both the national as well as the institutional level, it was the establishment of the Higher Education Academic Council (FTT) that met with the greatest institutional resistance

(424–425). According to Morgan, the high level of institutional fragmentation and the negative associations left by Soviet-era centralized planning had a significant impact on the proposed reforms: “since two of the active functions of lay boards are in the areas of policy and planning, there is an understandable suspicion toward any newly proposed entity which might re-establish disdained practices of the past” (Morgan et al. 2000: 426). Elsewhere in Europe, the introduction of lay boards has been an integral component in the devolution of centralized authority to the state and institutional level (426–427). According to Morgan, the reluctance on the part of the OM to devolve its powers to advisory boards was compounded by two historical factors (427–428). The first factor was the tenuous hold of the OM over the HE sector. Prior to 1989, the OM had been only one of several ministries responsible for HE (428). Following a series of government reforms in 1989, the Hungarian government attempted to consolidate the reporting relationships for HEIs under the OM.¹⁷ The second factor was the significant increase in autonomy afforded HEIs as a corollary of the general reaction to the highly centralized and politicized character of HE prior to 1989. Despite the predictable reluctance on the part of the OM to share any of its powers with a national level advisory board, intense lobbying by Western policy advocates and a critical lack of capacity within the OM ultimately convinced the Hungarian government of the potential utility of an agency devoted to the planning and implementation of HE policy. Although institutional-level boards encountered considerably less resistance at the ministry level (since both the Ministries of Education (OM) and Finance (PM) viewed the boards as a potential mechanism for increased control of higher education institutions), the boards enjoyed little popularity amongst university rectors, who successfully lobbied to downgrade the role of the boards from “supervisory” to “advisory” (428–429). Despite the increased autonomy devolved to HEIs in the late 1980s (universities were now able to set the terms of employment, to elect their rector and to establish internal governance policies), the OM retained substantial control over financing practices, the approval of new institutions and the allocation of admissions places (431). Continuing, Morgan cites two significant corollaries of the bureaucratic control of allocation: (1) ubiquitous institutional deficits and bargaining over budgets and (2) a tendency for low-level bureaucrats to extract and hoard additional funding (431–432). In part because the atmosphere of greater transparency promised by the introduction of lay boards threatened the negotiating power and discretion of institutional administrators, lay boards met with significant resistance from key administrators at major Budapest universities (432). Fearing an increased workload with the introduction of advisory boards, undercompensated educators were also hostile to the proposed reforms. As Morgan writes, the cultural assumptions behind the American board of trustees include the willingness and availability of volunteers, as well as a minimum degree of faith in the justice and efficacy of the legal system, neither

of which are entirely present in Hungary (433). In the Fall of 1995, a legislative working group (known as the Szeged Group and composed of representatives of the Hungarian Ministries of Finance (PM) and Education (OM), Hungarian university officials as well as educational consultants Anthony Morgan of Harvard and Tim Warner of Stanford) convened to draft what would become the 1996 amendment to the 1993 Higher Education Act (434). The primary tasks of the group included the review of various state-level board models from the United States, expanding the role of the FTT and developing a model for institutional-level boards responsive to regional needs. Ultimately, the Szeged Group was unable to reach a consensus on the composition and powers of the FTT, with ministry representatives unwilling to cede governance rights or representation on the board. Where the government initiative was unable to win the support of key policy actors, the MRK succeeded (434–435). As Morgan writes:

many of the policy initiatives, ranging from an overall plan for the development of higher education to the introduction of formula funding, were initiated or significantly shaped by this body and its leadership. But these intermediate bodies were interest groups rather than lay or citizen-based entities independent of any particular interests (Morgan et al. 2000: 435).

Trade unions and student organizations were also able to lobby effectively on such key issues as employee rights and tuition fees. Although the FTT was established by the 1993 Higher Education Act, a 1996 amendment increased the scope of the Council's advisory powers to include: (1) strategic planning for HE; (2) the review and revision of (a) funding and allocation formulas and (b) institutional development plans; (3) the evaluation of new degree programs; and (4) providing the OM with position papers on key policy issues. Not surprisingly, institutional leaders have come to view the power of the FTT as more than just advisory, given the council's ability to review and revise funding and allocation formulas. The ongoing struggle between university representatives, who sought to stack the FTT with academics and the OM, which sought to maximize the lay membership of the FTT, was finally resolved with a 1996 amendment to the 1993 Higher Education Act (435–436). The amendment divided the composition of the council into two blocks of voting and non-voting members. Of the 21 voting members: 10 were delegates from HEIs (4 as representatives of the MRK, 4 of the College Director's Conference (FFK),¹⁸ one of the directors of arts colleges and one of Hungary's religious colleges); 10 were delegates from "utilizing organizations" (one as a representative of the MTA, one of the research institutes of the MTA, one of an employers' panel, one of the Mayor of Budapest, one of a national alliance of municipalities, 4 of professional associations and one of the National Technological Development Commission (OMFB) (436).¹⁹ The 21st voting member of the Council

was delegated by the OM. Non-voting membership was primarily drawn from other ministries directly interested in HE, without whose support the Council's policies would have little chance of success. The Council also reserved the right to invite representatives of student organizations and trade unions when deemed appropriate (436–437). The deliberate understaffing and inadequate funding of the Council eventually resulted in a significant planning backlog (437–438). The Council's funding woes were soon remedied under the WB development plan in 1998 with a considerable injection of aid for technical assistance to be matched by OM funding increases. Despite the temporary budgetary increases represented by the WB loan, the OM's chronic underfunding of the FTT is evidence of the ongoing ill-will between the two bodies and their respective leadership (438). As Morgan writes:

an intense competition for leadership arose between OM staff and the FTT leadership. In addition to the cultural phenomena of the shortage economy and traditional power of bureaucracy over allocation, suspicion and competition became personality-based. Leadership of the FTT was in the hands of three leaders of higher education reform in Hungary. These leaders had clashed many times with the interests of the traditional power structure. A change in government in the Spring of 1998 intensified this dimension because the new OM staff leadership was drawn from the traditional power structure and the new government in general tried to distance itself from policies associated with the previous government, including those of higher education reform (Morgan et al. 2000: 438).

Increasingly, the OM came to view the FTT as exceeding its initial charter as an advisory body, while the Council's chronic understaffing and underfunding continued to create a bottleneck in institutional development plans. In addition to underfunding the FTT, the OM established the Fund Management Directorate of the Ministry of Education (OMAI)²⁰ in 2001 to retain key allocative functions that the OM would have otherwise been forced to devolve to the FTT. At the institutional level, rectors tended to view the formalized transparency requirements of the FTT as an unnecessary impediment to negotiations with the primary funding body, the OM:

while these processes and requirements were endorsed by the government and the World Bank (WB), the FTT found itself in the difficult role of trying to change patterns of interaction between institutions and the OM (Morgan et al. 2000: 438–439).

The 1996 amendment to the Higher Education Act formally required integrating institutions to form supervisory councils²¹ to “supervise, judge and evaluate the economic management of the institution and make proposals to improve it (Morgan et al. 2000: 439).” The amendment further stipulated that the majority of

council members could not be employees of the HEI. Contrary to American practice, members were to be appointed to the council for renewable three-year terms by the university senate. Following a 1999 amendment to the 1993 Higher Education Act, the nomenclature and competence of the institutional-level councils were downgraded from “supervisory” to “advisory” (441). As Morgan writes:

the reformers’ early victories in securing parliamentary provisions for the FTT have been redefined and diminished somewhat by the power of the [OM] to issue decrees detailing implementation (Morgan et al. 2000: 444).

Given the large percentage of the Hungarian population and the high number of HEIs concentrated in Budapest, it is little surprise that the two regional centers of Debrecen and Szeged have been instrumental in the implementation of such reform programs as institutional integration and advisory councils, and that such elite Budapest universities as Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE)²² have typically sought to undermine the implementation of what they see as undesirable reforms (444–445). In fact, it was only following intense lobbying by powerful Budapest universities that the implementation of institutional-level advisory councils was reduced from mandatory to optional (445). As Morgan writes, “this theme of the opposition of traditionally powerful institutions is a familiar one in reform” (Morgan et al. 2000: 445). In addition to attempts by the OM and the universities to manipulate the membership and powers of the FTT to their benefit, the establishment of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) can also be seen as an attempt to neutralize the challenge posed to the bimodal distribution of power (between university senates and the OM) by the FTT. Specifically, Morgan argues that:

the Hungarian Accreditation Committee [MAB], an entirely new actor on the scene, was in some ways competing with the FTT for its respective role in quality controls, but overall its role was less threatening to either the [OM] or the universities. In a way the [MAB] was merely a revised structural manifestation of the alliance between the professorate and the government – governments have always needed academics to define and monitor specialized knowledge [and that] further complicating the importation of reforms is the top-down, mandatory nature of many of these reforms. While lay boards, particularly at the institutional level, are not viewed as onerous, other elements of the reform provisions and their origins are ascribed as much to the World Bank as they are the Hungarian Government. Perceptions of imposition therefore taint all elements of the reform package and serve as important symbols for those opposing reform. If lay advisory boards are viewed as reforms of a particular government or an initiative of the World Bank, then there is a low probability of their longer-term institutionalization. Succeeding governments may reject

such reforms as symbols of rival political parties or unwanted strings attached to international loans (Morgan et al. 2000: 445–446).

In conclusion, Morgan writes that:

as economic and academic globalization marches on, [...] characteristic structural features of the region, such as relatively weak, elected rectors and very powerful senates with broad management powers, clash with what might be regarded as ‘global’ management models that call for a stronger executive function including expanded powers of the rector and separation of administrative from faculty expertise (Morgan et al. 2000: 447).

The 1993 HE Act represented a major development in the codification of institutional autonomy in Hungarian law. Writing on the BP and Hungarian HE, author Katalin Rádli reviews the various laws and ministerial decrees comprising HE policy in Hungary (Rádli 2002: 159–168). Specifically, she cites the 1985 Education and 1993 Higher Education Acts, which reintroduced the pre-Socialist organization of HE, established the bases for institutional autonomy, provided the legal and organizational conditions necessary for future reforms, and consolidated the administration of HE under the KM (159).²³ Subsequent decrees established the MAB and the FTT.

Not surprisingly, competing stakeholder groups often hold conflicting demands for autonomy. Writing on the various conceptions of autonomy found in education policy discourse in Hungary in the 1980s and 1990s, author Géza Sáska argues that the demand for increased autonomy has been raised by four distinct stakeholder groups within the field of public education (Sáska 2002/2003: 34). Specifically, Sáska argues that: (1) the OM has attempted to consolidate its hold on public education policy vis à vis the claims of competing ministries; (2) that teachers have sought to guard their profession from the interference of non-professionals; (3) that local administrators have sought to retain control over the educational process; and finally (4) that student organizations have sought to win a greater voice in the policies that effect their education (34 and 42–43). Interestingly, Sáska locates the turning point in the democratization of the educational system in Hungary in the 1980s, *prior* to the transition from the Socialist system of government (52). According to Sáska, the tensions resulting from the contradictory demands for autonomy within the field of public education are a legacy of state socialism, which have yet to be resolved by the logic of the market economy (53). According to Sáska, the explanation for the survival of this anachronistic vestige of egalitarianism in an age of market driven reforms is simply a lack of money. The idea that all of the stakeholders involved in the education process are equally deserving of autonomy is apparently a naive assumption that will remain unchallenged until the state has the requisite political and financial capacity to in-

roduce market-driven reforms in the public sector (35). As László Békési, Finance Minister under the Németh government²⁴ explained, “until the country spends more money on public education, the task is to develop school autonomy” (Sáska 2002/2003: 53). In practice, decentralization acted to consolidate the power of the OM elites within the educational sector by marginalizing competing interest groups from the decision-making processes in the nation’s schools (36–37). According to Sáska, the goal of the Hungarian OM was not local-level autonomy at all. Instead, the OM sought to monopolize education policy by establishing the principle of sector-level autonomy (37). As Sáska writes, “the ministry wanted to isolate the field of education from general rules of public administration, and this situation decided who the ministry could enter into an alliance with” (37).

3. Mobility

Writing in thirteen articles, authors Károly Barakonyi, Márton Csanády, László Dinya, Peter Grootings, Ildikó Hrubos, Berta Papp, Dezső Sima, Pál Tamás, Leslie Wilson and Colin Woodard address the mobility of students, faculty and graduates between nations, institutions, programs and levels of education. Specifically, the authors focus on professional mobility as one of the few incentives for the Hungarian professorate to support the reform of Hungarian HE, the growing recognition of the need to provide marketable degrees, the need for greater labor mobility in a global market, accession to the EU and its consequences for Hungarian HE, challenges posed by the lack of student mobility, types of student mobility, changes in the Vocational Education and Training (VET) system, the introduction of a diploma supplement system, potential threats posed by the increased mobility of labor between EU member states, student mobility and the dual degree system, the relationship between HE and the Hungarian economy, the TEMPUS, and finally the phenomenon of scientific brain drain from Hungarian universities.

One of the few incentives for the Hungarian professorate to support the reform of HE is the promise of greater professional mobility. Writing in a 2005 article, Károly Barakonyi²⁵ argues that the Hungarian system of HE has become “top heavy” as the ratio of university to college students has surpassed international standards (Barakonyi 2005). As Barakonyi explains, the restructuring of HE isn’t necessarily in the direct interest of Hungarian educators, since the implementation of the reform will represent a significant addition to their workload. The development of new courses, programs, departments and administrative systems represents a tremendous demand on the time and energy of already overburdened educators, which may explain their widespread opposition to reforms. Despite this, Barakonyi argues that the professorate does stand to profit from the BP – if only as

a consequence of the increased mobility between Hungarian and Western universities.

It is clear that the mobility of Hungarian graduates will depend in part on the marketability of HE degrees. Writing in a 2002 article, Károly Barakonyi explains that – as a consequence of the Bologna Declaration (BD) – Hungarian HEIs have begun to recognize the importance of the marketability of HE degrees (Barakonyi 2002c). Specifically, Barakonyi predicts that life-long learning will become an important mechanism for upward social mobility, cultural cohesion and the quality of life in the emerging knowledge-based society, and that the cultivation of a common European identity among HE students is only a mechanism to facilitate the recognition and adoption of the principles of the EU. In conclusion, Barakonyi argues that HEIs, and universities in particular, are inherently conservative and extremely resistant to external reforms.

This is particularly worrisome, since the mobility of advanced human capital within the European Union is primarily a function of the mobility of HE students. Writing in a 2002 volume on the BD and Hungarian HE, Károly Barakonyi argues that – because HE is a part of a larger socioeconomic context – social changes necessitate changes in HE policy (Barakonyi 2002a: 40). Specifically, Barakonyi argues that the education, creativity and mobility of national labor forces all influence the ability of EU member states to compete in a global market (42). Accordingly, the region's success or failure in the global market will depend largely on the performance of its national systems of HE. While Barakonyi argues that the transformation of HE (from a dual to a linear degree system) will foster greater student and workforce mobility, he fails to address the accompanying decline in academic standards, autonomy and the number of students continuing on to graduate school (43). Characteristically, the EU plans to utilize HE in the cultivation and reproduction of a common European identity. Specifically, the EU has emphasized the need for university students to cultivate a shared European culture, to familiarize themselves with the history and cultures of other member states, to recognize the advantages, drawbacks and challenges posed by EU membership, and finally to learn other European languages (44). Continuing, Barakonyi explains that the successful transformation of HE will require an honest assessment of the degree to which the Hungarian system of HE meets the challenges of globalization, the expectations of the EU, and the conditions of the BP (45). As Barakonyi explains, a widespread lack of internal mobility precludes program changes once a student has begun his or her studies, thus forcing students entering new programs to start over from the beginning (46). As Barakonyi explains:

the unfolding competition for students, institutions have formed more and more specialized programs in a bid to salvage faculty and funding from moribund programs (Barakonyi 2002a: 46).

The worrisome multiplication of programs and a general lack of mobility have led to the overproduction of graduates in some fields and shortages of graduates in others (47). As Barakonyi explains, instead of reflecting the needs of society, the overly specialized structure of HE reflects the undue influence of governmental, institutional and academic lobbyists, and tracks future university students into specializations before they have even graduated from high school, thus exacerbating Hungary's already low retention rate. The rigidity of the educational system, the lack of early exit opportunities and the difficulties posed by program changes all squander limited national resources. Thus, the rising number of students continuing on to HE has severely strained the dual degree system. Continuing, Barakonyi argues that the unwarranted combination of practical and theoretical education has: (1) made it difficult to conduct the sort of budgeting and planning necessary to synchronize higher education outputs with manpower requirements; (2) hindered the recognition of Hungarian degrees in the EU and foreign degrees in Hungary; and (3) limited the free flow of labor and student mobility (47–48). As Barakonyi argues, workforce mobility is largely a function of student mobility, which is itself premised upon the compatibility of credit systems (49). Unfortunately, the overspecialization²⁶ found in many departments has proven counterproductive. In fact, enrollment figures for Hungarian HE peaked in the 1970s and remained fairly level until the mid-1990s when the sector witnessed a 50% jump in attendance (50). Subsequent increases in student enrollments have severely strained the infrastructural capacity of both universities and colleges (50–51). Despite this dramatic rise in student enrollment, Hungary has nevertheless managed to maintain a reasonable student-teacher ratio of eleven students for every teacher (as Barakonyi explains, the average student-teacher ratio in Hungarian HE dropped from 11 to 1 in 1965 to an amazing 5 to 9 in 1990 and climbed back to 11 to 1 by 1997) (51). Reviewing the changing profile of the HE sector, Barakonyi observes that the fields of Agricultural and Religious Studies showed the highest rates of growth in the 1990s (51–52). Despite the overproduction of teachers and a demographic dip in the number of primary school students, the number of students enrolled in teacher training programs showed steady growth (52–53). In addition, there were slight increases in enrollments in the fields of Medicine and the Fine Arts.²⁷ Between 1990 and 2000, the fields of Economics and Engineering continued to show significant growth. As Barakonyi explains, the growth witnessed in the field of Economics is not unexpected, given the arrival of Neoliberal Capitalism. More surprising, perhaps, is the overall continuity in the profile (if not scale) of the HE sector despite the radical transformation to Hungary's political and economic systems. Among the possible explanations for the continuity in HE in the 1990s, Barakonyi cites: (1) the hesitant and contradictory process of social transformation; (2) the continued power of the interest groups controlling the

ministries, HEIs and various academic fields; and (3) a general abhorrence of change and lack of strategic foresight endemic to the sector. While the 1993 Higher Education Act stipulated a dual system in HE, in actual practice the Hungarian system of HE does not meet the strict definition of a dual system, since universities are entitled to start college programs and colleges can form university programs (55). Unfortunately, this combination of dual and linear systems has tended to retain all of the weaknesses and none of the strengths of each model. In addition, the integration process has only served to complicate the picture: college and university programs offering all but identical curricula within the same institution found it convenient to ignore their functional redundancy, choosing instead to observe the principle of "live and let live" (55–56). In conclusion, Barakonyi argues that Hungarian HE is in dire need of a paradigm shift involving the mandatory introduction of a linear degree system and the limitation of the dual model to the provision of elite education (60). Citing the degree of autonomy enjoyed by Hungarian universities and the lack of direct governmental intervention in the structure of academic disciplines, Barakonyi argues for the need to introduce alternative intervention mechanisms and differentiate between elite and mass education (arguing that elite education should represent only a tiny fraction of sector capacity) (61–62). As Barakonyi explains, the superficial character of the integration process suggests that the genuine transformation of HE will require the introduction of such financial incentives as mandatory tuition fees (arguing that tuition-free education should only be available to students in elite university programs, because a policy of automatic and general entitlement to tuition-free HE constitutes an unnecessary waste of resources. In conclusion, Barakonyi argues that the new educational system will require a new class of professional leadership (62).

The mobility of HE students and faculty can be expected to increase significantly with Hungary's accession to the EU. Writing in a 2004 article, author Márton Csanády examines the state of Hungarian HE in the context of its accession to the EU (Csanády 2004). Specifically, Csanády argues that the most important consequence of EU membership will be the increased mobility of capital, students and labor. While the increased flow of capital has already resulted in the arrival of for-profit, foreign educational institutions in Hungary, Csanády predicts that increased student mobility will result in: (1) the flight of relatively advantaged students to Western universities and (2) an influx of ethnic Hungarian students from neighboring countries into Hungarian universities. The free flow of labor, however, can be expected to result in the flight of Hungarian university graduates to better paying jobs in Western Europe and the United States (which would represent a one-way transfer of human capital from Hungary to the West).²⁸ Nevertheless, Csanády argues that each of these tendencies can be kept in check through the mechanism of government regulation. Surprisingly, Csanády argues

that the profile of the HE sector changed tremendously in the 1990s as medical and pharmacological programs experienced a growth rate of 20%. By comparison, the Economics, the Humanities, Religious Studies, Law, Engineering, Agriculture and the natural sciences were characterized by growth rates of as much as 379%. Continuing, Csanády argues that the expansion of HE that occurred in Hungary in the 1960s and 1970s has had a strong influence on subsequent attempts to restructure the sector. In particular, Csanády argues that the massification of the HE sector represents increases in the number of part-time and non-traditional students. In fact, part-time students accounted for roughly one-half of all students in HE in Hungary in 2003. In the same year, there were 23 universities and 43 colleges operating in Hungary, of which 30 were operated by the state, 10 by foundations and 26 by churches. Despite this proliferation of institutions, over 80% of HE students attend one of the 30 institutions operated by the state, an unusually high percentage in comparison with other recent accession states. In addition to the growing number of part-time students, the number of Hungarian students studying abroad grew from around 8,000 in 2000 to 12,226 in 2002. While Csanády notes that Hungary attracts nearly as many foreign students as it sends abroad each year, many of the foreign students attending Hungarian HEIs are ethnic Hungarians arriving from neighbouring countries with considerably less income than students arriving from Arab states to study in Hungary's well regarded medical and dental programs.

Paradoxically, the historical lack of student mobility at Hungarian HEIs has had both positive and negative consequences for the Hungarian economy. Writing in a 2002 article, author László Dinya describes three common positions taken by higher education stakeholders on the challenges posed by the lack of mobility in higher education (Dinya 2002b). The first reaction typically downplays the alleged challenges relative to already existing social problems, the second tends to take a wait and see approach to the challenges, while the third laments the inadequate response to the challenges. Because there is ample evidence both for and against each of the three positions, their adoption primarily reflects the interests, social status and access to information of the individual in question. Dinya laments what he characterizes as the overly particular focus of the debate of BP reforms, and warns that without further deliberation the challenges posed by the reforms may lead to counterproductive competition between colleges and universities. As he explains:

the operation of any organization (be it a business, institution or church) is meaningless unless it serves some sort of social function. No organization can function without access to labor, materials, money and information, all of which represent the direct or indirect support of the members of society (Dinya 2002b).

Although the general lack of mobility in HE tends to insulate less competitive programs from the influence of market forces, Dinya ironically observes that it also has the advantage of limiting the flight of Hungarian PhDs to western universities.

It is important to note, however, that student mobility can occur along several different dimensions. Writing in a 2002 article, author László Dinya differentiates between three types of student mobility targeted by the BP: (1) mobility between different types and levels of education; (2) mobility between different institutions and countries; and (3) mobility between different phases and schedules of education (Dinya 2002c). Specifically, Dinya argues that increased student mobility within the European Union is a necessary, if not sufficient, factor in the eventual realization of a European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In particular, Dinya argues that HEIs must diversify their services and reevaluate: (1) their unresponsiveness to student demand; (2) their focus on BA and Master of Arts (MA) programs to the detriment of other levels and types of education (e.g., doctoral programs, second degrees and continuing education); and (3) their inability to implement effective internal QA measures. In conclusion, Dinya observes that diversification need not necessarily preclude a well-organized and clearly structured HE system.

Not surprisingly, the flexibility and mobility of the Hungarian workforce is closely linked to the effectiveness of its vocational education and training (VET)²⁹ system. In a 1993 article author Peter Grootings explains that the transition from a centrally-planned to a market-oriented economy will demand fundamental changes in the structure, organization, management, administration, content, delivery, monitoring and assessment of the Hungary's VET system (Grootings 1993: 229). Specifically, Grootings argues that system will require greater flexibility to be able to respond effectively to the shifting demands of Hungary's labor market. According to Grootings, however, the scale of necessary changes will require a reform strategy beyond the scope of individual legal or administrative acts (229–230). According to the author, the reform of the VET system has been on the agenda since the early 1960s, when Hungary took steps to liberalize its economy (230–231). Although the VET system of the planned economy of Socialist Hungary was originally intended to substitute for the mechanism of a labor market by artificially synchronizing the type and number of graduates to forecasted manpower requirements, the VET system created a supply-driven labor market with little concern for cost, quality or efficiency (231–232). While the educational system was successful in realizing a high degree of intergenerational social mobility in the decades immediately following the Second World War, it nevertheless failed to increase intra-generational mobility enough to accommodate the larger percentage of students being graduated from secondary education (232). In the 1990s the newly created Ministry of Social Services and Labor (SZMM)³⁰ took

over primary responsibility for the VET from the OM (234). In retrospect, it is clear that the vocational educational system has been characterized by severe overspecialization, offering training in literally hundreds of occupations (235). Although the VET system was already in need of structural reform as early as the 1960s, its quality continued to decline through the 1970s and 1980s as a consequence of severe under funding (236–237). In the years immediately following the political transition, the VET system proved incapable of adapting to the demand for such market-oriented skills as accounting, business management and foreign language proficiency. Although the VET system did eventually develop a job training program for the unemployed, it took several years before the program was actually implemented. According to Grootings, such organizations as the EU and the WB can and should serve as a mediating mechanism between Hungary's educational system and labor market. In fact, Grootings notes that western countries have proven reluctant to provide aid unless it is explicitly linked to systemic reform and the transition to a market economy. The OECD and the ECom, in particular, have attempted to substitute bilateral with multilateral aid agreements, relying in particular on the PHARE program (237).³¹ As Grootings explains, the PHARE program now influences the content, controls the financing, and administers the implementation of structural reforms with all of the region's governments. In addition to the PHARE program, the WB has also had a major impact on the direction education policy has taken in Hungary by linking its aid packages to conditions aligned with its own development agenda. According to Grootings, much of the initial assistance provided by western nations has been in the form of capacity building (238). In conclusion, Grootings argues that the reforms financed by the ECom and the WB in the early 1990s had little structural impact on Hungary's VET system, serving instead to increase the capacity of an essentially outdated system. Specifically, Grootings reports that even as late as 1993 Hungary had yet to integrate the three main branches of VET (targeting youth, adults and the unemployed) into a single, coherent system.

In addition to the reform of the vocational education and training (VET) system, the introduction of a diploma supplement system promises to increase the international mobility of Hungarian graduates. Writing in a 2004 article, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs at the Corvinus University of Budapest³² and consultant for the Higher Education Research Institute,³³ Ildikó Hrubos describes the evolution of Hungary's diploma supplement system (Hrubos 2004). As Hrubos explains, the diploma supplement system is intended to aid in the comparison of HE degrees and thereby increase the international mobility of HE students, educators and graduates. Thus, the Hungarian government issued a decree in April 2003 mandating the provision of a Hungarian-language diploma supplement free of charge to degree recipients from June 2003, as well as the provision of an English-language diploma supplement at the student's expense from 2005.

Unfortunately, not all forms of mobility are benign. Specifically, the flight of both labor and capital represent a drain on the Hungarian economy. In an article on the future of work and learning in Hungary, author Berta Papp argues that the development of “a lean and responsive” public sector would “facilitate markets in becoming more competitive, leading to improvements in productivity, economic growth, and reinforcing the country’s knowledge capital” (Papp 2005: 42). According to Papp, Hungary’s lackluster economic performance is a direct result of its failure to invest in human resources (44). Papp attributes this failure to attract private investment primarily to the failure of HEIs to adapt to the demands of the market. Specifically, Papp argues that it is necessary to develop effective adult education programs to remedy the ill effects of unemployment and social exclusion, especially amongst Hungary’s Roma population (45). Papp also warns that the continued decline in fertility rates among Hungarians will increase the already considerable financial burden posed by an inefficient public sector. Addressing the impact of globalization on learning and work, Papp notes that Hungary has benefited from exceptionally high levels of direct foreign investment during its transition from a Socialist to a market economy (46). Specifically, she reports that foreign-owned companies gained control of over half of the total equity in Hungary during the 1990s. Although Papp warns of the danger of regional competitors taking advantage of Hungary’s highly skilled workforce and lower wage labor market, she fails to consider the possibility that the presence of Western firms in Hungary might be explained by similarly opportunistic motives. In conclusion, Papp warns of the threat to the Hungarian economy posed by the brain drain of Hungary’s scientific elite as a consequence of increased employment mobility within the EU (46–47).

The transition to a linear BA, MA, PhD degree system can be expected to increase the mobility of Hungarian students between nations, institutions and levels of education. Writing in a 2002 article, author Dezső Sima describes the main attributes of the two most common HE models: (1) a linear, sequential, two-cycle Anglo-American model and (2) a dual model adopted throughout the German-speaking nations of Europe (Sima 2002: 26). Continuing, Sima notes the differential marketability of ostensibly equivalent degrees earned from different HEIs (20). Prior to the 1997–1998 reform of German HE, the dual degree system was divided between universities and Fachhochschulen (26–27). The Fachhochschulen offered a four-year practice-oriented degree, while the universities offered a five or five and a half year theory-oriented degree (27). While Sima argues that the dual degree structure that evolved in Hungary in the applied sciences in the late 1960s merely mirrored the structure of Hungary’s ministries, he observes that the difference between colleges and universities was considerably smaller in Hungary than in Germany. As Sima explains, undifferentiated funding practices tend to favor the adoption of the significantly less expensive theoretical,

and not practical, curricula (29). According to Sima, the degrees awarded by Hungarian colleges in the late 1990s were roughly equivalent to BA or BSc degrees, while university degrees were nearly equivalent to MA or MSc degrees (35). As Sima explains, the voluntary introduction of a two-cycle degree structure at several of Hungary's universities (including the Budapest Technical University, the University of Miskolc and the University of Veszprém) can serve as a model for national reforms (36). Thus, the tightly integrated coursework of a five-year university degree will have to be completely reorganized to form a two-cycle degree structure (36). In conclusion, Sima writes that western European degree structures suggest the adoption of one of two possible alternative models: the 3+2 year model or the 4+2 year model (38). While Sima admits that the 3+2 year degree structure would be relatively more cost effective and offer the greatest degree of continuity with the current degree structure, he argues that the 4+2 year degree structure would best guarantee the quality and reform of the HE sector, since the latter would offer students an additional semester in which to complete their theses. While the greater expense involved in the extra year of study would be offset by the significantly smaller number of students continuing on the second degree cycle, Sima argues that the genuine reform of Hungarian HE will require a considerable increase in government funding (39).

The economic relevance of HE is significantly diminished by the lack of student mobility between institutions, programs and degree cycles. Writing in a 1979 article, author Pál Tamás argues that:

the fundamental issue in debates on higher education policy in Hungary is in determining the degree to which the educational system and economic processes are interrelated [...]. Everyone participating in the debate recognizes that a relationship does exist and the positions tend to differ only with respect to the strength of this relationship. According to one opinion (that of the group of experts linked with economic planning), educational planning, and in particular higher educational planning, is part of, or at least in close relation to, manpower planning [...]. According to others, higher education has numerous [cultural] functions in addition to that of qualification [...]. Therefore, planning and network development can only take place if all functions are taken into account (Tamás 1979: 349).

In conclusion, Tamás argues that:

the chief element of change in college and university education would be to eliminate the 'blind alleys' which have developed between different forms of training. This would mean creating an institutional guarantee of 'communication' among the different training levels and faculties, thus causing the regional inequalities in higher education to decline (Tamás 1979: 349).

One of the primary means of increasing the mobility of HE students in the EU has been the Trans-European mobility scheme for university studies, commonly known as TEMPUS.³⁴ In a 1993 article, author Leslie Wilson explains that TEMPUS was among the earliest external assistance schemes implemented under the auspices of the ECom PHARE program of support for the economic and political restructuring of East Central Europe (Wilson 1993: 429).³⁵ Formally adopted by the European Council (EC) in 1990, the budget and scope of the scheme were gradually expanded from 25 million European Currency Units (ECUs)³⁶ available for Poland, Hungary and Czechoslovakia, a 1991 budget of 70 million ECUs extended to include Bulgaria, Romania and the former Yugoslavia, a 1992 budget of 100 million ECUs further extended to include Albania and the Baltic States, and finally a 1993 budget of 133.5 million ECUs extended to include Russia, Belarus and the Ukraine. While the primary objective of the Scheme was to promote the restructuring of HE in ECE through partnerships with ECom member states, it was also an attempt to redress specific manpower and workforce deficiencies. As Wilson explains, these objectives were realized through such policy instruments as Joint European Projects (JEPs) (430). Specifically, JEPs are designed to facilitate structural change through the revision of curricula, workforce development for teaching staff, student mobility, intensive programs, investment in infrastructure, cooperation with industry and the establishment of new institutions. In evaluating the impact of the Scheme, the author differentiates between departmental-, institutional- and sector-level changes. Specifically, Wilson finds that the greatest impact of the Scheme has been in supporting department-level reform through curriculum development, material assistance and increased staff and student mobility between the former Socialist states and Western Europe (430–431). While the tremendous expense and difficulty involved in establishing new institutions has tended to limit the institutional-level impact of the Scheme, a few projects have created new institutions in such areas as Business Management and Environmental Studies, topics new to the region's education systems (431). In addition to the outright creation of new institutions, reforms in individual departments can also be assumed to have a cumulative impact at the institutional-level. Although JEPs have been targeted to meet the concrete needs of individual departments in individual institutions, the implementation of a critical mass of such projects has had a definite impact on the sector as a whole. Although the Scheme accounts for approximately 10% of the overall PHARE budget and some 37% of actual expenditures, it "is only one instrument of an overall aid program designed to support economic, social and political transformation in Central and Eastern Europe" (Wilson 1993: 432). The priority given to the Scheme within the PHARE program reflects a general political consensus that the reform of HE is an indispensable element in the successful transition to a market economy. Nevertheless, Wilson concludes that the lack of a clearly articulated HE policy in the countries in question

makes it difficult to determine the degree to which the “bottom-up” initiatives supported by the Scheme are harmonized with national policy (432–433). Specifically, the author argues for the need to elaborate a set of concrete priorities to serve as guidelines for the evaluation of prospective TEMPUS projects (433). Among the factors contributing to the success of such projects, Wilson cites the cooperation (and not just material aid) of Western participants, the involvement of individuals committed to reform, realistic and clearly articulated goals, adequate financing, the coordination of curriculum development within “a coherent institutional development strategy”, the selection of participating staff on the basis of age, language ability and openness to change, and finally the full support of institutions involved in the projects (433–434). Factors contributing to the failure or underperformance of TEMPUS projects include an inadequate understanding of, or ability to articulate, the requirements of eligible country partners the lack of clear and realistic objectives, the lack of a consensus on the most appropriate means of realizing project goals, inadequate individual or institutional buy-in to project goals, and finally the failure of Western partners to adjust to the economic and political realities of ECE (434). Although TEMPUS has succeeded in addressing the “rigid separation of teaching and research”, the Scheme did not initially target the diversification of HE. In conclusion, Wilson writes that it is of particular importance for TEMPUS projects to demonstrate the sector’s potential impact on human resource development to PHARE coordinators (435).

Hungary’s recent EU membership and the eventual removal of barriers to workforce mobility can be expected to result in the flight of science and engineering PhDs to Western Europe. In a 2005 article, author Colin Woodard explains that barriers to immigration to the West in the early 1990s meant that the flight of scientists from the region’s universities was primarily internal flight into the private sector, retirement or even unemployment, and – to a lesser extent – external flight to the West (Woodard 2005). In some areas, the transition to a market economy resulted in 50% cuts in research and development funding and the loss of as much as 70% of research staff. EU membership and the lifting of labor restrictions are predicted to induce another wave of flight from the region’s research institutions. Specifically, a 2004 ECom study forecasts a 10 to 13% loss of students and 5% loss of university graduates from the region to other EU member states. According to Woodard, the acute lack of research funding in Hungary leaves the country vulnerable to scientific brain drain. Although the amount spent on research and development (R&D) in Hungary as a percentage of the nation’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is approximately half the European average, this is not particularly surprising considering Hungary’s financial woes and significantly lower standard of living. While the former Minister of Education, Bálint Magyar acknowledged that Hungary lags far behind the European average, he noted that support for applied (as opposed to basic) research has been substantially in-

creased. According to Magyar, the fundamental problem limiting investment in R&D is the lack of private sector involvement. The push by the OM to increase investment in applied research while cutting investment in basic research has met with strident opposition within the research community. Specifically, the President of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences, E. Sylvester Vizi, has argued that cutting support for basic science will ultimately damage applied research as well. The MTA operates some thirty-seven research institutes which in turn fund numerous university-affiliated research groups. The MTA and its dependent institutions were particularly sensitive to the policy changes under Bálint Magyar's tenure at the OM since their funding is received almost exclusively from the central budget.

4. Massification

Writing in twelve articles, authors György Bazsa, Judit Lannert, László Dinya, Ildikó Hrubos, Lilla Juhász, László Kadocsa, Ádám Kiss, Tamás Kozma, Gyöngyi Petre and András Róna-Tas address the massification of HE that began in Hungary in the mid 1990s. Specifically, the authors focus on the rationale behind the massification of HE in Hungary, the impact of demographic and policy changes on Hungarian HE, the increased participation of the non-university sector in HE policy, the diversification and decentralization of HE, the evolution of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), challenges facing Hungarian HE, institutional resistance to the introduction of a two-cycle degree structure, economic instability and educational reforms, counterproductive competition between applicants resulting from admissions quotas, the role of consumer demand in HE policy, the conception of HE as both a public service and a sector of the national economy, and finally the democratization of HE.

The ongoing massification of Hungary's HE system has been accompanied by a considerable decline in quality. Writing in a 2002 article, György Bazsa³⁷ argues that this decline in quality is also due to the early and irreversible specialization of university students, a lack of mobility between disciplines, and the tacit assumption that a student's general education is completed in secondary school (Bazsa 2002). Despite these shortcomings, Bazsa concludes that, taken as a whole, Hungarian HE is still competitive, in many cases conducting world-class research amidst considerable financial difficulties. According to Bazsa, the implementation of BP related reforms in Hungary is justified by: (1) the need and opportunity to adjust to European HE trends; (2) compatibility with European HE; (3) the need to make Hungarian graduates more competitive; (4) the continuing educational opportunities offered by a linear degree system; (5) the need to rationalize the sec-

tor (by allowing progressively fewer students to proceed on to each successive degree cycle); and (6) the greater efficiency of early exit opportunities.

The massification of HE in Hungary is partly a consequence of higher graduation rates at secondary schools. Addressing the massification of HE, authors Judit Lannert et al. argue that changes in the horizontal structure of public education were primarily an outcome of the expansion of secondary education (which resulted in the increased demand for HE) (Lannert et al. 2006: 75). While partly the result of a demographic bulge, the expansion of secondary education can best be explained by increased competition between schools for students (as changes in financing laws induced schools to attract and retain as many students as possible) (72). The profile of secondary education was transformed in the 1990s as the percentage of students attending strictly vocational institutions decreased dramatically and the percentage of students attending grammar and grammar-vocational schools increased (76). This horizontal change was realized not by the closing of old and the opening of new institutions, but rather by the restructuring (or as some have argued, the renaming) of already operating vocational schools (76–77). Consequently:

the number of secondary institutions with a mixed profile (having both general secondary and vocational programs) increased considerably (Lannert et al. 2006: 76).

Continuing, the authors explain that HE under Socialism was fundamentally elitist in character, open to an extremely small segment of secondary school graduates, but that the increased demand for HE (resulting from the increased number of secondary school graduates) and the financial interests of HEIs have resulted in a 300% increase in the number of students admitted to HE (despite a much lower 33% increase in the number of secondary school graduates) (77):

those applying for admission to higher education (regular courses) rose quickly until 1995, and since the mid-1990s the level has stagnated at around 80,000 applicants (Lannert et al. 2006: 77).

The percentage of applicants admitted, however, has shown a gradual increase from 36% in 1990 to 60% in 2002. Despite these dramatic changes in enrollment, sector capacity (as measured in the size, number and quality of its institutions) has increased only slightly.

The massification of HE has been accompanied by the increased involvement of the non-university sector in policy formulation. Writing in a 2002 article, author László Dinya explains that the non-university sector of HE has only recently succeeded in airing its interests in the policy debates shaping the future of HE (Dinya 2002a). Specifically, the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) has successfully lobbied on behalf of national and profes-

sional associations of colleges before the European Council (EC), the EU and on the board of Bologna follow-up groups. In conclusion, Dinya argues that policy discourse has overemphasized the importance of a globalized labor market and failed to recognize the need for innovation and basic research in the formation of a knowledge-based society.

The continued massification of the Hungarian system of HE will require the diversification of institutions and programs. Writing in a 1997 article, author and sociologist Ildikó Hrubos argues that the diversification of HE is a politically desirable change, because a diverse set of institutions and programs will be necessary to meet the demand for mass education (Hrubos 1997). Specifically, Hrubos argues that the diversification of HE entails the indirect multiplication of disciplines, programs and course offerings. Despite nominal efforts to integrate the HE sector, Hrubos argues that the Hungarian government's preference for indirect rather than direct policy instruments (i.e., for allocating funding on a competitive basis) has promoted differentiation between institutions. Nevertheless, Hrubos warns that differentiation and homogenization are not necessarily mutually exclusive processes: "different dimensions of higher education (individual institutions, sectors or disciplines) can move in different directions, and are constantly changing over time" (Hrubos 1997). As Hrubos explains, the diversification of HE (1) is better at accommodating heterogeneous student demands; (2) is better positioned to meet the needs of the workforce; (3) allows the combination of élite and mass forms of education; (4) represents a more efficient distribution of expertise; and (5) limits the risks involved in innovation to individual institutions or sectors. Despite this, Hrubos argues that competition for limited resources tends to result in greater homogeneity (i.e., that competing institutions grow more and more alike as their environment rewards the imitation of previously successful institutions). Continuing, Hrubos differentiates between three basic types of HE systems: (1) *unified* systems (i.e., systems not explicitly divided into university and non-university subsectors) found in Australia, Sweden and the United Kingdom; (2) *binary* systems (i.e., systems including both university and non-university subsectors) found in Canada, Finland, Germany and Holland; and (3) *diversified* systems (i.e. systems diversified in both content and form) found in the United States. Ultimately, however, Hrubos concludes that it is impractical to study individual HE systems isolated from their particular social setting and historical background. As Hrubos explains, it is this complex set of interactions that so often confounds policy makers with unanticipated outcomes.

The BP, and the specific reforms it entails, can be considered an attempt to slow and shift the massification of HE in a direction conducive to the evolution of the EHEA. Writing in a 2004 report on the implementation of BP-related reforms in Hungary,³⁸ author Lilla Juhász explains that the EU has struggled with a perceived lack of democratic legitimacy and a resurgence of nationalism among its

member states (Juhász 2004). While the BP represents one part of a larger strategy developed by the “Eurocracy” in Brussels to deflect these threats, the process also represents a shift towards a knowledge-based society involving: (1) the horizontal restructuring of the formerly vertical structures and sectors of industrial society, as well as (2) the appearance of entirely new branches of knowledge and interdisciplinary programs. Thus, (1) inflexible disciplinary structures, (2) language barriers, (3) a lack of compatibility between degree systems and (4) inadequate student and faculty mobility between HE programs and institutions each obstruct the creation of a knowledge-based EU. Specifically, the author describes three basic models of HE systems: (1) a British model (characterized by institutional autonomy, a tutorial system, a linear progression of degrees, and a pronounced lack of either state or market oversight); (2) a Prussian or Bismarckian model (characterized by institutional autonomy, a division between the theoretical orientation of traditional universities and the practical orientation of technical colleges and universities, and little state oversight); and (3) a French or Napoleonic model (characterized by a division between university and non-university subsectors and direct state control of curricula and examinations). As Juhász explains, the massification of HE in Western Europe in the 1960s occurred in response to the information and technology revolution and primarily affected enrollment at technical colleges and universities. The subsequent glut of university graduates and the threat posed by large numbers of unemployed graduates led to increased state control over student and faculty quotas in the 1970s. Continuing, Juhász surveys the main landmarks on the road to the EHEA. Specifically, she cites the commitment to a common European identity expressed by the Council of Europe (CoE)³⁹ in its 1954 European Cultural Convention (ECC) as the first step on the road to the BP and the EHEA.⁴⁰ As Juhász explains, the 1988 signing of the Magna Charta Universitatum (MCU) at the University of Bologna represented a commitment to the ideals of institutional autonomy and academic freedom. The adoption of a revised International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)⁴¹ by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1997 established a framework for the comparison of national education systems. While the CoE and UNESCO formally recognized education as an inalienable human right with the joint ratification of the Lisbon Convention⁴² in 2000, it defined HE as an *instrument* and not an *entitlement*.⁴³ The basic principles contained in the 1998 Sorbonne Declaration (SD)⁴⁴ included: (1) increased student mobility; (2) the emergence of a common European labor market; and (3) increased transparency. Among other goals, the 1999 BD expressed a commitment to the integration of Europe’s HE systems, recognized HE to be critical to economic competition, as well as repeating and reinforcing the principles expressed in the MCU and the SD. As Juhász explains, the BP represents both the culmination of a strategy adopted in the 1980s, as well as evidence of the dependence of a supranational Europe on

the cooperation of individual nations. The 2001 Prague Communiqué (PC) outlined a set of concrete goals to be met by 2010. Among these were: (1) the adoption of credit systems compatible with the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS); (2) the development of a standard QA system through the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA);⁴⁵ (3) the adoption of a compatible degree system; (4) the introduction of a two-cycle degree structure and credit system; (5) the cultivation of a European identity in HE; (6) life-long learning; (7) the constructive partnership of HEIs and students in the reform process; and (8) increasing the international attractiveness of the EHEA. While building on the principles expressed in previous declarations, the 2003 Berlin Communiqué (BC) defined concrete steps to be taken by signatory states by 2005. Specifically, the Communiqué called for the introduction of a two-cycle degree system (wherein the first cycle provides preparation for both the labor force and the second cycle). The signing of the 2003 Graz Declaration (GD)⁴⁶ by the European University Association (EUA) called for the integration of HE and research and the election of institutional leaders committed to the principles of institutional autonomy and socioeconomic cohesion. Continuing, Juhász briefly delineates the implementation of BP reforms in Great Britain, France, Austria, Germany and Hungary. As Juhász explains, the British government formed the Department for Education and Skills (DfES)⁴⁷ to coordinate the divergent profiles and priorities of the English, Scottish, Welsh and Northern Irish HE sectors. Although the majority of HEIs operating in Great Britain were already organized into a two-cycle (3+2) linear degree structure, a small number of institutions retained the right to offer longer degree cycles in the fields of Mathematics, Engineering and Business. In 2002, the French government, adopting the principles of the BP, dramatically reduced the duration of its three (BA+MA+PhD) HE degree cycles from 3+5+8 to 3+2+5 years, while exempting such fields as Medicine from the restructuring process. While the Austrian HE sector has traditionally been divided between universities and *Fachhochschulen*, the widespread adoption of a two-cycle, BA+MA degree structure has had a homogenizing effect on the sector. As Juhász explains, the four main types of HEIs operating in Germany are: (1) universities; (2) *Fachhochschulen*; (3) teacher training colleges; and (4) fine arts colleges. Of these, the *Fachhochschulen* are the most numerous, intended to prepare students for immediate entry into the workforce. While the German government introduced a pilot program based on a two-cycle degree structure in 1998, the program left the 5–6 year duration of the first cycle intact. Subsequently, the German government mandated the incorporation of 3+2 or 4+1 degree cycles in the accreditation of new institutions (with the notable exception of the fields of Medicine, Chemistry, Pharmacology and Law, which were exempted from the mandatory two-cycle degree structure).⁴⁸ As Juhász explains, the Hungarian system of HE, while originally based on the dual Prussian model, was a hybrid of elements of

both linear and dual degree structures by the early 1990s. As late as 2005, the first cycles at Hungarian universities, colleges and medical schools lasted 5, 3–4 and 6 years respectively. In 2000, the Hungarian government issued a decree mandating the adoption of the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS). As Juhász explains, the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) has been a member of ENQA since 2000. Among the goals of the BP, Juhász cites: (1) the transparency and equivalence of degrees and degree programs (i.e., that a BA degree from a college should be equivalent to a BA degree from a university); (2) graduated education (i.e., that the three (BA+MA+PhD) degree cycles will offer mass, semi-elite and elite educations to progressively smaller cohorts); (3) the harmonization of credit systems; (4) the mobility of students, faculty and graduates between countries, institutions and programs; (5) the improvement of QA practices; (6) the cultivation of a common European identity; (7) the introduction of life-long learning (a concept which first entered policy discourse when the Organization for OECD and the EU declared 1996 the “year of life-long learning”); (8) the direct participation of HEIs and students in the formulation of HE policy; (9) marketing the EHEA; and (10) capitalizing on the synergy between the EHEA and European Research Area (ERA). Interestingly, the author argues that Hungarian policy-makers would be ill-advised to model the restructuring of Hungarian HE on western practices, since such policies were developed and implemented in unique environments. Further complicating the adoption of Western practices is the tendency for conservative institutions to create the impression of compliance while doing everything in their power to undermine the reform. It is for these reasons, Juhász argues, that Hungarian policy-makers should base their reforms on the principal documents of the BP, and not the practices of other signatory states. In order to avoid any confusion in the evaluation of the various declarations and communiqués of the BP, Juhász addresses the most common misinterpretations in Hungarian policy discourse. Specifically, she cites: (1) the overemphasis of the multi-cycle degree structure; (2) the focus on student mobility between degree cycles to the exclusion of other, equally relevant forms of mobility; (3) the attempt to misrepresent the traditional five-year university degree as a BA+MA degree structure; and (4) the focus on institutional or structural and not curricular reforms. In conclusion, Juhász makes a number of concrete recommendations for the restructuring of Hungarian HE including: (1) partial material support for élite education; (2) the application of student financial aid to study abroad; and (3) increased state support for research.

The massification process is only one of the challenges facing the Hungarian system of HE. Writing in a 2002 article, author László Kadocsa attempts to summarize the trends and challenges facing Hungarian HE (Kadocsa 2002). Specifically, Kadocsa cites: (1) an ongoing shift from élite to mass education; (2) the internationalization of HE; (3) the integration and restructuring of state-run higher

education institutions; (4) increasing diversification and the introduction of multiple degree cycles; (5) increased institutional autonomy; (6) the introduction of cost-effectiveness; (7) links between HE, research and industry; and (8) the introduction of QA systems. As Kadocsa explains, the specific challenges facing the HE sector are related to two basic issues: (1) the demand for quality mass education and (2) the increased pace of economic and technological change. According to Kadocsa, the simplest way for the sector to demonstrate its relevance to the public is to improve its quality and increase its international profile. Continuing, Kadocsa argues that the dichotomy between mass and élite forms of education is an oversimplification. Specifically, he argues that élite education serves less than 15%, mass education between 15–50% and general education greater than 50% of the relevant population (the 18–23 age group). Thus, the 25% increase in the percentage of the relevant population attending HE between 1990 and 2002 (from 10% to 35%) represents a shift from élite to mass education, whereas the goal of 50% enrollment in HE by 2010 established by the OECD will represent general education. In addition to the challenges posed by the massification of HE, the performance of Hungarian secondary school students in mathematics, the natural sciences and reading comprehension has declined in recent years. As Kadocsa explains, the quality of HE and research is intimately linked to the proficiency of the teaching staff, the caliber of the student body and the quality of an institution's infrastructure. While Kadocsa admits that the massification of HE has led to a decline in quality in other countries, he argues that it can also increase a country's reserve of social capital. Thus, a slightly lower standard of education distributed among a significantly greater number of graduates will represent a larger and more equitably distributed reserve of social capital. Discussing curricular trends in Hungary, the author argues that the content-centered approach of the 1960s was gradually replaced by an ability-centered approach in the 1970s and 1980s, which was in turn replaced by a competence-based approach to learning in the 1990s, closely linked to the ideal of life-long learning (i.e., of learning to learn by cultivating aptitudes and inclinations). Thus, life-long learning requires opportunities for self-guided learning and supposes a sophisticated approach to life and problem solving including the ability to cooperate, communicate, transfer knowledge and participate in group work. While Kadocsa concludes that the quality of education is linked to a process-centered, and not test-based, approach to learning, he also warns that poorly motivated students learn what they are tested on, and not necessarily what they are taught.

The relegation of the majority of HE students to a three-year BA degree cycle represents a subversion of the spirit of the massification of HE. Writing on the BD and Hungarian HE, author and member of the MAB *Ádám Kiss*⁴⁹ explains that the massification of HE that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s in Western Europe only reached Hungary in the mid 1990s, when the sector witnessed a three-fold in-

crease in student enrollment (Kiss 2002a: 7). While emphasizing that this development will ultimately prove to be in the best interest of the nation, Kiss warns that the sector is in dire need of reform. Specifically, he argues that the sector is crippled by a chronic lack of student and instructor mobility. Discussing the introduction of the BA Degree in Hungary, Kiss questions the utility of a post-secondary degree that does not provide its holder with professional expertise (10). As Kiss explains, the attendees at a 2001 summit meeting of Hungarian university rectors and college directors in Lillafüred expressed their unanimous opposition to the introduction of a two-cycle linear degree system (11). While conceding that the introduction of a foundational (or BA) degree might be justified in the Humanities, Kiss concludes that it would be inappropriate in the professional schools of Law, Medicine and Engineering. Continuing, Kiss explains that the lack of electives available to university students poses one of the greatest barriers to intellectual mobility: "there is no freedom in a system where as much as 80% of a student's coursework is required" (Kiss 2002a: 12). Specifically, Kiss proposes required subjects constitute no more than 60% of a student's coursework, the remaining 40% divided between electives (both within and outside of the student's major). Addressing the proposed introduction of a Europe-wide QA system, Kiss concludes that such a system would be undesirable, if not impossible, to develop. While admitting the functionality of life-long learning, Kiss argues that life-long learning is more a response to persistent unemployment than any love of learning (13). Interestingly, Kiss assumes the partnership between HE stakeholders to extend to both students and educators. In conclusion, Kiss warns that the British and American systems of HE have become export businesses, particularly in the provision of distance education, and that until the number of foreign students studying in Hungary is matched by the number of Hungarian students studying abroad, the Hungarian system of HE will be incapable of competing with the West (14).

The continued massification of Hungary's system of HE will require a considerable increase in funding. In a 2002 article, author Tamás Kozma concludes that it will be difficult, if not impossible, to reform and expand HE without the kind of financial stability found in the core member states of the EU (Kozma 2002/2003: 12). Specifically, Kozma suggests that the expansion, or massification, of HE will also require the simultaneous expansion of its institutional infrastructure (13). This, Kozma argues, will require the integration of new institutions into already operating or planned regional universities (13–14). Among the potential benefits of such integrated institutions, the article cites the economy of scale and positive economic impact on their respective regions (14). Discussing the expansion of HE, the author argues that the increasing number of secondary-school graduates continuing on to HE will entail the intensive integration of the educational system, while noting that the expansion of HE will not necessarily occur through the ex-

pansion of traditional institutions, but may instead be realized in such alternative forms of education as continuing education and distance learning (28).

Despite the massification of Hungarian HE, which began in the 1990s, the percentage of the Hungarian population continuing on to HE is extremely low by international standards. Writing in a 1990 article, author Tamás Kozma argues that five decades of separation from Western Europe have resulted in a unique system of HE in Central and Eastern Europe (Kozma 1990: 379). This system, however, is less an organic development as it is a substandard version of Western practices that were adopted during the Socialist era. As Kozma argues, the reform of HE policy is of particular importance for Hungary's full and successful integration into the European community. As of 1990 there were eighty-two HEIs serving a total of 64,000 full time students and employing 14,200 faculty members (379). The low ceiling on full time enrollment and a 3 to 1 ratio of applicants to entrants resulted in intense and counterproductive competition (including ideological polarization, social stratification and simple corruption) (380). As late as 1990 the distribution of staff and resources in the HE sector was concentrated in a few élite institutions, which were in turn concentrated in and around the country's capital. In total, 33% of HE institutions, 80% of research units, 50% of staff and 75% of Hungary's researchers were located in the greater Budapest area in 1990. Despite this over concentration in the Budapest area, Kozma notes that some degree of diversification in the HE sector was apparent as such vocational universities as the University of Heavy Industry (NME)⁵⁰ in Miskolc attempted to introduce faculties of law and economics. According to Kozma, HE in Hungary faced three major challenges at the beginning of the 1990s in the areas of (1) participation; (2) bureaucracy; and (3) financing (381). Specifically, Kozma reports that participation rates in HE in Hungary are among the lowest in Europe, but that any sizeable increase in the percentage of the population attending HE must be weighed against the lack of institutional capacity and the risk of diploma inflation. Diploma inflation in particular can be expected to increase white-collar unemployment, which can in turn be expected to depress salaries and weaken academic autonomy. While academic autonomy is a seemingly unambiguous principle, it has nevertheless taken on a new meaning as the political context has shifted from state socialism to a parliamentary democracy. The bureaucratic inertia and lack of accountability that functioned to insulate the HE sector from political intervention under the Socialist regime have proven just as effective in insulating a conservative faculty from the market-driven forces of commodification and globalization. Because HE in Hungary is financed primarily from the state budget, there is intense international pressure to introduce sizeable and mandatory tuition fees in adherence to the neoliberal economic rationale of cost recovery (i.e., to shift the costs of social services onto the public). The dismally low standard of living in Hungary, however, has made the introduction of anything but nominal tuition fees political sui-

cide. As Kozma explains, the growing demand for HE in the mid 1990s in Hungary (as reflected in the ratio of applicants to entrants) can be explained by three interrelated factors: (1) a demographic bulge in incoming age cohorts; (2) a general lack of institutional capacity; and (3) the higher graduation rate among secondary school students, with nearly half of incoming age cohorts qualified to attend HE (382). According to Kozma, the failure of policy makers to expand the capacity of the HE sector to meet the increased demand extends beyond simple budgetary constraints (383). Specifically, Kozma argues that the highly selective, élite system of HE functioned to neutralize the threat posed to the political establishment by unemployed professionals. HE policy, however, has been less the outcome of rational manpower calculations as the result of a bargaining process between HEIs and state bureaucracies, with each party doing their best to either minimize or maximize the amount allocated from the central budget to the HE sector, with little genuine concern for the country's actual manpower needs. Despite the obvious need to eliminate perverse incentives to over- or underestimate manpower requirements in budgetary negotiations, policy debates in the HE sector typically fail to address such concerns.

The massification of Hungarian HE can also be understood as the predictable outcome of the application of a consumer model to HE. Writing in a 2001 case study of a Hungarian, Ukrainian and American educational partnership, authors Patricia Kubow and Suzanne Crawford argue that:

the diverse purposes of education are not mutually exclusive. The challenge for higher education is to embrace and implement policies that meet consumer demands while also expanding the notion of professionalism to include a global dimension [...]. Higher education needs to spend as much effort on creating stable and relevant decision-making mechanisms as it does on selecting relevant and significant problems (Kubow et al. 2001: 77 and 84).

The shift from elite to mass education reflects a new conception of HE as both a public service and a sector of the national economy. In a 2004 interview with Gyöngyi Petre, then Hungarian Minister of Education Bálint Magyar explained that:

it is no longer possible to ignore the fact that higher education is both a public service as well as a sector of the national economy (Bálint Magyar in Petre 2004).

Later in the interview, Magyar reported that the number of BA or entry-level programs in HE would be reduced from more than 400 to as few as 100, while the number of MA and PhD specializations would be increased, thereby checking the tendency towards premature specialization. Continuing, Magyar explained that

the administrative councils (IT) will be composed in equal parts of institutional and governmental delegates.

In retrospect, it is clear that massification did not automatically result in the democratization of HE. Writing in a 2002 article, former President of the MAB, András Róna-Tas addresses the massification of HE, the growth of transnational education and the emergence of a European labor market (Róna-Tas 2002b: 145). According to Róna-Tas, the healthy functioning of the EU depends in large part on the degree to which its four largest member states (Germany and France in particular) are able to harmonize their HE policies (146). Given the very significant differences between the German and French systems of tertiary education, Róna-Tas suggests that the future of HE in Europe will be derived from either the French or German model, but not from both. As Róna-Tas writes, one of the most important characteristics of the Sorbonne Declaration (SD) was the promotion of a two-cycle degree structure, closer to the French model of HE than the binary system common in Germany. Although reasonably compatible with the HE system of France, the two-cycle model endorsed in the SD was fundamentally different from the German model of HE (146–147). Where the first of the two cycles leads to a BA degree (as in the US), the lack of a third cycle leading to a PhD, meant that the second cycle would lead either to a MA degree or a PhD (147–148). As Róna-Tas explains, this aspect of the SD proved to be extremely unpopular and was subsequently omitted from the BD (148–149). Although the BP now enjoys the support of major student organizations and trade unions, a great deal of conflict could have been avoided if the original thirty-one signatories of the document had represented a wider range of HE stakeholder groups (148). Continuing, Róna-Tas cites the omission of the super-accreditation system as the most significant change between the content of the Bologna and the Prague Declarations (150).

5. Quality Assurance

Writing in sixteen articles, authors Tamás Lajos, László Filep, Géza Gordos, Ádám Kiss, Pál Michelberger, László Mihoczy, András Róna-Tas, Christina Rozsnyai, Tibor Szántó and Voldemar Tomusk address the Hungarian adoption of Western QA practices. Specifically, the authors focus on student demand as a QA mechanism, the elusive definition of quality in the provision of HE, the link between research and quality in HE, QA and the policies of the OM, the activity of the MAB, the EHEA and the maintenance of Hungary's historically high standard of education, the evolution of Hungarian accreditation agencies, the political motives behind the adoption of QA practices in East Central Europe, and finally the

role of stakeholder groups in the definition and evaluation of quality in Hungarian HE.

Under certain conditions, student demand can constitute an informal means of QA. Although student representatives accounted for as much as a third of the seats on decision making bodies in HE in the early 1990s, the decreased momentum of student movements has made it easier for institutions to marginalize student voices (Lajos 1993: 407). According to author Tamás Lajos, this is of particular concern, since students constitute the only group in HE which can count a high-quality education among its narrow self-interests. While the demands of EU accession have been employed with tremendous success in leveraging stakeholder involvement in reform processes, outside influence, especially from élite Western universities (where autonomy is not necessarily contingent upon accountability and the degree of student involvement in policy formulation is even smaller than in Hungarian universities), has tended to bolster conservative forces within Hungarian HE (408). Specifically, the model of European HE adapted from élite Western universities has tended to neglect such areas of HE as continuing education, short-cycle training, vocational education, in-service training, quality control, external evaluation and financing. The failure of such international economic bodies as the WB to link their support to genuine structural changes in the early 1990s also tended to reinforce the conservative power structure within the HE sector. Despite these initial failures, Lajos argues that the overall effect of external assistance has been positive, but that genuine reform will require more than foreign aid. Specifically, Lajos argues that “the additional resources required to implement the transformation should be earned by the institutions themselves through services offered to society” (Lajos: 410). The adoption of the principle of cost recovery, however, is unlikely without overwhelming public support, because “the academic community can resist outside pressure because of the political and personal influence of its members” (Lajos: 410). In conclusion, Lajos argues that budgetary goals of increased quality and cost-effectiveness will only be realized through “*an abrupt and radical increase in the number of students* (the massification of HE)” (Lajos: 410). Coupled with tuition fees and increased representation on decision-making bodies, a sizeable increase in the number of students in HE would serve as a tremendous force for change in HE. Clearly the HE sector has no incentive to reform itself and government coalitions simply do not have the political capital necessary to execute major structural reforms without leveraging external aid and exploiting preexisting conflicts of interest between stakeholder groups (411).

The introduction of QA practices presumes a definition, however provisional, of a quality education. Writing in a 2002 contribution on the BD and Hungarian HE, author László Filep acknowledges the difficulty in defining the concept of

quality in the provision of HE (Filep 2002: 169). Specifically, Filep argues that our understanding of quality is akin to Saint Augustine's understanding of time:

I know what time is until you ask me to define it. Once I have to define it for you, I don't know what it is anymore (Filep 2002: 169).

Despite this, it is clear that QA mechanisms are derived from our understanding, however vague, of what constitutes quality in the provision of HE. Thus, Filep has developed a "purpose-based" hierarchy of definitions of quality appropriate to the Hungarian system of HE (169–170). Specifically, Filep's model includes five increasingly specific definitions of quality: (0) fitness for purpose (does the institution or practice being evaluated meet its purported goals); (1) education, research, public service (does the organization or practice accord with the general goals of HE); (2) basic and applied research (does the organization or practice accord with the different emphases of the university and non-university subsectors of HE); (3) the degree of correspondence between the mission statement and the actual *organization* of a given institution; and (4) the degree of correspondence between the goals and *practices* of a given program. Continuing, Filep argues that internal reviews are typically composed of three basic phases: (1) a descriptive phase (dealing with statistics and facts); (2) an *evaluative* phase (seeking to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats);⁵¹ and (3) a *summative* phase (culminating in a development plan) (172). While internal reviews may not always include each of these three phases, Filep argues that they generally gravitate to one of two basic orientations. The first orientation seeks to maintain the *status quo*. Thus it: (1) employs a definition of quality independent of the institution or program in question; (2) assesses the presence of certain minimal requirements; (3) employs discrete (yes or no) output criteria; (4) is primarily derived from "hard" quantitative data; (5) includes no development plan; and (6) tends to evaluate static conditions. The second orientation seeks to improve the *status quo*. Thus it: (1) employs a definition of quality which is specific to the institution or program in question; (2) assesses the degree to which certain minimal requirements are actually satisfied; (3) employs graduated output criteria; (4) is primarily derived from "soft" qualitative data; (5) does include a development plan; and (6) attempts to evaluate dynamic tendencies. As Filep explains, the introduction of improvement-oriented internal reviews is unlikely without the existence of an improvement-oriented external QA system.

There is a clear link between the quality of research and education. In a 1994 article on Hungarian HE, author Géza Gordos argues that research activity is an integral part of a quality education, which is in turn indispensable in attracting students (Gordos 1993/1994: 53). Specifically, Gordos argues that HE in Hungary was impacted negatively by the decision of the Communist government to shift the research function of universities into independent research institutes. Accord-

ing to Gordos, this trend resulted in a marked decline in the quality of universities as many of the country's best researchers left teaching positions for the relatively better funded institutes of the MTA.⁵² By the late 1980s, however, universities and institutes alike were struggling with chronic under-funding and a general state of stagnation. Prior to the massification of HE in Hungary in the mid 1990s, universities admitted as little as 10% of each age cohort. According to Gordos, this dismally low figure was the result of the low admission ceiling set by the state and correspondingly severe admissions requirements. While the high admission standards tended to limit social mobility, they nevertheless helped keep the dropout rate at a relatively low 20%. According to Gordos:

the social impact of universities is the basis for evaluating their role in different types of societies; in transitional societies, the attempt must be made to bring the aspirations of youth for better education into line with the needs of society, at least in certain disciplines (Gordos 1993/1994).

Specifically, it is necessary to maintain a balance between the acquisition of basic knowledge and more immediate objectives. In conclusion, Gordos argues that quality must be defined as the correspondence between education and employment, and is best realized in developing countries through the availability of a greater number of marketable diploma options at different points in tertiary education.

Not surprisingly, the OM has been instrumental in the introduction of QA practices in Hungary. Writing in a 2002 volume on the BD and Hungarian HE, author Ádám Kiss explains that the HE policies of the OM rest on the three pillars of: (1) cost effectiveness; (2) increased upward social mobility; and (3) QA (Kiss 2002b: 123). Specifically, Kiss argues that the OM has introduced QA mechanisms in the form of a new admissions system (123-4). In addition, the OM has supported a number of separate QA mechanisms, including: (1) accreditation (*minőségihitelesítés*) administered by the MAB; (2) internal monitoring (*minőségbiztosítás*) developed by individual institutions; (3) external evaluation (*minőségellenőrzés*) conducted by the OM; and (4) peer review (*minőségértékelés*), the joint responsibility of trade unions, student organizations, teachers unions, rectors' conferences and the OM (124). Continuing, Kiss questions whether the introduction of a BA Degree is truly justified in Hungary:

it is not at all clear that a department by department evaluation will support the introduction of the two cycle degree structure in all fields. After all, the dual system has had certain advantages evident in the achievements of the last 100 years. It is imperative, therefore, to protect these achievements (Kiss 2002b: 126).

As Kiss explains, the introduction of the two-cycle degree structure is intimately linked with the question of mobility, which is itself linked to the credit system: “the purpose of the credit system is to facilitate mobility” (Kiss 2002b: 127). As Kiss explains, the QA system developed by the OM is composed of three distinct elements: (1) a partner-centered approach (i.e., synchronizing funding decisions with feedback from students, recent graduates and employers); (2) a checklist of all relevant data for each institution (to be used to track and compare changes over time); and (3) an annual evaluation of actual teaching practices (to serve as corrective feedback) (128–129). Even so, Kiss warns that QA measures will prove inadequate unless funding is predicated upon quality (129). Recognizing this, the Hungarian government issued a decree in 2000 overhauling the normative financing of HEIs. Specifically, the decree addressed: (1) educational and administrative norms (including the number of students and qualified educators); (2) the amount of funding available for research;⁵³ and (3) support for the studies of the most talented students. As Kiss explains, an institution is only as good as the individuals it employs. In conclusion, Kiss observes that the “problem free” implementation of the integration process involved ceding greater autonomy to individual administrative branches within the universities (130).

The principal government agency responsible for evaluating the quality of Hungarian HEIs is the MAB. In his contribution to a 2002 volume on the BP and Hungarian HE, author Pál Michelberger⁵⁴ discusses the role of the MAB in the preaccreditation of new HEIs (Michelberger 2002b: 131). Specifically, Michelberger explains that the establishment of new state universities requires the committee’s proactive involvement in QA, whereas the reopening of church-operated institutions requires much less direct involvement (132). Although the tendency for new institutions to model themselves on the organization of preexisting institutions is understandable, it is not at all clear that this is the most effective or appropriate path to take. While the primary function of the MAB is to evaluate HEIs in an advisory capacity to the OM, the committee also reviews the formal appointment of university and college teaching staff (134). As Michelberger explains, the committee approved approximately two-thirds of the some 200 applications for university and college teaching positions submitted in 2001. Because Hungarian law does not explicitly require that university teachers be members of the MTA or even hold PhDs, roughly a third of the applicants awarded positions at universities held only candidate’s degrees or doctorates and were appointed on the basis of their scholarly activity, publication record and international reputation. At the same time, Hungarian law now precludes the appointment of new university professors not holding Habilitation’s degrees, regardless of their status as members of the Academy (134–135). According to Michelberger, the anonymity of the peer-review process has been indispensable to its success (135). Among the goals outlined in a strategic plan presented by then MAB president, András

Róna-Tas were the improvement and expansion of the level of service provided to HE stakeholders (136–137). While committee membership is intended to be representative of a wide spectrum of HE stakeholders (from professors and students to the groups that directly or indirectly benefit from HE (i.e., business, industry, agriculture, the MTA and its research institutes, as well as the general public), Michelberger concedes the impossibility of maintaining a representative selection of HE stakeholders on a 30 member committee (137). According to the author, the committee's continued independence from individual administrations and political parties is indispensable in the fair and impartial completion of its duties. Continuing, Michelberger notes the plurality of interpretations of important passages of the BD held by university leaders, and warns that it will take at least a decade for a unified approach to the implementation of BP reforms to evolve (138). While Michelberger questions the wisdom of a "super-accreditation agency" operated by the EU, he warns that the spontaneous development of alliances of accrediting institutions can be expected to have a divisive influence on the sector (138–139). In conclusion, Michelberger writes that the MAB is:

primarily interested in building off of the experiences of smaller countries. It is, therefore, the experiences of Denmark, Switzerland, Belgium and Holland that are most important for us. While it is also important to familiarize ourselves with the English, French and German systems, it is not at all clear that they can be directly transplanted into the context of Hungarian higher education [...]. We are also interested in improving the level of service we provide [...]. The Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) was conceived as a vehicle for the whole of Hungarian society, not an end in its own right (Michelberger 2002b: 140).

However well intentioned, the eventual establishment of a EHEA will represent a threat to Hungary's historically high quality of education. Writing on the impact of the BP on HE in Hungary, Pál Michelberger argues that the establishment of the EHEA represents both an opportunity and a challenge for Hungarian institutions: an opportunity to gain the economy of scale necessary to remain competitive in an increasingly globalized higher education market and a challenge to make sure that the transformation of the HE sector does nothing to lower Hungary's historically high standard of education (Michelberger 2002 *Előszó*: 4). As Michelberger explains, the reports contained in the volume represent the findings of two conferences on the BP organized in 2001 by the MAB. While many of the authors of the reports are themselves past or present committee members, Michelberger emphasizes that their opinions do not necessarily represent the official position of the MAB (4–5).

In retrospect, it is clear that the per capita financing of HEIs has had a negative impact on the quality of Hungarian HE. Writing in a 1996 article, Professor

László Mihoczy argues that the financing of state universities on a per capita basis has created a perverse incentive for universities to admit as many students as possible regardless of their capacity to meet the demands of increased enrollment, thereby negatively impacting the quality of education (Mihoczy 1996). Despite the fact that the percentage of the overall population attending HE in Hungary is low in international comparisons, Mihoczy argues that we get a clearer picture of social mobility in Hungary when we examine the percentage of the overall population that *completes* rather than *attends* HE. Whether this is in fact a more appropriate indicator of equal access to HE or not, the completion rate for university students in Hungary is somewhat higher in international comparisons.

The size and caliber of the teaching profession constitutes perhaps the single most important factor in the quality of higher education. In a 2003 article on the teaching profession in Hungary, author Mária Nagy writes that the size of the teaching profession impacts both the quality and financing of public education (Nagy 2003: 17). Specifically, she reports that an overall decrease in employment in Hungary during the 1990s occurred primarily in the private sector, leaving public sector employees largely unaffected (17–18). All told, some 300,000 teachers and support staff were employed in the educational sector in 1999 (18). In international comparisons this figure is relatively high, with Hungary ranking first among eighteen OECD countries in number of teachers employed in primary and secondary schools (accounting for some 4.2% of its total manpower). This figure in other OECD countries was on average 1.3% lower for the same period. Continuing, Nagy reports that, as a consequence of the political vagaries of education policy, employment figures for the 1990s were far from static, with the number of teachers employed in primary and secondary education rising and falling at different points in the decade. In international comparisons the ratio of teachers in Hungary to both the total workforce and the number of students is quite high (18–19). Both student-teacher ratios and the index of classes taught (relevant to the quality of education) are extremely favorable at all levels of Hungarian public education (19). Nagy cautions, however, that such international comparisons tend to focus on a few elements of an education system isolated from its national context. Nevertheless, the comparisons seem to indicate that the workload of Hungarian teachers (as determined by student-teacher ratios and the number of working hours per year) is relatively low, which Nagy argues presents a picture of a highly inefficient education system in dire need of reform.

One of the principal tasks of the BP has been the coordination of national QA systems. Writing on the international political compromise represented by the BD, former President of the MAB, András Róna-Tas explains that the French and German systems of HE differ not only in structure (bimodal versus linear), but also in the centralization of policy decisions (Róna-Tas 2002c: 117). Róna-Tas cites the absence of a strong central authority in Germany and the consequent im-

possibility of mandating national-level reforms as a key consideration in the drafting of the BD. According to Róna-Tas, the single most important factor in the emergence of a resilient and dynamic European Higher Education Area is the recognition of students as active partners in (and not just the passive beneficiaries of) HE (118). As Róna-Tas explains, the EHEA is an attempt to compete with the American HE sector (118–119). Similarly, the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA),⁵⁵ is an alliance of QA agencies formed to disseminate best practices in HE, thereby realizing the degree of mobility found in the American HE. Continuing, Róna-Tas considers two possible strategies for harmonizing QA practices in Europe: (1) to mandate the accreditation of institutions, departments or accreditation organizations or (2) to do nothing and trust in the gradual emergence of a *de facto* norm in the field of QA as a consequence of preexisting relationships between higher education institutions and regulatory bodies (120). According to Róna-Tas, the conspicuous omission of the first strategy from the final draft of the Prague Communiqué (PCom) suggests that, for the time being, the Europe-wide accreditation of HEIs is a political impossibility, but that the eventual introduction of a meta-accreditation agency may prove to be the most viable solution (120–121). Among the main organizations representing the interests of HE stakeholders, Róna-Tas mentions: (1) the European University Association (EUA):⁵⁶ an umbrella organization of European universities and national rectors' conferences formed to advance the interests of European HE and research by (1) rationalizing the role of universities in the emerging European Higher Education and Research Areas (EHEA and ERA), by (2) coordinating projects improving the quality of individual institutions, by (3) disseminating best practices in HE, and by (4) increasing the competitiveness of European higher education in a global market (117); (2) the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE): an umbrella organization representing the interests of national and professional associations of professional colleges before the EC, the EU and on the board of Bologna follow-up groups (118); and (3) the National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB): an umbrella organization of forty-six national student unions from thirty-five countries representing the educational, cultural and economic interests of some ten million students before the EC and the EU.⁵⁷

The conflicting interests of stakeholder groups have considerably complicated the selection of appropriate quality indicators. Writing on the BP and HE, András Róna-Tas⁵⁸ explains that the negotiation of a finite set of criteria to use in the accreditation of all PhD programs has proven all but impossible when each field has its own set of exemptions to include (Róna-Tas 2002a: 141). As a consequence, it has proven impossible to accommodate the contradictory Humboldtian principles of academic and administrative freedom with financial accountability and QA (141–142). As Róna-Tas explains, the MAB was granted decision-making (and

not just advisory) powers in the official recognition of Hungary's new PhD programs in a 1993 HE Act (142). According to Róna-Tas, the evaluation of PhD programs and doctoral schools ultimately rests on the judgment of individual committee members (i.e., on a process of peer review):

while it is of course possible to insure that minimal requirements are being met, quality isn't as easily quantified (Róna-Tas 2002a: 141).

It is for this reason that the individuals selected to sit on the committee responsible for the evaluation of doctoral schools are themselves academics, and in most cases already members of the MTA, and are hopefully less concerned with the impact of their decisions on their careers (142–143). Among the problems facing Hungarian doctoral schools, Róna-Tas cites a crisis of leadership and the marriages of convenience that have arisen as otherwise inadequate programs have united as multidisciplinary programs in an attempt to circumvent the requirements established by the MAB for the operation of doctoral schools (143–144). Although acknowledging the high standard of education and research found in a minority of such multidisciplinary programs, Róna-Tas warns that many such programs are in danger of losing their accreditation (144).

The evolution of QA requirements in Hungarian HE has paralleled the evolution of Hungarian accreditation agencies. Writing in a 2003 article, András Róna-Tas describes the status and history of Hungary's doctoral schools (Róna-Tas 2003: 1298). Specifically, he explains how:

by 1991 it was clear that it was necessary to return the right to confer doctoral degrees to the universities, since membership in the Association of European Universities (CRE)⁵⁹ was limited to universities with doctoral programs. [...] The change was also justified by the feared incompatibility between Hungarian and western degrees. The *kandidat nauk* degree,⁶⁰ for example, proved particularly incompatible with western degrees. [...] On the other hand, it was clear that the Candidate's Degree represented a different career path and a different set of goals. While the Doctor of Science Degree⁶¹ represented the highest (and in Hungary, the only) academic degree attesting to advanced research activity, the Candidate's Degree was awarded upon the successful completion of a major research project (typically to middle-aged academics) and counted as the first step towards membership in the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MAB). Thus, the change resulted in the simultaneous elimination of the Candidate's Degree and the introduction of a new degree structure (Róna-Tas 2003).

Fearing that the changes would be accompanied by a decline in the quality of Hungary's doctoral programs, the MRK lobbied to link the right to confer doctoral degrees to some form of QA. Ultimately, the rectors' proposal was imple-

mented under a compromise reached between the universities and the Ministry of Finance (PM). Mihály Kupa, the Finance Minister at the time, agreed to consider additional financing for new programs involving some form of QA. Ultimately, the agreement resulted in the provisional accreditation of Hungary's doctoral programs. The plan was formally implemented by the government as the Provisional National Accreditation Committee (IOAB), the predecessor of the MAB. Considering the radical changes entailed in the introduction of a national accreditation system, it is noteworthy that the 1993 parliamentary vote on the applicable sections of the HE bill enjoyed the unanimous support of both government and opposition parties. Although the IOAB only accepted 35% of the applications submitted during the provisional phase of accreditation in 1993, a year later the National Accreditation Committee (OAB) oversaw the successful accreditation of more than 200 programs. By 2000 more than 600 doctoral programs had satisfied the formal requirements for accreditation, although accreditation applications were all too frequently motivated by personal gain, and not academic considerations. These abuses were partly remedied by a 2000 amendment to the 1993 Higher Education Act mandating the transformation of doctoral programs into doctoral schools. A subsequent government decree further restricted accreditation to no more than one doctoral school per discipline (*tudományág*) per university, while also allowing the formation of multidisciplinary doctoral schools. It was not until 2002, however, that the MAB finalized the accreditation of the initial 145 doctoral schools formed by Hungarian universities. Unfortunately, the development of the schools has been handicapped by leaders unwilling or unable to honestly assess the strengths and weaknesses of their programs and faculty and make any necessary changes. In addition to the weaknesses of Hungary's doctoral schools, it has become clear that the standards of Hungary's habilitation system have also declined. While there is little agreement amongst policy makers as to the ultimate purpose of the habilitation system (i.e., whether it should generate scholars or educators or some mix of the two), it is generally accepted that any changes in the system should increase its compatibility with European standards. Policy makers have also raised the question of whether the Doctor of Science degree conferred by the MTA should be a requirement of the habilitation process and/or appointment as a university professor. According to the National Association of Doctoral Students (DOSZ), increases in the number of students continuing on to doctoral schools have not been matched by increases in the number of funded places available. The quality of Hungarian HE has suffered as universities have increased enrollments in PhD programs beyond their capacity to deliver a quality education in an attempt to compensate for inadequate state funding. Further burdening Hungary's doctoral students is what Róna-Tas describes as the undue amount of time they spend as course instructors during their relatively short (three-year) programs. While Róna-Tas concedes that the QA system for doctoral schools is still a

work in progress, he explains that the role of the MAB will eventually be reduced from the exhaustive inspection of HEIs to their external evaluation and accreditation. Chief among the threats to Hungary's doctoral programs is the significant decline in the real value of state funding per student. As Róna-Tas explains, this chronic lack of funding has the counter-selective effect of encouraging the best and brightest to seek work at universities abroad or in the private sector, thereby ensuring the mediocrity of future generations of educators, a trend that is likely to worsen as the barriers to student and labor mobility within the EU are slowly removed. Continuing, Róna-Tas explains that the excessive emphasis placed on the quantification of standards and the normative financing of HE have tended to distort rather than improve the quality of Hungary's doctoral schools. In conclusion, Róna-Tas explains that unreconciled contradictions between the short- and long-term goals of HE programs have significantly lessened the effectiveness of the MAB.

The evolution of Hungary's QA system has been highly politicized. In a 2003 article, Christina Rozsnyai argues that the concept of QA has traditionally focused on the *maintenance* (as opposed to the *improvement*) of the *status quo* (Rozsnyai 2003: 271). It is for this reason, Rozsnyai argues, that the BP has emphasized the social relevance of HE. According to Rozsnyai, increased state control over the number of students enrolled in HEIs in the 1970s was primarily intended to minimize the unemployment rate among university graduates by limiting admissions figures (272). Following the regime change in 1989–1990, universities and colleges won a greater degree of freedom from state control, with each institution forming a senate to elect its rector. Despite the increased autonomy enjoyed by HEIs following the regime change, the OM continued to dictate curricular content, enrollment levels and normative financing (273). As Rozsnyai explains, centralization tended to “curtail independent initiative and creativity” by creating a climate in which:

individual autonomy and accountability in the higher education community do not stimulate career advancement within institutions and have not fostered an awareness in the educational community or the public at large for the need to cater to student demands (Rozsnyai 2003: 273).

While the Hungarian system of HE underwent a massification process in the mid 1990s (with the percentage of 18–22 year olds attending HE rising from about 12% in 1990 to approximately 35% in 2003), it is clear that enrollment has exceeded the capacity of the sector to deliver a quality education. According to Rozsnyai, the pressure to meet BP goals has given reformers the leverage they need to renegotiate the organization and function of HE. While the QA practices introduced in Hungarian HE in the early 1990s were highly politicized, QA was

initially conceived as an accreditation process entailing specific benchmarks (274). According to Rozsnyai, this reliance upon explicit benchmarks “almost always has a political overtone” (Rozsnyai 2003: 274). Whereas the adoption of accreditation requirements in Western Europe can be understood as a means of ensuring accountability for public funds, the introduction of otherwise identical requirements in Hungary in the early 1990s was motivated by the need for greater compatibility with HE in the West, the desire to purge curricula of the vestiges of socialism, and the wish to harmonize HE with the perceived demands of the labor market. Publicly, however, policy makers justified accreditation requirements by the need to maintain Hungary’s historically high standard of education (274–275). While the SD makes no mention of QA, the BD explicitly calls for the “promotion of European cooperation in quality assurance with a view to develop comparable criteria and methodologies” (Bologna in Rozsnyai 2003: 275). Although Rozsnyai concedes that several studies have claimed that the QA requirements predating the BP had a significant impact on the quality of HE in Hungary, she concludes that, when “weighed against the expended [sic] human and financial resources spent on quality assurance, few studies have come up with a positive balance” (Bologna in Rozsnyai 2003: 279).

The leverage originally employed by the Hungarian Ministry of Education to introduce QA practices at Hungarian universities was the right to award doctoral degrees. Writing in a 2004 article, Tibor Szántó⁶² explains that the concept of QA was formally introduced in Hungary in 1992 when universities regained the right to award doctoral degrees (Szántó 2004: 59). Initially operating under the name of the IOAB, the advisory body was chartered to insure the quality of Hungary’s new PhD programs. With the introduction of the 1993 Higher Education Act, however, the Committee’s competence was expanded to include the accreditation of all HE degree programs and institutions. According to Szántó, the first eight-year accreditation cycle revealed a number of inconsistencies in the committee’s evaluation procedures (60). Foremost among these was the lack of objectivity and preparation evidenced in the performance of visiting committee members. Compounding the uneven application of standards by individual committee members was a gradual shift in guidelines employed by the organization itself over the course of the accreditation cycle. While largely attributable to improvements made as the committee passed through a gradual learning curve, the standards applied to an institution undergoing accreditation in the first year of the cycle were nonetheless substantially different from those applied in the eighth year (61). Following an external evaluation in 1999 by an international advisory board composed of experts from the EUA, the MAB revised its approach to the accreditation process. Specifically, the Committee elected to adopt the Danish practice of the direct and simultaneous evaluation and comparison of degree programs within a given discipline at different higher education institutions. According to Szántó:

the goal of the parallel evaluations of operating programs is not unifying or harmonizing curricula but the evaluation of degree programs and the attestation of their quality (Szántó 2004: 62).

Most significant, however, was the Committee's decision to recast itself "as a partner interested and helping in quality improvement", rather than as an external authority uninterested in the success of Hungary's HEIs (63).

The selective adoption of Western QA practices in Hungary has resulted in a unique hybrid of several models. In a 2000 article, Voldemar Tomusk argues that the adoption of QA models by Eastern European governments reflects more than just a desire to increase their political control over higher education (Tomusk 2000: 175). According to Tomusk, the highly selective adoption and application of Western QA models (neglecting, for example, to incorporate the fitness for purpose component prevalent in Western Europe) is characteristic of the "radical de-contextualization" of Western approaches. While Tomusk cites the massification of HE, the three-fold increase in the number of HEIs and the emergence of short-cycle HE as important changes in the former Socialist states of Eastern Europe, he emphasizes the role of QA in the emerging character of post-totalitarian HE. Despite the enthusiastic adoption of Western policy practices, Tomusk notes that, in its earliest incarnations, QA has been primarily limited to the implementation of non-voluntary accreditation practices (176). While the primary justification for the introduction of a separate QA mechanism was the decreased direct state control of the HE sector (prior to 1989, direct state control of the content and administration of HE acted as a direct mechanism of QA), Tomusk argues that the introduction of QA measures provides, among others, a convenient cover for almost any policy agenda a particular government may have. Adopting Ratcliff's 1998 paradigm of QA models, Tomusk characterizes the French QA model by its reliance on external reviews in the implicit or explicit comparison of programs and institutions, the English model by its use of peer reviews in enhancing the effectiveness of programs, and the American model by its use of voluntary accreditation, its independence from governmental funding or oversight and explicit comparison of the strengths and weaknesses of similar programs (176–177). In addition to the three main models of QA described by Ratcliff, Tomusk also describes a fourth, Dutch model characterized by its emphasis on self-regulation and peer review (177). Although the Dutch model has since been incorporated into Eastern European policy discourse, it originally evolved from negotiations between the Dutch government and HEIs, whereby institutions were afforded greater autonomy in exchange for the systematic and wide scale implementation of QA mechanisms. Addressing the selective application of sanctions, Tomusk cites the differential utilization of accreditation standards and sanctions between the public and private sector in Romania, with private institutions closed at a far higher rate than institutions in the public sector despite the fact that both sectors

draw from the same pool of educators (many holding part-time positions in as many as three or four public or private universities). In fact, far from increasing the quality of HE, the selective application of QA sanctions has had the effect of safeguarding the monopoly of traditional institutions. It is particularly ironic:

that at the very time when these same institutions are facing a challenge to change on what is arguably an unprecedented scale, they are caught up as never before in the trammels of formal assessment which are binding them ever more tightly to the *status quo* (Broadfoot 1998 in Tomusk 2000: 177–178).

Under these circumstances, the state accreditation of universities chronically under funded by the state is a foregone conclusion. Continuing, Tomusk argues that the prevailing form of accreditation in Eastern Europe is a pseudo-Dutch model endorsed by the EC and adopted by Hungary and several Baltic states. According to Tomusk, the EC model diverges from Dutch QA practices in two important respects. Specifically, the model is characterized by the control exercised by the Ministry of Education control, either directly or indirectly through nominally independent agencies, as well as its reliance on summative, and not formative, evaluation practices. Although the final decision in the accreditation process typically rests with the executive branch of the government (as for example in Estonia, where the Ministry of Education has the power to approve or reject proposals tendered by the Higher Education Evaluation Council (HEEC)), this practice is by no means universal (with accreditation powers resting with the parliaments in other countries) (178). Although QA practices have ostensibly been implemented as a part of a “politically driven Westernization project”, Tomusk argues that the involvement of senior academics “slows rather than accelerates the renewal of the content of higher education studies in Eastern Europe” (Tomusk 2000: 179). While Tomusk admits that absolute relativism may be an economically justified approach to the business of QA, he nevertheless argues that the highly contextualized definition of QA philosophically and morally problematic (180). Specifically, Tomusk argues that “fitness for purpose” is a meaningless measure of quality in a region where “there is apparently no purpose” to HE (181). Although Tomusk argues that “universities face a particular difficulty in trying to define their purpose at a time when, from a technical point of view, there is hardly any” (Tomusk 2000: 181), he nevertheless concedes the social and political function universities have served by absorbing significant numbers of secondary school graduates who would otherwise number among the unemployed (181–182). Addressing the remarkable degree of ideological continuity between Socialist and post-Socialist HE, Tomusk suggests that “the changes of the late 1980s were not much related to the crisis of ideology, but were manipulated by the second echelon of the functionaries themselves” (Tomusk 2000: 182). In conclu-

sion, Tomusk finds that the reason why HE discourse has tended towards “vaguely defined universal standards instead of more substantial local ones seems to be related to the threat of having a far-reaching public debate on the purpose of higher education” (Tomusk 2000: 184), since such a debate might highlight uncomfortable parallels between Socialist and post-Socialist definitions of quality in HE:

The state-socialist countries had tried to relate higher education to the perceived needs of the society to an extent unknown in the history of the university. Defining the quality of higher education as infinitely contextual, to an extent that any factual evidence that questioned particular ideology was declared to be mistaken, corrupted higher education and particularly all fields of social studies and philosophy. Profitability as a truth criterion may have a similar impact on higher education (Tomusk 2000: 184).

One possible measure of quality in the provision of HE is derived from economic and social criteria. In a 2001 paper András Róna-Tas argues that the quality of life in a given society is a function of economic, social and cultural variables, and that it is these variables which must be addressed by an effective HE policy (Róna-Tas 2001: 1). Specifically, the author argues that quality HE will produce graduates capable of working effectively and therefore competitively in a knowledge-based society; of minimizing conflict and increasing social cohesion; and of improving the material and cultural quality of life for all members of society. The author notes, however, that the policy activities involved in the realization of these aims (policy formulation, monitoring and evaluation) are currently the responsibility of three separate sets of policy actors in Hungary: respectively the OM, individual higher education institutions and the MAB (2). Discussing the role of stakeholders in the definition and evaluation of quality in HE, Róna-Tas notes that HE stakeholders can be broadly construed to include such disparate parties as tax-payers, students, employers, and the international business community. While allowing the need to include the input of all potential stakeholders in the evaluation of HE policy, Róna-Tas nevertheless questions the desirability of assigning equal weight to the opinions of groups with conflicting interests and greater or lesser degrees of technical competence in HE. While emphasizing the role of the market in realizing quality in HE, the author also notes that different forms of competition can interact in unpredictable and potentially counterproductive ways. Specifically, he cites the competition: (1) between individual institutions, schools and departments to attract students, teaching staff and funding and (2) between students and teachers within individual institutions for access to limited public and private resources (2–3). Nevertheless, Róna-Tas concludes that the market and competition are not the most appropriate means of realizing long-term goals in HE policy, suggesting instead that the evaluation of quality in

HE must include both: (1) its success in increasing equity, access and integration (especially of historically disadvantaged social groups) and (2) its responsiveness to the demands of the labor market (3). Discussing the massification of HE, the author argues that increasing access to HE has proven to be a double-edged sword: increased upward social mobility has typically come at the cost of a dumbed-down curriculum, high student-teacher ratios, degree inflation and over education (relative to the demands of the job market). While the author advances a model for the evaluation of HE employing what he terms a prospect for employment (PE) index with which to calculate the probable (1) life-long income; (2) range of employment; (3) number of job offers; and (4) quality of life of a typical graduate of a particular program, he concedes that such models do little to anticipate the long-term needs of society (4–5). In conclusion, the author argues that the influence of the market is desirable only to the extent to which it induces HE to contribute to its primary purpose: the overall improvement of the quality of life in society (5).

Following an external review, the MAB recast itself as a partner interested in, as opposed to an agency indifferent to, the quality of Hungarian HE. Writing on the lessons learned from the first eight-year accreditation cycle in Hungarian HE,⁶³ Christina Rozsnyai explains that prior to the regional integration of the HE sector in 2001, there were a total of eighty-nine HEIs in Hungary (Rozsnyai 2004: 129). Following the mergers, the total number of HEIs operating in Hungary (both public and private, Hungarian and foreign) had dropped to seventy-six. The slight drop in the number of institutions, however, masked a tremendous increase in the size of several state universities and the diversity of HE. Of the seventy-six HEIs operating in Hungary in 2004, 18 were state universities, 13 were state colleges, five were church-operated universities, 21 were church-operated colleges, one was a private university, ten were private colleges and eight were foreign institutions operating in Hungary with the approval of the OM. In addition to its advisory function in the accreditation of all higher education institutions and programs operating in Hungary, the MAB also evaluates the credentials of individuals seeking professorial appointments at universities and colleges and exercises executive powers in the accreditation of PhD programs. According to Rozsnyai, the Committee's approach to accreditation initially chose to judge institutions on the basis of the strengths and weaknesses of their individual programs, rather than the effectiveness of their operating practices (130). While this decision was primarily motivated by a reluctance to hold the leadership of recently reorganized institutions to too high of a standard, it also reflected a certain lack of experience among academic committee members in questions of the professional management of institutions. According to Rozsnyai:

there was a strong tendency in the MAB to avoid negative accreditation decisions and to leave room for an institution to iron out its weaknesses. In cases where the MAB found that an institution did not meet the required standard, conditional accreditation was given. The accreditation report described the weaknesses that needed to be improved (Rozsnyai 2004: 131–132).

Although reports also provided deadlines for completing the necessary improvements, little was actually done to verify that the improvements had in fact occurred (132). The membership of review teams, while initially comprised of members of the MTA, gradually changed over the course of the eight-year accreditation cycle to include non-academic PhD holders. In response to the external review of the MAB conducted by the Association of European Universities CRE reorganized as the European University Association (EUA) in 2000, the committee issued a strategic plan in 2002 calling for the involvement of external stakeholders in the accreditation process. Although the committee has always included a non-voting student, there have been concerns that students had not been allowed to participate as full members of review teams (136). Another criticism of the committee's activity centered on the relative brevity of its accreditation reports (132). Given the vast amount of information contained in the self-evaluation reports required of institutions undergoing the accreditation process, the "in-depth analysis of the institution's strengths and weaknesses was wanting" (Rozsnyai 2004: 132). Despite the committee's ostensible commitment to assist institutions in improving their quality, its activity during the first accreditation cycle was nevertheless more prescriptive than supportive (133). By 2004, the guidebook published by the MAB had been revised to reflect the committee's new role as a partner in the success of institutions. In addition to the shift in the image of the committee that occurred between the first and second accreditation cycles, accreditation criteria are now formulated and published by the MAB itself, instead of being explicitly derived from relevant laws (134). In addition to the input criteria taken into consideration during the first accreditation cycle (e.g., formal qualifications of teaching staff, student-teacher ratios and legislative requirements), the second cycle will also include the evaluation of such output criteria as the degree of partner satisfaction and the efficacy of problem-solving mechanisms (135). In order to avoid the predictable political and economic backlash that would follow a decision not to accredit an established university, the committee is now empowered to confer conditional and preliminary accreditation to institutions that fail to meet the requirements for full accreditation (131–132). Perhaps the most significant change in the second cycle of institutional accreditation in Hungary is the "report card" represented by the full publication of descriptive, rather than summative, institutional accreditation reports (134–135). While the reports make no attempt to rank institutions or programs, the ability to make point by point comparisons of

competing institutions can be expected to increase student choice (135). In conclusion, Rozsnyai writes that the initial emphasis on fitness *for* purpose in QA is now an emphasis on fitness *of* purpose (i.e., has expanded from a strictly empirical evaluation of the degree to which a given institution meets its formal mission to include a normative evaluation of the mission itself) (136). As Rozsnyai argues, it is only reasonable to expect HE to “submit to external oversight if it is to be state-recognized or to receive public funds” (Rozsnyai 2004: 137).

6. Equity

Writing in twelve articles, authors Zsuzsa Mátrai, Lajos Ficzer, Ervin Gömbös, Orsolya Lelkes, Katalin Koncz, Judit Timár, Péter Nagy Tibor, Róbert Rontó, Kornél Almássy, Theresa Agovino, Katalin Forray and Colin Woodard discuss issues related to the ideals of gender, racial, cultural, political and socio-economic equity in the provision of HE in Hungary. Specifically, the authors focus on the erosion of social services following the transition to a market economy, the relationship between HE and upward social mobility, the correlation between socioeconomic status and student enrollment in the university and non-university sectors of HE, the need to increase access to HE amongst Hungary’s most marginalized populations, the feminization of the health and education professions, the role of the Constitutional Court (AB) in HE policy, the introduction of a student loan system, the need to involve student organizations in HE policy formulation, the exclusion of Hungary’s Roma population from HE, the establishment of Gypsy Studies programs in Hungarian HE, and finally efforts to educate a generation of Roma professionals.

The transition to a market economy has had a negative impact on the equitable provision of HE in Hungary. Writing in a 1997 article, Zsuzsa Mátrai examines changing attitudes towards citizenship in Hungary, and argues that:

the Hungarian population has achieved much concerning civil, political, and human rights, but has lost a lot concerning social rights: a major proportion of social services previously free to all as rights of citizenship (rights to a job, a minimum standard of living, free education, medical care, etc.) (Mátrai 1997: 45).

Mátrai employs T. H. Marshall’s classic definition of citizenship as comprising: (1) civil rights (including freedom of speech and thought); (2) political rights (including the right to vote and run for office); and (3) social rights (including basic healthcare and universal basic education). In Marshall’s model, these three sets of rights are protected by the justice system, representational government and social services. Without rejecting the validity of Marshall’s claims, Mátrai never-

theless notes that, because Marshall's definition is inextricably bound to the political unit of the nation state, it fails to address such fundamental concerns as human rights, which should not in theory depend on categories of citizenship.

Hungarian policy makers have argued that the reorganization of Hungary's historically closed university system has the potential to increase the equity of HE. Writing on the BD and Hungarian HE, Lajos Ficzer explains that the Higher FTT deals primarily with (1) the strategic development and structure of the HE sector and (2) the sector's financial and operational system (Ficzer 2002: 92). As Ficzer explains, a conference of HE stakeholders organized by the FTT in 2001 called for the institutionalization of social and economic openness in HE (93). Specifically, the participants recommended the fundamental reorganization of the closed academic system that has historically characterized the Hungarian HE sector.

The correlation between low socioeconomic status and enrollment in the non-university sector is evidence of the continued lack of equity in the provision of HE in Hungary. In a 2003 article Ervin Gömbös argues that the increased focus on HE in Hungary's economic policies reflects the anticipated role of knowledge in the global economy, workforce development, international development and political prestige (Gömbös 2003: 421). As Gömbös explains, the 1990s were characterized by dramatic changes in HE (422). Specifically, the 1990s witnessed such curricular reforms as the enlargement of continuing education programs to counter the accelerated obsolescence of workforce skills, the increased autonomy of students (especially as a consequence of their increasing mobility between programs, institutions and nations), and a move towards increased compatibility between degree programs (especially in response to EU and BP initiatives). The article also notes the need for more countries to

improve, in qualitative and quantitative terms, the match between the output of higher education systems and the capacity of labor markets to absorb this output (Gömbös 2003: 422).

This need is particularly urgent where business has begun to expand its previous relationship with universities from that of a customer, provider and partner to owner. As the article notes, the state monopoly on HE in Central and Eastern Europe is, in key respects, a thing of the past: the 1993 Higher Education Act formalized the legal framework governing the establishment of private higher education institutions (423). The act charged the MAB and the FTT with key roles in the establishment and evaluation of HEIs. As the article explains, there were 119 public state-run and 32 church-run HEIs operating in Hungary in 1998. By 2001, however, the regional integration process reduced this number to thirty public (seventeen universities and thirteen colleges) and twenty-six church-run (five universities and twenty-one colleges) HEIs. Of the 327,000 students enrolled in HE in

Hungary in the 2000–2001 academic year, 26,000 or 7.9% were attending private institutions. The article reports that the private sector has tended to specialize in the fields of economics, business, information technology, modern languages and mass communication, areas of expertise perceived to be in demand in the job market. While Gömbös writes that socioeconomic status is an accurate predictor of a student choice between universities and colleges (with students from wealthier families enrolling at higher rates in universities), he mistakenly assumes that all students enjoy an equivalent range of options, regardless of socioeconomic status (differences in quality of secondary education, cultural capital, expectations and income) (424). Although Gömbös writes glowingly of the higher quality of infrastructure, degree of student satisfaction and level of career counseling services available in the private sector, he also acknowledges that the private sector has had to reconsider its initially excessive tuition rates as student enrollment declined in the late 1990s (427). Gömbös attributes this decline to increased competition from public institutions, the virtual absence of tuition fees in the public- and church-based sector and the overall decline in size of the population. In conclusion, Gömbös finds that the single most important factor limiting the growth of the private sector in HE is its failure to justify its exorbitant tuition rates (430–431). Indeed, tuition has limited access to the private sector for all but a tiny minority students from extremely affluent families (431).

The truly equitable provision of HE in Hungary must accommodate Hungary's most marginalized populations. Writing in a 2003 article, Orsolya Lelkes argues that beyond the need to avoid EU sanctions, fostering greater equality in Hungarian society will decrease cultural tensions, foster greater public safety, and reduce social spending once marginalized social groups are given the opportunity to integrate into HE and the workforce (Lelkes 2003: 88). As Lelkes explains, the removal of barriers to migration within the EU and the potential influx of marginalized social and ethnic minorities from the recent accession states have encouraged policy makers to address the lack of economic and social cohesion in East Central Europe (89–90). Specifically, Lelkes reports that the 1999 income gap between the richest and poorest countries and regions of the EU will double with the addition of the new member states (90). Thus, social inequalities in Hungary can no longer be considered merely a national problem, but now hold direct consequences for the whole of the EU. For the time being, however, the integration of the marginalized social and ethnic groups remains the responsibility of its individual member states. As Lelkes explains, the EU has recognized the following factors in fostering social inclusion: (1) workforce development; (2) access to public services, consumer goods and civil liberties; (3) decreasing the risk of marginalization; (4) targeting at risk groups for additional public services; and (5) coordinating the services of private sector organizations and governmental agencies (91–92). As Lelkes reports, the primary indicators of social exclusion ac-

cepted by the EU are material deprivation, inadequate education, unemployment and substandard health (92). Other important indicators include political participation, level of indebtedness and welfare dependence. While useful, these indicators fail to differentiate between low and high quality educational and health services, short-term and long-term unemployment, or generational and situational poverty (94). According to Lelkes, pervasive tax evasion and ethnic prejudice have made government statistics for income and ethnicity extremely unreliable, thus severely limiting the measurement of social exclusion in Hungary (101).

Despite greater gender equity in early degree cycles, the feminization of the healthcare and teaching professions have meant that the average female wage earner is paid less than her male counterpart. In an article on women in Hungarian HE and the labor market, Women's Studies professor, Katalin Koncz writes that the position of women in the Hungarian labor market has not kept pace with the recent improvement in educational attainment amongst the female population (Koncz 1998: 76). Thus, the educational attainment of female wage-earners actually exceeded that of males in the late 1990s (with 12.7% of female and 11.9% of male wage-earners having attended HE). According to Koncz, women's under compensation in the labor market may reflect qualitative differences between the education and professions of female and male wage-earners. Specifically, Koncz argues that the movement of women into and men out of traditionally male professions is driven by a process of feminization, resulting in a loss of prestige and a lower wages.

The transition to a parliamentary democracy has resulted in both vertical and horizontal manifestations of gender inequality in Hungarian HE. Writing in a 2004 article, Judit Timár and Ildikó Fábíán Jelenszky argue that:

the economic transition has not only failed to improve the position of females within geography in higher education but has impaired it in certain respects [and that] the legal establishment of democracy by itself has not resulted in a meaningful discussion of women's interests. Neither has it led to the recognition of women's disadvantageous position within geography (Timár et al. 2004: 102).

Continuing, the authors cite the prevalence of "gender blind" statistical data as a major methodological constraint on the study. As they explain, their study focuses primarily on: (1) the relative decline in female enrollment in geography programs following the massification of Hungarian HE and (2) the vertical and horizontal manifestations of gender inequality in the field of Geography (e.g., the over representation of female students in undergraduate programs and their under representation in graduate programs). In order to evaluate the changing socioeconomic status of women in the field of Geography, however, the authors consider two "background processes" (104). Specifically, they examine:

changes in women's social and economic status compared with men's during the transition period from socialism to capitalism [as well as] changes in the self-development, structure and theories of geography as a discipline during the same period (Timár et al. 2004: 104).

As the authors note, one of the most important consequences of the transition was a sizable decrease in the number of women in the Hungarian workforce (in direct contrast with labor trends in Western Europe). In addition to this trend, the restructuring and privatization of a significant percentage of the Hungarian economy has served to reinforce the feminization of the education and healthcare professions. As the authors explain, the horizontal and vertical segregation of women in the field of Geography directly mirrors their position in the labor market. In conclusion, the authors report that the status of women in HE and the workforce is typically excluded from policy discourse in East Central Europe (106), not surprising given the tremendous under representation of women in the Hungarian Parliament:

while in some EU countries women's presence in government exceeds 30 per cent, in Hungary their average representation in parliamentary committees has remained below 12 per cent since the onset of political changes (Timár et al. 2004: 106).

In a major blow to the re-privatization of secularized educational institutions, the Constitutional Court (AB) halted the transfer of nationalized schools to church organizations, arguing that religious schools are incapable providing a neutral education. In a 2003 article on state-church relations under the first post-Communist Hungarian government, Péter Nagy Tibor argues that the Communist decision to nationalize church-run schools in 1948 was actually preceded by a secularization process as churches struggled under the financial burden posed by the operation of the majority of the nation's schools (Nagy Tibor 2003: 27). By the 1950s the nationalization process had reduced the number of church-run schools in Hungary to less than ten, a tremendous decrease from the 1935–1936 school-year when nearly 60% of Hungarian schools were church-run (27–28). By the 1980s, however, the reform-wing of the Communist government had begun negotiating the return of a few of the schools secularized at the end of the Second World War (28). In 1989 the OM publicly acknowledged that the “re-privatization of church schools is in [Hungary's] national interest” (Nagy Tibor 2003: 28). The first school to be returned was the Budapest Gimnázium of the Lutheran Church in 1988. Interestingly, the re-privatization process was coupled with closer diplomatic relations with the West, including the active involvement of the US embassy in the reopening the first Reformed school and a visit from George Bush, Sr. on the occasion of the first reopening of a secularized Lutheran school. The first

significant setback suffered by the re-secularization process occurred when the lay leadership of the Reformed Church called for the re-privatization of an élite Budapest school (29). Although the OM was willing to return the building to the Reformed Church, many parents were unwilling to move their children from a state-run to a church-run school. A 1990 amendment to the 1985 Education Act introduced a per student funding formula from the central budget for both state- and church-run schools, which raised questions of equity, since religious schools were able to offset their operating expenses with tuition fees, while state schools had no such option. With the victory of a non-Communist coalition in the 1990 elections, the privatization process was considerably accelerated. The leading coalition was able to pass a re-privatization act in Parliament the following year despite the opposition of the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ), alliances of municipalities and teachers unions (30). The failure to win the support of the municipalities, in particular, proved to be a major impediment to the process as municipalities successfully argued that the loss of a school was more than the loss of a building: municipal schools filled a neutral function church schools were incapable of providing (31). Ultimately, the position of the municipalities was backed by a decision by the AB⁶⁴ which stated that “the state (municipality) must offer the opportunity to attend a neutral school to anyone not interested in attending a church school” (32–33). The court’s decision was a major success for the liberal opposition and a source of tremendous frustration for the center-right coalition government (Nagy Tibor 2003: 33). While the re-privatization of nationalized schools has obvious implications for the proposed privatization of Hungarian HE, the principal form privatization has taken in Hungary is the transfer of state assets to the hands of foreign investors. As such, the history of privatization in Hungary is also a history of political abuses. While all of Hungary’s ruling coalitions since the transition to a multiparty political system have been implicated in privatization scandals, the rate of privatization – and the corresponding level of corruption – has fluctuated significantly from one government to the next. Not surprisingly, each of Hungary’s three principal political parties – the Alliance of Young Democrats (Fidesz), the Hungarian Socialist Party⁶⁵ and the Alliance of Free Democrats – offer very different accounts of the privatization process. According to a Socialist website, the level of privatization achieved by the Antall government (a non-Socialist government) dwarfed the scale of the spontaneous privatization, which had occurred under the Németh government (a Socialist government). Under the Németh government, income from privatization remained in the hundreds of millions of HUFs, while the profits from privatization quickly climbed into the hundreds of billions of HUFs under the Antall government. Thus, “privatization passed from the hands of bureaucrats to the new elite, insuring that they and their clients would reap the rewards of future privatization” (Mocsáry 2005). Not surprisingly, the website fails to detail the his-

tory of privatization under the Horn government, the Socialist coalition, which succeeded the Antall government. The Horn government was in office during the period from 1995–1997, a period another political analyst characterizes as:

the indisputable peak of the privatization process, when a number of strategic companies – among them Matáv and the gas and power providers – were privatized. It was no coincidence that nearly half of the income generated by the decade and a half of privatization – 1,120 billion HUFs – was collected by the Horn government (Sára 2006).

While most of the privatizations had already occurred by the time the Orbán government took office, the new administration nevertheless managed to embroil itself in bank scandals and reward its clients with key positions at companies where the state was the majority stockholder (Mocsáry 2005). After the minimal privatization that occurred under the Orbán government, the process took off again in 2003–2004 under a new coalition government of Socialists and Free Democrats (Sára 2006). While Fidesz is far from blameless in the privatization process, the party has argued that the process has been less than equitable, profiting a handful of Hungarians with the right political connections:

in Hungary, stock offerings represented only 16% of privatizations, while sales to a single (more often than not, foreign) buyer represented four-fifths of the privatizations (Anonymous 2007a).

Thus, Fidesz has come out in opposition to future privatization, arguing that complete privatization has a great deal in common with complete nationalization: they both leave “the majority of the population at the mercy of a narrow circle of elites” (Anonymous 2007a). As Zoltán Pokorni of Fidesz has observed, the current degree of privatization in Hungary is unparalleled, with an amazing 90% of commercial wealth in the hands of private investors and a mere 10% controlled by the state. According to Fidesz, future privatization would lead to even more basic services ending up in foreign hands, causing the country to lose its independence and become an economic colony (Anonymous 2007a). Responding to statements issued by Fidesz calling for the re-nationalization of strategic interests, the Alliance of Free Democrats organized a debate over the merits of privatization in the Hungarian Parliament (Anonymous 2007d). During the debate, SZDSZ faction leader, Gábor Kuncze argued that the statements made by Fidesz and Viktor Orbán have created an atmosphere hostile to foreign investment, jeopardizing the neoliberal consensus that evolved between Hungary’s leading political parties during the transition to a multiparty democracy. A prominent member of the Socialist Party, however, has suggested that – despite ample rhetoric to the contrary – Viktor Orbán and Fidesz will continue privatization on their own terms if and when they return to power (Péter Kiss in Anonymous 2007d), an accusation that

may not be that far from the truth given the 113 privatization transactions completed while the Orbán government was in power (Anonymous 2007d). Unfortunately, the privatization of state assets is only one of the strategies adopted by the current Hungarian government in the rationalization of public services.

It is clear that the introduction of mandatory tuition fees and a student loan system will have a negative impact on the equitable provision of higher education in Hungary. Writing in a 2004 article, Róbert Rontó explains that the introduction of a student loan system in Hungary was intended to facilitate upward social mobility by deferring the costs of HE to a later, hopefully more affluent point in a graduate's life (Rontó 2004). While rising interest rates have won the acrimony of Hungary's largest opposition party, Rontó argued that the 12.5% interest rate would decrease dramatically following Hungary's accession to the EU.⁶⁶ At the 12.5% interest rate available in 2003, a student receiving 1,250,000 HUF in loans could expect to repay at least 2,500,000 HUF.⁶⁷ While student loans go into automatic repayment upon graduation or the suspension of studies, monthly loan payments are limited to 6% of the official minimum wage per month for a period of two years, whereupon they are adjusted to 6% of the graduate's monthly income, until the loans are repaid in full or the loan recipient retires or dies, at which time the outstanding debt is forgiven in full. Despite Rontó's objections to the contrary, student demonstrations and a parliamentary initiative calling for a government subsidy for student loans are clear evidence of popular dissatisfaction with the government's financial aid policies. Of the some 90% of HE students eligible for student loans in 2003, a low 34% actually availed themselves of the program. According to Rontó, the most financially disadvantaged students are least likely to shoulder the responsibility of repaying loans. Instead, student loans are viewed by students from more affluent families as a comparatively inexpensive source of credit. Even then, few students have risked taking out more than 50,000 Forints in debt. According to Rontó, the most common complaint aired by students is that the financial aid has to be repaid at all. In stark contrast to the 20–30% of student loan recipients who go into default in Great Britain, as of 2004 not one single Hungarian student had failed to repay their loans.

The involvement of student organizations in HE policy formulation can be expected to lead to greater equity in the provision of HE. Writing on the BD and Hungarian HE, Kornél Almássy argues that, despite the ability of the Socialist system of HE to keep pace with the West through the late 1980s, a string of unsuccessful HE reforms in the 1990s left Hungary's universities and colleges ill-equipped to cope with the challenges of the 21st Century (Almássy 2002: 108). Continuing, Almássy explains that Hungary's accession to the EU and participation in the BP may succeed in building the consensus necessary to finally modernize Hungary's HE sector. Specifically, Almássy argues that the increased involvement of student organizations in policy negotiations has the most potential to

challenge the *status quo*. In fact, HE students have succeeded in winning a place for themselves at the negotiating table (albeit rather late in the BP) (109). The National Unions of Students in Europe (ESIB), for example, is an umbrella organization of forty-six national student unions from thirty-five countries, which now represents the educational, cultural and economic interests of some ten million HE students in the BP. The primary mission of the ESIB is to increase access to HE (108). As Almásy explains, the organization had little impact on HE policy in the 1990s as a consequence of its inability or unwillingness to accommodate the interests of the policy makers guiding the BP (109). In addition, the commitment of the umbrella organization to the plight of students in Sri Lanka and Iran, for example, was perceived by many of its constituents⁶⁸ to be tangential to its principal mission to protect the interests of its European members. The organization's idealism ultimately contributed to the exclusion of ESIB representatives from the conference of ministers in Bologna. The threat of student protests and their potential to disrupt the BP, however, convinced Europe's HE policy makers to accept the ESIB as a necessary partner in the formation of a EHEA. Thus, the ESIB succeeded in influencing the wording (if not the eventual implementation) of the PCom. As Almásy explains, the once elite scale of HE in Hungary was expanded in the late 1990s into a system of mass education, with student representatives constituting anywhere from a quarter to a third of institutional councils, far exceeding the degree of representation enjoyed by their counterparts in Western Europe and the United States (110). In fact, Zoltán Pokorni, Minister of Education under a Fidesz-led coalition government from 1998 to 2000, called for a minimum of 50% participation in HE by 2010.⁶⁹ Despite this commitment, Almásy cautions that the continued expansion of HE might prove counterproductive should graduation rates exceed the demand for university graduates in the workforce. Thus, the massification process threatens to undermine the marketability of university degrees and lower Hungary's historically high standard of education: "however discriminatory the idea of elite education sounds, the outstanding talents of each generation deserve an elite higher education" (Almásy 2002: 111). In contrast to the relatively high degree of student representation on institutional councils, Hungarian students have little opportunity to move between programs, institutions or countries (111–112). As Almásy explains, the primary barrier to student mobility between Hungarian and Western universities is the government's continued failure to provide students with adequate financial support (112). Student mobility within Hungary is similarly handicapped by a chronic lack of affordable student housing. The difference between the 40,000 dormitory places available to the 180,000 students supported by the Hungarian government in 2001 posed a greater financial burden for the families of students residing outside of Hungary's largest cities. While the introduction of student loans was originally welcomed by HÖOK representatives, the ostensible generosity of the OM

must be understood in the context of its repeated (if unsuccessful) attempts to rationalize (if not eliminate) Hungary's system of tuition-free HE (113). In conclusion, Almássy argues that it is ultimately in Hungary's best interest to adhere to the principles articulated in the BD and the PCom in its HE policies.

Perhaps the single greatest barrier to the equitable provision of HE in Hungary is the severe under representation of the Roma population in the Hungarian educational system. Although negative stereotypes of Gypsies are all too common in Hungary, author Theresa Agovino reports that efforts are being made to mitigate, if not eliminate, the severe prejudice Roma face in Hungarian society (Agovino 2000a). Efforts have been focused primarily on one of two solutions: to improve the participation of Roma students in secondary and HE and to increase the cultural awareness of the Hungarian teachers working in Roma communities. While members of the Roma community would ideally be represented in the teaching staff of Roma Studies programs, little can be done to remedy the situation without first addressing the dismally low graduation rates in the Roma community. In fact, Roma access to HE is almost nonexistent with a nationwide total of 500 Roma students attending Hungarian universities (exactly 0.1% of the estimated 500,000 Roma living in Hungary in 2000). According to Rózsa Mendi, the director of Romaversitas, a program established to provide scholarships to Roma college students, these numbers are far from surprising, given the dismally low graduation rate among Hungarian Gypsies (with fewer than 2% finishing and 45% ever attending secondary school). According to the article, Romaversitas provides eligible Roma students with stipends, tutors and monthly meetings, where they have the opportunity to meet with other Roma students.

One strategy which has been used to insure the equitable provision of HE to Hungary's Roma population has been the establishment of Roma Studies programs. In a 2002 article, Katalin Forray writes that important, if largely symbolic, steps have been taken to remedy both Hungarian perceptions of the minority group and Roma participation in secondary and tertiary education through the establishment of a Roma Studies Department at the University of Pécs (Forray 2002/2003: 88). In addition to exposing Hungarian university students to Roma culture, the program also trains a small number of Roma university students as secondary school teachers and mentors for the next generation of Roma children. As the article reports, Roma children typically struggle with prejudice and widespread poverty compounded by their exclusion from avenues to social mobility (70). Forray argues that progress has been made in increasing access to the fields of Law and Medicine for a handful of Roma students, but that this does little to improve the severe underrepresentation of Roma in secondary and HE (85). What exactly should be done to improve their situation, however, remains an open question. As Forray notes, there is no consensus as to whether policy makers should support positive discrimination measures or not. Increasing pressure to meet EU

minority rights requirements, however, has forced the government to take serious steps to decrease the isolation of the Roma minority in Hungarian primary and secondary schools. Another major development occurred in 2000 when the MAB together with the OM approved the establishment of a faculty of Roma Studies at the University of Pécs (88). Although the step was partly symbolic (of the institutionalization of the Roma population as a national minority), it also has the, as yet unrealized, potential to expose future generations of secondary school teachers to Roma language and culture.⁷⁰ Together with support from the Open Society Institute (OSI), such EU programs as Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies (PHARE) have done the most to increase participation and retention of Roma students (85). As a part of its mission to improve the economic and social cohesion of EU accession states, the PHARE program has supported efforts in colleges and universities in a number of Hungarian cities to establish Gypsy Studies programs. According to a ECom report, Hungarian institutes currently engaged in some form of Roma-related teacher training include Eötvös Loránd University, the University of Pécs, Nyíregyháza College, the University of Kaposvár, Apor Vilmos Catholic Colleges, the University of Miskolc, Kölcsey Ferenc Teacher Training Calvinist College, Tessedik Sámuel College, the College Faculty of Pedagogy, Eötvös József College, and the University of Debrecen. In addition to these advances, the Association of Roma Academic Researchers was founded in 1995 to research the language, culture and traditions of Hungary's Roma population, as well as to contribute to the reform of the Roma minority education and the development of appropriate textbooks.

In addition to supporting Roma Studies programs, the Hungarian government has also introduced positive discrimination measures in the evaluation of university entrance examinations. According to a 2004 article on plight of the Roma, fewer than a third of the minority start and less than 5% ever finish secondary school (Woodard 2004). By comparison, nearly 90% of the Hungarian population starts secondary education. A low 2% of Roma ever reach tertiary education, with only a small percentage of these actually graduating. According to estimates published by the OM, as few as 5% of the nation's 110,000 teachers are Roma. According to a 2003 United Nations study, the conditions many Roma face are comparable to the poverty found in sub-Saharan Africa. While EU membership and minority rights requirements have forced the Hungarian government to take steps to improve the social and economic conditions of its Gypsy minority, many would argue that real progress will only occur once a generation of Roma professionals have been educated. Nevertheless, the OM has appointed Viktória Mohácsi Bernáth to head the desegregation of the nation's public schools. Typically, Gypsy students have been tracked into remedial or special education programs, from which they rarely make it to HE. The OM has also enacted a positive discrimination program to increase Roma access to tertiary education, despite wide-

spread criticism of the program as a return to the class-based admissions policies of the socialist system. According to Voldemar Tomusk, deputy director of the International Higher Education Support Program (IHESP) at the OSI in Budapest, "The real barriers occur long before [Roma students] ever get considered for the university" (Tomusk in Woodard 2004). Tomusk is not alone in the belief that the most effective point at which to intervene is not at the gates to HE. Ian Hancock, a professor of Roma Studies at the University of Austin, argues that attempting to improve the condition of the Roma minority in Hungary by educating a professional class is misguided:

once we get a generation of self-sufficient skilled people, then maybe their children can start thinking about becoming physicians and attorneys and professors (Hancock in Woodard 2004).

Conclusion

It is my argument that the most frequently cited goals of the reform of the Hungarian system of HE are actually subordinate to a larger, neoliberal agenda involving the marketization of education, healthcare and other public services. Thus, the reform of HE in Hungary is inextricably bound up with the interests of the international financial community through the policy framework advanced by the two principal sources of external aid in Hungary: the WB and the EU. Specifically, the various policy goals involved in the marketization of HE in Hungary serve one of two principal ends: the introduction of cost recovery mechanisms in the provision of public services or the transition to a knowledge-based economy (the former policy championed by the WB, the latter by the EU). The neoliberal logic of cost recovery flies in the face of the long-held assumption that governments are obliged to provide their citizens with social services. Moreover, the reform of the Hungarian system of HE has been conceived by foreign political and economic bodies unaccountable to the will and unconcerned with the welfare of the Hungarian public. In fact, the marketization or commodification of HE is embedded within a larger matrix of policy assumptions commonly referred to as the Washington Consensus, a neoliberal economic agenda centered around the liberalization of consumer prices, the privatization of national interests and the marketization of social services. Lamentably, Hungarian policy makers have proven themselves wholly subservient to the interests of the international financial community and unconcerned with the interests of the Hungarian population. In stark contrast to the articulate opposition to the imposition of neoliberal reforms at African and Latin American HEIs, Hungarian policy discourse has failed to recognize, let alone question the marketization of HE. Instead, reformers have

portrayed the transformation of HE as a means of increasing upward social mobility, despite comparative data demonstrating that adherence to the neoliberal logic of cost recovery in the provision of social services marginalizes low-income families. Perhaps the most salient corollary of the implementation of neoliberal reforms in Hungary has been the ensuing de-emphasis of the responsibility of the state in the provision of social services. Consequently, the potential benefits of the restructuring of the HE sector cannot be meaningfully evaluated without also considering the largely deleterious impact of the marketization of what was once considered a public service. Thus, there is an irreconcilable contradiction in the Hungarian government's ongoing campaign to win the support of HE stakeholder groups for reforms not clearly in the interest of the Hungarian population.

The marketization of higher education (HE) in Hungary has two principal components: the introduction of cost recovery mechanisms and the transition to a knowledge-based economy. The first of these can be further divided into the three interrelated policy goals of rationalization, privatization and devolution. While the World Bank (WB) threw its considerable weight behind the introduction of cost recovery mechanisms in Hungarian HE (in the form of tuition fees, a subsidized loan system and the casualization of academic staff positions), a 1998 change in governments delayed the introduction of the promised reforms. Although failing to meet many of its specific policy goals, the WB reform did succeed in normalizing the marketization of the public sector in Hungarian policy discourse. While policy makers have promoted the combination of mandatory tuition fees and a student loan system as a vehicle for greater social mobility, it may take a few years for the Hungarian public to forget that HE was once available (albeit to a smaller percentage of the population) free of charge. In addition to the questionable rationale behind the introduction of tuition fees, Hungary's student loan system has been faulted for its high interest rates, low participation levels and misuse by students from middle- and upper-income families (for whom it is apparently an attractive alternative to commercial credit).⁷¹ In addition to the leverage the WB exerts over HE policy in Hungary, the considerable financial support provided by the European Union (EU), the European Commission (ECom) and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has been instrumental in the restructuring of Hungarian HE. Not surprisingly, external aid not explicitly linked to the implementation of specific policy instruments has been appropriated by interest groups opposed to the reform of Hungarian HE. Although suffering a temporary setback with the delayed introduction of tuition fees, the considerable financial inducement represented by the WB loan convinced Hungarian HEIs to acquiesce to the introduction of advisory boards. The challenge to the traditional bipolar distribution of power between the Ministry of Education and individual HEIs presented by the introduction of external lay boards was exacerbated by WB funding for a national-level buffer body⁷² which had previously

been under funded by the OM. Temporarily frustrated, but undeterred, the OM responded by founding the Fund Management Directorate of the Ministry of Education (OMAI) so as to retain allocative functions it was reluctant to devolve to the Higher Education and Scientific Council (FTT). Perhaps the most significant outcome of the WB reform was the reconception of HE as a commodity and not a public service to be provided free of charge. Despite ample international evidence that the adoption of cost recovery policies leads to the marginalization of students from low-income families, the European finance community has continued to pressure the Hungarian government to reduce its budget deficit by introducing mandatory tuition fees and other inequitable cost recovery policies. The introduction of cost recovery mechanisms in the provision of social services has been a condition of WB loans for decades, despite overwhelming evidence of the harmful effect of user fees on the utilization of social services. Alternative forms of cost recovery considered, but rarely advocated, by the WB are the introduction of a graduate tax, employer taxes, differential fees, targeted scholarships, community support and national service schemes. While all involve the diversification of institutional resource bases through the externalization of costs to the direct or indirect beneficiaries of HE, the introduction of a graduate tax assumes the efficient operation a national tax system (an assumption not necessarily justified in the current Hungarian economy). While a national service scheme would not directly lower costs at HEIs, it would benefit society at large, thereby reimbursing Hungarian taxpayers for their government's support of HEIs. Unfortunately, national service schemes also run the risk of student default and lock graduates into years of service that may or may not be related to their professional training. Much of the focus on cost recovery seems misguided, since the additional revenue represented by tuition fees will cover only a tiny fraction of the total cost of HE. Worse yet, the student loan program necessary for students to pay tuition fees is likely to prove more costly for taxpayers than it would be to disburse the same amount of financial aid as grants. Unfortunately, the government's subsidy and guarantee of student loans is unlikely to be reconsidered, since it represents a sizeable transfer of wealth from taxpayers to private lenders, which is precisely the goal of the marketization of HE. The first of the three interrelated policy goals involved in cost recovery is the rationalization of HE.

The rationalization of higher education (HE) has involved both the integration and harmonization of higher education policies and institutions (HEIs). Not surprisingly, the two principal strategies employed in the rationalization of HE in Hungary have had a deleterious impact on quality. Specifically, the regional consolidation of state-run HEIs and the introduction of normative financing practices, both policies linked to World Bank (WB) support, have had a number of unanticipated and harmful consequences for tertiary education. The introduction of the normative financing at HEIs has created a perverse incentive for institutions to ex-

pand enrollment beyond their capacity to provide a quality education. Because rationalization calls for maximal efficiency (whether by limiting inputs or increasing outputs), it seeks to minimize personnel expenditures (by far the largest input in the provision of HE). Thus, Hungary's first place ranking among Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries in the number of teachers as a percentage of total manpower and low student to teacher ratios are viewed as inexcusably inefficient by WB economists. It is important to note, however, that such narrow understandings of the function of HE fail to consider the co-optive function of academic employment during a political transition. Because the rationalization of Hungarian HE is clearly not in the interests of the professorate or the rectorate and the Ministry of Education (OM) has proven incapable of enforcing genuine compliance with reforms, increased student participation on institutional governing bodies has been considered as a possible means of implementing reforms opposed by the traditional power structure at Hungarian HEIs. As one aspect of the commodification or marketization of public services, the rationalization of HE has sought to quantify, regulate and evaluate the provision of educational services according to the standard of profitability. Unfortunately, the multifunctional nature of HEIs does not easily lend itself to evaluation according to any single criterion, economic or otherwise. Thus, the rationalization and marketization of HE has proven particularly ill-suited to the realization of such long-term goals as increased social cohesion. In fact, undue reliance on narrow cost-benefit analyses has led economists to view HE as a socially irrelevant drain on state budgets, if not an outright contributor to social inequality. Such misrepresentations of the role of HE have been used by neoliberal reformers to justify the downsizing and casualization of teaching staff in transition economies, claiming that the only way to meet the increased demand for HE (ascribed to the artificially high rate of return on tuition free education) is to do more with less. Thus, the WB has advocated alternative allocative mechanisms including a reliance on competitive funding practices. One aspect of the rationalization of HE has been the integration of HEIs.

In addition to the introduction of cost recovery mechanisms in the provision of higher education, Hungary's 1998 World Bank (WB) loan was also linked to the regional integration of state-run higher education institutions (HEIs). While intended to minimize institutional redundancy and achieve regional economies of scale at HEIs, the integration process actually led to greater functional fragmentation between departments and programs at the newly formed regional universities. Specifically, it is clear that the integration process was largely superficial, with redundant departments and programs within individual institutions observing a live and let live policy of coexistence. Perversely, the integration process was in part conceived as a remedy for the institutional fragmentation resulting from the hesitance of WB advisors to support HE reforms in Hungary involving

the coordination of complementary institutions. A second aspect of the rationalization of HE has been the harmonization of national education policies.

The harmonization of national higher (HE) education systems in Europe was made possible by the establishment of such supranational organizations as the European Commission (ECom) in the decades following the Second World War. While the first explicit reference to the harmonization of national education systems was made in a 1973 ECom report, the report was careful to frame harmonization as a means to an end, rather than a policy goal in its own right. While references to the harmonization of HE were omitted from the final draft of the Bologna Declaration (BD) to appease signatory states uncomfortable with the implications of consigning responsibility for their national HE policies to a supranational organization, the ECom used its considerable economic weight to ensure that harmonization was included among the goals of the Sorbonne Declaration (SD). Thus, the Hungarian government has effectively ceded responsibility for HE policy to a supranational coordinating body. The second of the three interrelated policy goals involved in cost recovery is the privatization of HE.

Although the World Bank (WB) has endorsed privatization as a cost effective means of increasing quality and access in Hungarian higher education (HE), there is abundant international evidence that privatization has an adverse impact on the quality of HE in transition economies. Since the withdrawal of US and British membership from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in the 1980s, the WB has become the most important actor in the formulation and funding of HE policy. This is of particular concern, since WB loans require the adoption of specific policy instruments such as the redirection of funding from tertiary to secondary and primary education. The last of the three interrelated policy goals involved in cost recovery is the devolution of authority to higher education institutions (HEIs).

The devolution of authority to individual higher education institutions (HEIs) is intimately related to seven further policy goals: autonomy, competition, quality assurance, academic freedom, democratization, responsiveness and productivity. The devolution of discretionary powers from the Hungarian Ministry of Education (OM) to individual HEIs in the 1980s and 1990s was a part of a larger decentralization strategy ostensibly designed to improve the delivery of social services and increase regional autonomy. In reality, however, devolution was little more than a pretext for the central government to decrease spending and delegate responsibilities without relinquishing significant power. In fact, there has been little to suggest that the decentralization of Hungarian HE led to improved governance or resource allocation. Aside from enabling the OM to consolidate its control over the HE sector vis à vis competing ministries, the most obvious consequence of decentralization has been to raise the unit cost of HE by increasing institutional re-

dundancy. The first of the seven policy goals related to the devolution of authority is autonomy.

The strong version of autonomy prevalent in higher education (HE) policy discourse in Hungary is clearly a byproduct of the politically motivated decentralization policy adopted by the state in the late 1980s. As such, the strong version of autonomy is gradually being replaced by a weaker, market-oriented version premised upon greater accountability to external stakeholder groups. Specifically, intense lobbying by Citizens Democracy Corps (CDC)⁷³ and World Bank (WB) representatives in the 1990s led to the legislation of mandatory governing boards at Hungarian higher education institutions (HEIs). Derived from American governance practices, governing boards represent a direct challenge to the autonomy of individual universities. While unable to block the introduction of lay boards, universities did succeed in downgrading the competence of the boards from a supervisory to an advisory role. Thus, the bureaucratic inertia that provided a minimum of institutional autonomy under state socialism has proven equally capable of resisting the forces of marketization. While the interests of the Ministry of Education were indirectly threatened by the adoption of lay boards at individual HEIs, WB funding for the Higher Education and Scientific Council (FTT)⁷⁴ was correctly perceived as a challenge to the authority of the OM. Given the neoliberal attempt to wrest control of HEIs from internal stakeholder groups, it is not surprising that the version of institutional autonomy promoted by the Secretariat of the Bologna Process (BP) attempts to isolate the professorate from direct contact with the OM. The second of the seven policy goals related to the devolution of authority is competition.

Although the Hungarian government has introduced competitive funding practices in an attempt to increase the efficiency of resource allocation, competition between individual higher education institutions (HEIs) has resulted in the inefficient and costly duplication of programs and services. Moreover, the increased percentage of income at Hungarian HEIs represented by capitation grants has led to counterproductive competition for limited resources. The third of the seven policy goals related to the devolution of authority is quality assurance (QA).

Acting on the assumption that information about quality is necessary for policy actors to make informed decisions, the Hungarian Ministry of Education (OM) has introduced such forms of quality assurance (QA) at higher education institutions (HEIs) as accreditation, internal monitoring, external evaluation and peer review. While the primary government agency responsible for the accreditation of Hungarian HEIs⁷⁵ was chartered to represent the interests of a wide range of stakeholder groups, the agency has been criticized as a return to a bipolar distribution of power between the OM and the rectorate. However reasonable, the opposition of the professoriate to the introduction of QA practices, which increase accountability and reduce autonomy, has proven insufficient to block proposed reforms

outright. While the adoption of western QA practices has been highly selective, at times failing to include institutional fitness in the evaluation of HEIs, Hungary's lack of an explicit, long-term higher education strategy makes the evaluation of fitness of purpose all but impossible. A dependence on peer review and the fiction of anonymity in a country the size of Hungary have made the impartial accreditation of HEIs extremely unlikely. Responding to these and other criticisms raised in an external review of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB), the committee has attempted to recast itself in the role of a partner interested in, instead of an authority indifferent to, the future of HE. In fact, it is arguable whether the potential benefits of QA practices outweigh the tremendous reporting burden they represent for HEIs. Whatever value cost-benefit analyses assign to Hungary's QA system, it is clear that until funding decisions are linked to accreditation reports, HEIs will have little incentive to change the way they do business. In practice, the accreditation of Hungarian HEIs has resulted in greater homogenization between, and differentiation within, individual HEIs. In fact, the homogenization or normalization of HE is a key function of Hungary's QA system, since predictability is a necessary precondition for the state to transform itself from a provider to regulator of HE. Unfortunately, the normative definitions of quality employed in QA systems tend to reflect and reinforce the interests and biases of dominant stakeholder groups. In particular, the rationalization of HE and the introduction of QA practices have been observed to have a detrimental impact on gender equity. This is especially worrisome given the likelihood that the marketization of HE will tilt the composition of accrediting bodies in favor of utilizing organizations unconcerned with the larger societal function of HE. The fourth of the seven policy goals related to the devolution of authority is academic freedom.

Academic freedom has been recognized as a necessary precondition of higher education (HE) insofar as it promotes the open exchange of ideas conducive to learning and research. While typically understood as the right of professors and students to express themselves without fear of censorship, academic freedom has also been construed as the prerogative of university administrators to dictate institutional policy to professors and students. Because the latter definition of academic freedom is more compatible with corporate governance practices, the neo-liberal reform of HE can be expected to have a chilling effect on the open exchange of ideas between professors and their students. If the purpose of the Hungarian system of HE is to serve the public good, then the curtailment of academic freedom integral to the marketization of HE is clearly antithetical to the interests of Hungarian society. The fifth of the seven policy goals related to the devolution of authority is democratization.

The democratization of higher education (HE) is premised upon the realization of the two, related policy goals of participation and transparency. While the 1993

Higher Education Act can be considered an important landmark in the democratization of Hungarian HE, the act nevertheless withheld the right to establish, reform and close public higher education institutions (HEIs) from stakeholder groups. In practice, the democratization of Hungarian HE has meant the involvement of a wider group of stakeholders on institutional governing bodies. The Bologna Process (BP), in particular, has advocated increased student representation on governing bodies as a means of executing reforms opposed by the professoriate and the rectorate. Thus, the legitimate aspiration to democratize Hungarian HE (by involving students, parents and the general public in policy formulation) has been cynically manipulated by politicians at the behest of powerful business lobbies seeking to profit from the transformation of Hungarian HE. The first of the two necessary preconditions of the democratization of HE is participation.

Not only has the increased involvement of external stakeholders in higher education (HE) governance diluted the influence of internal stakeholder groups, it is doubtful whether increased political participation can be considered a desirable policy goal. While the prominence of the non-university sector in HE policy formulation reflects the centrality of life-long learning to the goals of the Bologna Process (BP), the participation of student organizations in the BP is a tacit admission that student protests have the potential to significantly impede the development of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). While Hungarian students are marginally better represented on institutional governing bodies than their counterparts at western universities, surging enrollments have done little to improve the representation of Hungarian students on governing bodies. The participation of a truly representative range of stakeholders on governing bodies at Hungarian higher education institutions (HEIs) would require an unprecedented degree of transparency. Not only has the massification of HE failed to widen participation, there is evidence that it disproportionately benefits students from upper- and middle-income families. The second of the two necessary preconditions of the democratization of HE is transparency.

Because higher education institutions (HEIs) have historically been loathe to conduct their business under public scrutiny, governments have often found it necessary to pass open meeting and public information laws in order to insure public accountability at state-run HEIs. While open meeting laws have increased the accountability of HEIs, it is clear that they have also stifled the free exchange of opinions necessary for the effective functioning of governing bodies. Thus, it is unclear whether full compliance with open meeting laws is actually a desirable policy goal. Specifically, the reluctance of board members to discuss potentially controversial issues at meetings subject to transparency requirements tends to shift the locus of policy formulation to one on one meetings between the chair and individual board members. This has the obvious disadvantage of endowing a single individual with undue influence over policy formulation. While much of the

activity of academics is performed under the cloak of anonymity or confidentiality, this lack of transparency tends to raise doubts as to the ultimate justice of decision-making processes. The sixth of the seven policy goals related to the devolution of authority is the responsiveness of HEIs to public demand.

While quality assurance (QA) practices have attempted to reorient the Hungarian system of higher education (HE) to the perceived needs of the labor market, not all approaches to QA challenge the status quo. Specifically, the application of discrete output criteria and quantitative indicators to static conditions has tended to reinforce, rather than improve, the way Hungarian higher education institutions (HEIs) function. In response, the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB) has included such output criteria as partner satisfaction and problem solving mechanisms in its evaluation of higher education institutions (HEIs). In addition to the introduction of QA practices, competitive funding practices promise to eliminate programs unresponsive to the perceived needs of the labor market. While the Hungarian government has increased support for applied (as opposed to basic) research in an attempt to force HEIs into collaborations with the business community, universities have shown little inclination to adjust their output to the demands of the labor market. In fact, the relatively static profile of the HE sector through the 1990s is evidence of the degree of power enjoyed by internal stakeholder groups. While distance education has also been considered as a means of increasing the responsiveness of the HE sector to the demands of the labor market, it clearly fails to deliver the same quality of instruction as traditional education. One outcome of the increased responsiveness of HEIs to consumer demand has been the diversification of HE.

Curricular diversification, the proliferation of new programs and the growth of such non-traditional forms of education as distance learning represent one of the few changes in the profile of Hungarian higher education (HE) in the 1990s. Specifically, a shortage of skilled manpower and a greater return on the cost of vocational (as opposed to theoretical) programs has made non-traditional forms of HE an attractive option for secondary schools graduates. The introduction of adult education programs has also been hoped to reduce unemployment. The overly specialized structure of Hungarian degree programs has led to the overproduction of graduates in certain fields and a shortage of graduates in others. While the growth and expansion of Hungarian HE in the 1990s was partly due to the expansion of the private and religious sectors, the expansion of the private sector was driven by the significant financial support of the Hungarian government. Whether state support for private higher education institutions (HEIs) is evidence of a shift towards the sector-neutral funding of HE (advocated by World Bank (WB) economists), or simply an attempt to compensate for the secularization of education, which occurred under state socialism, remains to be seen. Despite the current diversity of Hungarian HE, it is clear that the marketization of HE will foster and reward

greater institutional homogeneity. This is particularly problematic, since the flexible workforce required by a knowledge-based economy is inconceivable without the continued diversity of Hungary's HE system. The last of the seven policy goals related to the devolution of authority is productivity.

Although attempts to increase the productivity of higher education institutions (HEIs) have often taken the form of budget cuts, cost reduction alone is no guarantee of increased productivity. While productivity improvement policies require the selection of relevant performance indicators, productivity is unlikely to increase absent a credible set of financial incentives and mandates (i.e., already overburdened faculty are unlikely to increase their productivity unless provided with a compelling reason to do so). Although generally defined in terms of inputs and outputs, it is clear that the productivity of a HEI cannot be accurately assessed without reference to both its efficiency (how well it does what it does) and effectiveness (the degree to which its actions meet its goals). While productivity cannot be increased simply by cutting costs, institutions unable or unwilling to control costs have little chance of increasing productivity. Thus, the positive correlation observed between the availability of subsidized student loans and the cost of higher education (HE) is of particular concern for Hungarian policy makers. Despite being the most commonly cited reason for the low productivity, there is little evidence of inflated faculty salaries or light course loads at Hungarian HEIs. The second principal component of the marketization of HE in Hungary is the transition to a knowledge-based economy.

The transition to a knowledge-based economy involves four interrelated policy goals: innovation, mobility, cohesion and access. Popularized in a series of Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and World Bank (WB) reports published in the late 1990s, the model of a knowledge-based economy emphasizes the role of higher education (HE) in the production of advanced human capital. Thus, the transition to a knowledge-based economy was included amongst the goals of the Sorbonne Declaration (SD) as essential to the future of the European Union (EU). Former lead economist at the WB, Joseph Stiglitz has distinguished knowledge-based economies from traditional industrial economies on the basis of the abundance (as opposed to the scarcity) of knowledge. As knowledge has come to be considered a productive asset central to success in the global economy, the WB has belatedly acknowledged the importance of HE as the primary producer of the advanced human capital and new knowledge in society. Thus, the increased relevance of HE has forced the WB to reconsider its former policy of redirecting funding from higher to primary and secondary education. In fact, the Bank has gone so far as to recognize the obligation of the state to support HE, arguing that orthodox rate of return analyses fail to consider the many externalities generated by HE. It is increasingly clear that governments failing to invest adequately in advanced human capital will find their countries marginalized from

the emerging knowledge-based economy. The first of the four interrelated policy goals involved in the transition to a knowledge-based economy is the development of a national innovation system.

While innovative policy changes do have the potential to increase the productivity of Hungarian higher education (HE), not all policy changes can be fairly characterized as innovative. Thus, the lack of an explicit national innovation strategy has made it impossible to determine whether prospective changes in HE policy are truly in the best interests of the Hungarian economy. Despite this, attempts to develop and fund a national innovation plan have been frustrated by a lack of cooperation between competing state bureaucracies. The privatization of the majority of the Hungarian economy in the 1990s had a negative impact on the amount of the state budget devoted to research and development activities. Thus, the Hungarian government has attempted to compensate for budget cuts by coordinating funding for applied research with the interests and the support of the business community. Not surprisingly, Hungary's failure to articulate and fund a national innovation strategy has gone largely unnoticed amidst the considerable injection of foreign technology and expertise that accompanied the transition to a market economy. This is of particular concern, since the development of an indigenous innovation system is premised upon the ready availability of advanced human capital, an assumption that may not be warranted as more and more science and engineering graduates are lured abroad by the promise of higher salaries and larger research budgets. Thus, the flight of science and engineering graduates from Hungary to Western Europe and the US represents a tremendous drain on the Hungarian economy, as well as a barrier to the eventual evolution of an indigenous innovation system. The second of the four interrelated policy goals involved in the transition to a knowledge-based economy is increased student mobility.

The current Hungarian government⁷⁶ has implemented several reforms within the framework of the Bologna Process (BP), which will increase the mobility of Hungarian students. Specifically, the introduction of a diploma supplement system, the adoption of an ECTS⁷⁷ compatible credit system and the transition to a three-cycle (BA, MA, PhD), linear degree structure will facilitate greater student mobility both within Hungary and the emerging European Higher Education Area (EHEA). Unfortunately, early reform proposals also envision significantly lower admissions quotas at each succeeding level of the new degree structure. While the Hungarian Ministry of Education (OM) has called for a negligible increase in the overall number of students admitted to higher education (HE), it has also projected a significant decrease in the number of students continuing on to the second or MA degree cycle (the closest equivalent to the five-year university degree currently earned by Hungarian university students). If the three degree cycles do provide mass, semi-elite and elite educations to progressively smaller cohorts of students (as is envisioned in reform proposals), a slightly higher percentage of future

secondary school graduates will have the opportunity to spend less time at Hungarian universities to earn an inferior version of the traditional five-year university degree. Despite this, the restructuring of Hungarian HE and the transition to a three-cycle degree structure do promise to increase the international mobility of Hungarian students. This is of particular importance given the role of student mobility in the functioning of the European labor market, the transfer of knowledge and expertise between states, the creation of a common European identity and the acquisition of foreign language skills. Unfortunately, the Hungarian government has yet to remedy the problems of nepotism and academic inbreeding arising from the lack of faculty mobility between higher education institutions and programs. Although clearly integral to the realization of the EHEA, the increased international mobility of Hungarian faculty and students can also be expected to increase the flight of science and engineering PhDs from Hungary to Western Europe. The third of the four interrelated policy goals involved in the transition to a knowledge-based economy is greater social cohesion.

Recognizing that the socialization which occurs at higher education institutions (HEIs) can either promote or impede social cohesion within the European Union (EU) policy makers have called for greater student mobility within the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). While the mobility of university students may lead to greater cultural understanding, it is unlikely that greater workforce mobility will result in greater social cohesion. In fact, international workforce mobility has typically increased cultural tensions and fueled the rise of xenophobic nationalism. Fearing a flood of economic refugees from Eastern Europe, policy makers have been slow to relax labor restrictions within the EU. Specifically, the political leadership of the EU has raised concerns that the lack of social cohesion in Hungary, and other accession states with a large minority populations, will flood western Europe with unskilled labor. In an effort to avert such an eventuality, European governments have provided substantial funding for projects contributing to the social and economic cohesion of accession states through the PHARE program. In addition, the EU has published a list of key indicators of social exclusion and suitable policy interventions. The last of the four interrelated policy goals involved in the transition to a knowledge-based economy is increased access.

Increased access to higher education (HE) has contributed to the three further policy goals of massification, equity and the right to an education. It is important to note that control of admissions quotas was not among the powers devolved to Hungarian higher education institutions (HEIs) in the 1990s. Thus, the Hungarian government was directly responsible for the massification of tertiary education that occurred in the late 1990s. In fact, the choice to increase access to HE can be seen as a calculated attempt by political parties to win votes, rather than an attempt to increase social mobility. Not surprisingly, the government has since introduced

tuition fees in a bid to control the inflation of expectations that has accompanied the massification of HE. Unfortunately, the introduction of fees can be expected to have a disproportionate impact on students from low-income families. The first of the three policy goals derived from increased access to HE is massification.

Although the massification of higher education (HE) represents a political response to social frictions caused by a gap between the demand for and access to tertiary education, the unprecedented demand for HE in the early 1990s was primarily a consequence of higher enrollment, retention and graduation rates at secondary schools (resulting from the convergence of two factors: the demographic bulge in the size of incoming cohorts and the incentive to maximize enrollments in a normative financing system). Thus, the Hungarian government⁷⁸ raised admissions quotas in an attempt to preempt potential political unrest and build political capital with its constituents. Predictably, the Hungarian labor market proved incapable of satisfying the unrealistic expectations that accompanied the massification of HE. Despite an increase in the percentage of the relevant age group attending HE in the 1990s, tracking between sectors, institutions and programs has tended to limit the upward social mobility of graduates. In fact, there is clear evidence that the massification of HE has contributed to diploma inflation, white collar unemployment and depressed salaries, suggesting a need to coordinate the output of higher education institutions (HEIs) with the requirements of the labor market. Since the outright demassification of HE does not appear to be a politically viable option, the Hungarian government has resorted to such surreptitious means of decreasing demand for HE as underfunding HEIs and shifting the cost of HE onto students through the adoption of cost recovery mechanisms. Whatever solutions the Hungarian government ultimately employs, it will have to contend with two unavoidable constraints: the need to maintain the marketability of HE degrees (in order to prevent the political instability arising from white collar unemployment) and the need to increase the percentage of the Hungarian population attending HE (in order to reach the minimal goals set for Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries by 2010). The policy changes currently being implemented by the Hungarian government show a number of parallels to the reform of HE currently underway in Germany. Specifically, the initial massification of German HE was also undermined by budget cuts, the introduction of tuition fees and attempts to track students into the shorter and cheaper degree cycles at vocational colleges. The second of the three policy goals derived from increased access to HE is greater equity.

The transition to a market economy has resulted in greater gender inequity in higher education (HE), with Hungarian females underrepresented in later degree cycles and overrepresented in feminized fields. The high percentage of females enrolled in tertiary education has been characterized as a compensation mechanism for the discrimination women face in the job market. As a consequence of

the casualization and feminization of both the healthcare and the teaching professions, the average Hungarian female wage earner earns less than her male counterpart. Not surprisingly, the transition to a parliamentary democracy has also been accompanied by the marginalization of females from public life, with the percentage of females on parliamentary committees less than half the European average. Not only has the diversification of HE allowed the concentration of female students in low status sectors, institutions and programs, it has also been instrumental in the reproduction of socioeconomic inequalities within Hungarian society, with students from low-income families overrepresented in lower-status programs in the non-university sector. Thus, attempts to define Hungary's system of HE as mass or elite on the basis of enrollment figures are pointless, since they ignore variation between sectors, institutions and programs. Increased access to non-elite institutions has done little to slow the widening income gap between the haves and have nots in Hungarian society. This is of particular concern for Hungary's Roma population. While the Hungarian government has introduced positive discrimination measures in the evaluation of university entrance examinations in an attempt to increase the number of Roma students enrolled in HE, critics have argued that lowering admissions standards is socially stigmatizing and does more to hurt than help the interests of the Roma community. While the handful of Roma students that do reach HE enjoy the financial and moral support of such programs as Romaversitas, it is clear that large scale change will require the immediate and radical intervention of the Hungarian government at all levels of education. Despite the obvious opportunity for upward social mobility presented by access to HE, it has been suggested that the Roma community would profit more from access to blue collar employment than the creation of a professional class of Roma intellectuals. Whatever solution the Hungarian government ultimately chooses, it is clear that the European Union (EU) expects immediate and decisive action to insure the equitable provision of HE within its member states. Thus, the Bologna Secretariat has called upon governments to safeguard HE as a public, and not a private, good, reiterating the commitment expressed by the signatories of the World Declaration on Higher Education to actively facilitate access to HE for members of minority populations. The last of the three policy goals derived from increased access to HE is the right to an education.

Despite the fact that a significant and increasing percentage of Hungarian students are denied the right to a quality education due to their social and economic backgrounds, the indicators of social exclusion recognized by the European Union (EU) and employed by the Hungarian government have proven incapable of accurately tracking the increasing socioeconomic inequality present in Hungarian society. Unfortunately, the introduction of mandatory tuition fees and student loans at higher education institutions (HEIs) can be expected to have a disproportionate impact on the social mobility of secondary school graduates from low-in-

come families. Although policy makers have claimed merit-based aid will insure that the most deserving students can afford higher education (HE), international comparisons show that merit-based aid is awarded at a higher rate to students from more affluent families. In fact, increases in merit-based aid at US HEIs have correlated with decreases in need-based aid, forcing students to take on ever greater loan debt. Not surprisingly, greater loan debt has meant greater profit for the financial sector, with one private corporation in particular, Sallie Mae (publicly traded as the SLM Corporation) holding 85 billion dollars in student loans for 7 million borrowers. If the primary function of the Hungarian system of HE is, as has been claimed, to serve the public good (and not the private banking industry), it would seem logical to make HE available as a right (and not a privilege) to all applicants with tuition rates adjusted to their ability to pay. Failing this, the introduction of tuition fees and interest-bearing student loans can be expected to deter many secondary school graduates from low-income families from continuing on to HE.

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Abbreviations

A

AB (Constitutional Court) Alkotmánybíróság

B

BA (Bachelor of Arts)

BCom (Berlin Communiqué)

BCon (Bologna Conference)

BD (Bologna Declaration)

BP (Bologna Process)

BSc (Bachelor of Science)

BTK (College of Arts and Sciences) Bölcsészettudományi Kar

C

CDC (Citizens Democracy Corps) since renamed the Citizens Development Corps

CHEA (Council for Higher Education Accreditation)

CoE (Council of Europe)

CoEU (Council of the European Union)

CRE (Association of European Universities) since reorganized as the European University Association (EUA)

D

DB (Doctoral Committee) Doktori Bizottság

DOSZ (National Association of Doctoral Students) Doktoranduszok Országos Szövetsége

E

EC (European Council)
ECom (European Community)
ECTS (European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System)
ECUs (European Currency Units)
EHEA (European Higher Education Area)
EM (Ministry of Health) Egészségügyi Minisztérium
ENQA (European Association for Quality Assurance) formerly the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education
ERA (European Research Area)
ESIB (The National Unions of Students in Europe)
EU (European Union)
EUA (European University Association) formerly the CRE (Association of European Universities)
EURASHE (European Association of Institutions in Higher Education)

F

FFA (Higher Education Development Fund) Felsőoktatási Fejlesztési Alap
FFK (College Directors Conference) Főiskolai Főigazgatói Konferencia
Fidesz (Alliance of Young Democrats) Fiatal Demokraták Szövetsége
FPI (Higher Education Tenders Board)
FTT (Higher Education and Scientific Council) Felsőoktatási és Tudományos Tanács
FVM (Ministry of Agricultural Affairs and Rural Development) Földművelésügyi és Vidékfejlesztési Minisztérium

G

GATS (General Agreement on Trade in Services)
GD (Graz Declaration)
GDP (Gross Domestic Product)
GKM (Ministry of Economy and Transport) Gazdasági és Közlekedési Minisztérium
GT (Financial Council) Gazdasági Tanács

H

HE (higher education)
HEIs (higher education institutions)
HÖÖK (National Conference of Student Governments) Hallgatói Önkormányzatok Országos Konferenciája

I

ICSSZEM (Ministry of Youth, Family Affairs, Social Services and Equal Opportunity) Ifjúsági, Családügyi, Szociális és Esélyegyenlőségi Minisztérium
IOAB (Provisional National Accreditation Committee) Ideiglenes Országos Akkreditációs Bizottság
INQAAHE (International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education)

ISCED (International Standard Classification of Education)
IT (Executive Council) Igazgatói Tanács

J

JEPs (Joint Economic Projects)

K

KB (Central Committee) Központi Bizottság
KE (President of the Republic) Köztársasági Elnök
KM (Ministry of Culture) Kulturális Minisztérium
KTIA (Research and Technological Innovation Fund) Kutatási és Technológiai Innovációs Alap

L

LC (Lisbon Convention)

M

M (Prime Minister) Miniszterelnök
MA (Master of Arts)
MAB (Hungarian Accreditation Committee) Magyar Akkreditációs Bizottság
MCF (Forum of Hungarian Gypsy Organizations) Magyarországi Cigányszervezetek Fóruma
MCU (Magna Charta Universitatum)
MM (Ministry of Labor) Munkaügyi Minisztérium
MPA (Labor Market Fund) Munkaerő-piaci Alap
MRK (Hungarian Rectors Conference) Magyar Rektori Konferencia
MSc (Master of Science)
MSZMP (Hungarian Socialist Workers Party) Magyar Szocialista Munkáspárt
MTA (Hungarian Academy of Sciences) Magyar Tudományos Akadémia

N

NKÖM (Ministry of National Cultural Heritage) Nemzeti Kulturális Örökség Minisztériuma
NKTH (National Office for Research and Technology) Nemzeti Kutatási és Technológiai Hivatal
NME (University of Heavy Industry) Nehézipari Műszaki Egyetem (since integrated as the University of Miskolc (MTE))

O

O (Parliament) Országgyűlés
OAB (National Accreditation Committee) Országos Akkreditációs Bizottság
ODHT (National Doctoral and Habilitation Council) Országos Doktori és Habilitációs Tanács
OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development)
OFESZ (National Higher Education Advocacy Association) Országos Felsőoktatási és Érdekvédelmi Szövetség
OKM (Ministry of Education and Culture) Oktatási és Kulturális Minisztérium
OM (Ministry of Education) Oktatási Minisztérium

OMAI (Fund Management Directorate of the Ministry of Education) Oktatási Minisztérium Alapkezelő Igazgatósága

OMFB (National Technological Development Commission) Országos Műszaki Fejlesztési Bizottság

OSI (Open Society Institute)

OTKA (National Fund for Scientific Research) Országos Tudományos Kutatási Alap

P

PCom (Prague Communiqué)

PCon (Prague Conference)

PD (Prague Declaration)

PE (Probability of Employment)

PHARE (Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies)

PhD (Doctor of Philosophy)

PM (Finance Ministry) Pénzügyminisztérium

Q

QA (Quality Assurance)

R

R+D (research and development)

S

SD (Sorbonne Declaration)

SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)

SZDSZ (Alliance of Free Democrats) Szabad Demokraták Szövetsége

SZMM (Ministry of Social Services and Labor) Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium

T

TEMPUS (Trans-European Mobility Scheme for University Studies)

U

UK (United Kingdom)

UN (United Nations)

UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization)

US (United States)

V

VET (Vocational Education and Training) szakképzés

W

WB (World Bank)

Notes

- ¹ The author holds a PhD in Hungarian Studies from Indiana University and can be contacted at jschelbl@indiana.edu.
- ² The Ministries of Culture and Education (OKM), the Interior (BM), Defense (HM), Youth, Family Affairs, Social Services and Equal Opportunity (ICsSsEM), Agricultural Affairs and Rural Development (FVM) and Health (EM).
- ³ While institutional income is primarily a function of enrollment rates, faculty salaries are partly based on academic achievement (Szegegy-Maszák 2007).
- ⁴ As of 2007, there were a total of 72 HEIs operating in Hungary (Szegegy-Maszák 2007).
- ⁵ As Katalin Kovács has observed, the transformations can be described as revolutionary in content and not form because they were the result of legal negotiations between the Németh government and the democratic opposition (Kovács 2000 in Mitter 2003: 81).
- ⁶ Although the Sorbonne was comprised of four faculties (of Arts, Medicine, Law and Theology), students were required to graduate from the Faculty of Arts to be admitted to the higher faculties.
- ⁷ “In the early twenties, isolated by defeat after the First World War, Hungary launched a cultural and scientific offensive with a view to making up for its lack of political and military power with its intellectual capacity. Thus, under the leadership of Minister of Culture, Kunó Klebelsberg, Hungarian institutes of science and culture, known as Collegium Hungaricum, were founded in 1923 in Rome and in 1924 in Vienna and Berlin” (Anonymous 2007b).
- ⁸ Although the Collegium Hungaricum also enjoyed the financial support of the Austrian, German and Italian governments.
- ⁹ “Although it is true that higher education got less financial support in 1927 than before WWI, it should not be forgotten that the size and budget of the country after WWII were much smaller. The relative percentage of the educational budget was much higher in the 20s than it is today” (Szegegy-Maszák 2007).
- ¹⁰ Following the 1989–1990 tenure of Ferenc Glatz (the final Hungarian Minister of Education prior to the transition to a multi-party political system), the Ministry of Education (OM) has been headed by a total of 9 different ministers (with Bálint Magyar serving two separate tenures for a total of 6 of the 17 years since 1990). Specifically, the OM has been headed by Bertalan Andrásfalvy (1990–1993), Ferenc Mádl (1993–1994), Gábor Fodor (1994–1996), Bálint Magyar (1996–1998), Zoltán Pokorni (1998–2000), József Pálinkás (2001–2002), Bálint Magyar (2002–2006) and István Hiller (2006 to the present). From: <http://www.om.hu/>
- ¹¹ Which tended to increase centralization and reduce academic freedom.
- ¹² The XX. Század Intézet.
- ¹³ While researchers at the institutes of the MTA are not required to teach, many also hold teaching positions at HEIs. The current President of the MTA, E. Sylvester Vizi has stated that the successful reform of the MTA will require reconciliation of the “real or perceived differences of interest between universities and research institutes on the one hand, and between basic and applied research on the other” (Vizi in Anonymous 2007c).
- ¹⁴ Modeled on the *Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft*.
- ¹⁵ Under pressure from the international financial community to implement a series of austerity measures, the ruling coalition of Socialists (MSZP) and Free Democrats (SZDSZ) introduced sizeable and mandatory tuition fees at HEIs scheduled to take effect in the Fall of 2008, despite the categorical opposition of the National Conference of Student Governments (HÖÖK) and the likelihood of massive student protests (see for example: <http://www.notandij.hu/>).
- ¹⁶ Since renamed the Citizens Development Corps, the CDC was founded in 1989 by President George Bush, Sr. to assist the Communist states of Eastern Europe transition to a market-based

economy. Although ostensibly operating as an independent, nonprofit, non-governmental organization (NGO), the CDC has been instrumental in the implementation of World Bank and the United States Agency for International Development projects (Anonymous 2007f).

17 While largely successful, the consolidation faced serious challenges from Hungary's medical and agricultural universities that sought to reestablish their previous reporting relationships with the Ministries of Health and Agricultural Affairs and Rural Development.

18 Főiskolai Főigazgatói Konferencia.

19 Országos Műszaki Fejlesztési Bizottság.

20 Oktatási Minisztérium Alapkezelő Igazgatósága.

21 Now referred to as the Igazgatói Tanács or Executive Council.

22 Ranked first among Hungarian universities in international comparisons in 2006 (Szegegy-Maszák 2007).

23 Reorganized in 2006 as the Ministry of Education and Culture.

24 The Németh government was the final administration before the return to a multi-party political system (Szegegy-Maszák 2007).

25 Former Rector of the University of Pécs and World Bank consultant.

26 Sarcastically referred to as *szakbarbár képzés*.

27 Not surprisingly, both fields attract a considerable number of foreign students.

28 According to Miklós Szócska of Semmelweis University, Hungary's leading medical school, it is possible that, within a decade, close to half of the graduates of Hungary's medical schools will seek employment abroad. According to Szócska, low salaries were the primary reason cited for seeking employment abroad (Szócska in Danó 2005). For the time being, however, Hungary has a relative abundance of physicians. In fact, Hungary boasts 3.6 physicians per 1,000 inhabitants, nearly twice the rate of physicians to inhabitants in Britain. Following Hungary's EU accession, 360 Hungarian physicians were registered with the British Medical Association, of which less than half were actually employed. According to Zoltán Aszálós, the director of a human resources firm placing Hungarian physicians in Britain, the majority of Hungarian physicians that do find work in Britain end up in positions at less second tier hospitals outside of the London area (Aszálós in Danó 2005).

29 Szakképzés.

30 Szociális és Munkaügyi Minisztérium (SZMM).

31 Phare is the French word for lighthouse and the acronym for Assistance for the Economic Restructuring of Poland and Hungary.

32 As of 2004 the Budapest University of Economic Sciences and Public Administration was legally recognized as the Corvinus University of Budapest.

33 Specifically, the Professzorok Háza Felsőoktatási Kutatóintézet.

34 Tempus is the Latin word for time.

35 The encyclopedia entry for Phare explains that "the Phare programme is one of the three pre-accession instruments financed by the European Union to assist the applicant countries of Central and Eastern Europe in their preparations for joining the European Union. Originally created in 1989 as the Poland and Hungary: Assistance for Restructuring their Economies (PHARE) programme, Phare has expanded from Poland and Hungary to currently cover ten countries." In French, phare means lighthouse (Anonymous 2007g).

36 According to the Pacific Exchange Rate Service, "the European currency unit, ECU for short, was an artificial 'basket' currency that [...] was conceived on 13th March 1979 by the European Economic Community (EEC), the predecessor of the European Union, as a unit of account for the currency area called the European Monetary System (EMS). The ECU was also the precursor of the new single European currency, the euro, which was introduced on January 1, 1999" (<http://fx.sauder.ubc.ca/ECU.html>). The Ecu was an early French coin.

- 37 Chemist, member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (MTA), former rector of Kossuth Lajos University (since reorganized as the University of Debrecen), past president of the National Doctoral and Habilitation Council (ODHT), head of a working group at the 1999 Bologna Conference, prominent member of the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) and current President of the Higher Education and Scientific Advisory Council (FTT).
- 38 The report was prepared in conjunction with the Educational Administration of the Rector's Office of the Budapest Technical and Economic University.
- 39 Not to be confused with either the Council of the European Union (CoEU) or the European Council (EC), the Council of Europe (CoE) was officially founded on May 5, 1949 by the Treaty of London in response to a speech delivered in Zürich, Switzerland on September 19, 1946 by Sir Winston Churchill, in which he argued that "we must recreate the European Family in a regional structure called, it may be, the United States of Europe. And the first practical step would be to form a Council of Europe."
- 40 From: <http://www.peshawar.ch/varia/winston.htm>
- 40 "The aim of the Council of Europe is to achieve a greater unity between its members for the purpose, among others, of safeguarding and realizing the ideals and principles which are their common heritage." From: <http://www.conventions.coe.int/Treaty/en/Treaties/Html/018.htm>
- 41 "UNESCO developed the first ISCED during the 1970s; the present 'revised' version was formally adopted in November 1997 [and] is designed to serve as an instrument suitable for assembling, compiling and presenting comparable indicators and statistics of education both within individual countries and internationally." From: <http://www.uis.unesco.org>
- 42 Officially ratified as the Convention on the Recognition of Qualifications concerning Higher Education in the European Region CETS No.: 165.
- 43 From: <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/165.htm>
- 43 The preamble to the Convention explicitly states that "the right to education is a human right, and that higher education, which is instrumental in the pursuit and advancement of knowledge, constitutes an exceptionally rich cultural and scientific asset for both individuals and society."
- 44 From: <http://conventions.coe.int/treaty/en/Treaties/Html/165.htm/>.
- 44 Signed in Paris on the 1998 anniversary of the University of Paris by education ministers Claude Allegre (France), Jürgen Rüttgers (Germany), Luigi Berlinguer (Italy) and the Baroness Tessa Blackstone (United Kingdom), the Sorbonne Joint Declaration: Joint declaration on harmonization of the architecture of the European higher education system expressed a commitment to "encouraging a common frame of reference, aimed at improving external recognition and facilitating student mobility as well as employability."
- 45 Established in 2000, the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) was reorganized by its General Assembly in 2004 as the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). From: <http://www.enqa.eu/>.
- 46 Officially titled the Graz Declaration 2003: Forward from Berlin: the Role of the Universities. From: <http://www.eua.be/>.
- 47 See: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/>.
- 48 As in France and Great Britain, certain disciplines were exempted from the restructuring of the Austrian HE sector.
- 49 Kiss was selected to sign the BD on behalf of the Hungarian government, and attended the Prague Conference (PCon) as a member of the Hungarian delegation headed by then Secretary of Education József Pálincás.
- 50 Since reorganized as the University of Miskolc (MTE).
- 51 The SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) Analysis was developed as a strategic planning tool by Albert Humphrey at Stanford in the 1960s and 1970s.

- 52 “Gordos fails to mention an important fact: between 1957 and the early 80s scholars who were tolerated but not supported by György Aczél could not teach at universities” (Szegegy-Maszák 2007). Of these, many found employment at the various institutes of the MTA.
- 53 Operational funding is disbursed from separate sources.
- 54 An engineer by training, a full member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and a member of the MAB, Michelberger taught at the Budapest Technical University until 2000.
- 55 Formerly the European Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).
- 56 Formerly the Association of European Universities.
- 57 An important policy actor not mentioned by the author is the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO): an agency formed by the United Nations (UN) in 1945 to promote international cooperation in the areas of education, science, and culture in order to further the rule of law, human rights and the fundamental freedoms contained in the UN Charter.
- 58 Current President of the Doctoral Committee (DB) and past President of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee.
- 59 Since reorganized as the European University Association.
- 60 The Russian term for the Candidate’s Degree.
- 61 Still conferred by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences.
- 62 Member of the Hungarian Accreditation Committee and the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE).
- 63 According to Rozsnyai, “the first cycle of institutional accreditation began with the writing of an ‘accreditation guidebook’ in 1994/95. It was launched in 1995 in a pilot phase involving three universities and three colleges” (Rozsnyai 2004: 130).
- 64 Alkotmánybíróság (AB).
- 65 Not to be confused with the Hungarian Socialist Workers Party (MSzMP), the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP) is the principal successor of the MSzMP, the party that ruled Hungary from 1956 to 1989 under the leadership of János Kádár. This has proven to be both an asset and a liability for the party. Specifically: “the decision to declare the party a successor of the MSZMP was controversial, and still carries repercussions for both the MSZP and Hungary. Some say the MSZP shouldn’t have kept the assets of the MSZMP, which were quite substantial, but that these should have been distributed among the newly emerged democratic parties, including but not limited to the MSZP. Another source of controversy is that some members of the former Communist elite maintained political influence in the MSZP, a factor that is still true today. Indeed, many key MSZP politicians were active members or held leadership positions within the MSZP [...]. On economic issues, the Socialists have often been greater advocates of liberal, free market policies than the conservative opposition [the Alliance of Young Democrats (Fidesz)], which has tended to favor more state interventionism in the economy through economic and price regulations, as well as through state ownership of key economic enterprises. The MSZP, in contrast, was forced [by the international financial community] to implement a strong package of market reforms, austerity and privatization in 1995–96, when Hungary faced an economic and financial crisis [...]. In political terms, the MSZP differentiates itself from its conservative opponents [Fidesz] mainly in its rejection of nationalism. The party, along with its minority liberal partner in the governing coalition [the Alliance of Free Democrats (SZDSZ)], campaigned against extending Hungarian citizenship to ethnic Hungarians living in neighboring countries in a December 5, 2004 referendum [A referendum supported by Viktor Orbán and Fidesz]. The referendum was defeated, but tensions remain over the fate of Hungarian minorities abroad, which in some countries have faced hostility or even a degree of persecution at the hands of majority cultures, particularly when nationalist or populist governments have been in power in those countries” (Anonymous 2007e).

- 66 In fact, interest rates have risen considerably since Hungary's 2004 accession to the European
Union (EU).
- 67 Hungarian Forints.
- 68 E.g., the National Conference of Student Self-governments (HÖÖK).
- 69 In accord with a similar resolution passed by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and
Development (OECD).
- 70 It has also been suggested that a lack of adequate public funding has severely limited integra-
tion attempts, even where potentially effective programs were already in place.
- 71 Most likely due to the deferred payment plan.
- 72 The Higher Education and Scientific Council.
- 73 Since renamed the Citizens Development Corps.
- 74 A national-level buffer body historically underfunded by the OM.
- 75 The Hungarian Accreditation Committee.
- 76 A coalition led by the Hungarian Socialist Party and the Alliance of Free Democrats.
- 77 The European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System.
- 78 A coalition dominated by the Hungarian Socialist Party and the Alliance of Free Democrats.

HUNGARIAN STUDIES

a Journal of the International Association
for Hungarian Studies
(Nemzetközi Magyarstudományi Társaság)

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Mihály Szegedy-Maszák

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Volume 20
Numbers 1, 2



AKADÉMIAI KIADÓ, BUDAPEST
2006

CONTENTS

<i>Balázs, Eszter</i> : An Emblematic Shot of the Hungarian Revolution of 1956: The Life Story Behind the Photograph and the Afterlife of the Photograph	109
<i>Bischof, Günter</i> : The Collapse of Liberation Rhetoric: The Eisenhower Administration and the 1956 Hungarian Crisis	51
<i>Borhi, László</i> : Hungary in the Soviet Empire 1945–1956	21
<i>Buzsáki, György</i> : Oscillatory Heritage of the Grastyán School	127
<i>Cooper, Thomas</i> : Anxiety of Ideology: Resistance to Allegory in the Literary Narration of History	83
<i>Deák, István</i> : The Revolutionary Tradition in Hungary and the Lessons of the 1956 Struggle for Independence	3
<i>Gyáni, Gábor</i> : Socio-Psychological Roots of Discontent: Paradoxes of 1956	65
<i>Harnad, Stevan</i> : Creativity: Method or Magic?	163
<i>Holloway, David – McFarland, Victor</i> : The Hungarian Revolution of 1956 in the Context of the Cold War Military Confrontation	31
<i>Kenéz, Péter</i> : Autobiography and History	223
<i>Kovács, Ilona</i> : Bela Julesz and “Scientific Bilingualism”	245
<i>Kramer, Mark</i> : The Soviet Union and the Onset of the Crises in Poland and Hungary	11
<i>Ludanyi, Andrew</i> : The Impact of 1956 on the Hungarians of Transylvania	93
<i>MacWhinney, Brian</i> : The Multidisciplinary Analysis of Talk	143
<i>Pléh, Csaba</i> : Using Hungarian Language to Clarify Language-thought Relations in Impaired Populations	233
<i>Pók, Attila</i> : Captive Minds and Scapegoats in Stalinist Hungary	209
<i>Rainer M., János</i> : Intersecting Lives – Imre Nagy and János Kádár in 1956	199
<i>Schelble, James Terence</i> : The Marketization of Higher Education in Hungary	253

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Mihály Szegedy-Maszák: Conservatism and Innovation in the Culture of the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy
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ISSN 0236-6568



9 770 236 656 005

Printed in Hungary
PXP Ltd., Budapest