

responsive universities for a sustainable society

Dr Sijbolt Noorda
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**looking back to the 2018
authorization process**

congratulations!

picture taken at New Year Celebrations
in Tbilisi by Erasmus student Manoj
Pradeep (from Chennai)



quality assurance 2.0

- operational quality in teaching & learning and research is an essential precondition for HE&R systems and institutions
- quality is not a formal, isolated phenomenon, it is *contextual* and serves ulterior *purposes*
- this is why profile, mission and strategy are key items in the authorization process

university and society

- serving society is not a nice add-on, it is a *core task* and *purpose* for universities in teaching & learning as well as in research, contributing to
 - next generations of graduates
 - present & future labour markets
 - civic values & virtues
 - social innovation & economic performance
 - sustainable development

the part of universities

1

responsive universities

- this assumes that universities have a clear picture of the society they are serving and know how to design their own contributions to it
- a matter of profile, shared values and nimble adaptability
- which – by the way – is easier said than done

universities at crossroads

- the multitude & complexity of meaningful options and the need to focus
- the dilemma of the comfort of the present and the sense of urgency of the future
- the art of realizing change in a multilayered institution
- institutional rethinking & remodeling takes more than re-phrasing strategies

a potential menu

- inclusive & diverse (instead of monolithic)
 - in terms of participants, stakeholders, themes as well as workprocesses
 - in terms of interdisciplinarity: redesigning disciplines, broad & mixed curricula, promote & protect collaborations
 - in terms of internationality 3.0: abroad and at home

is it a plan or are we going to do it?

- new policies need
 - rationale as well as drive (agency, ownership)
 - enabling as well as embedding
- the shifting 'we' of the university
 - policymakers and executives
 - institution and departments
 - teachers and researchers
 - students

SO

- it is crucial that / how we are empowering ourselves
- as institutions, teachers, researchers, students, leadership
- to transform universities into living labs in the real world of today's multidimensional cities and societies
- organizational change and strong agency shouldn't be an afterthought

the part of society

2

sustainable societies

- the society part of the relationship isn't any easier:
- 'society' is a container concept [society? which society?] with diverse content
- some of it is powerful and visible, some of it speaks only with a weak voice
- so partnering and matchmaking require good care and strong values

government

- diverse societies need diverse services
- how to design and maintain a good and *differentiated* national system of HE & R?
- what is the role of *government*?
 - between scripting and trust
 - between empowering and control
 - between tactics and strategy
 - between short-term and long-term
- quality assurance 2.0 should include government

living labs

- sustainable societies need more than good government
- a variety of platforms and institutions beyond the traditional and the well-established
- living labs, open workshops, citizens science, community centres, private-public partnerships
- ideal meeting grounds for students & teachers as well as researchers, in view of deep learning and smart contributing

in conclusion

- for societies to be and remain sustainable the engagement of responsive universities is and should be of paramount importance
- for universities to play this part well is quite a challenge as well as a key *raison d'être*
- so it's better to be well prepared, all over the world, not just here in Georgia