

Reform through Autonomy

a way forward

Key objectives

- * Reform - modernisation through effective institutional autonomy
- * A strong, **integrated**, relevant, Higher Education sector focusing on student-centred learning
- * Implementation of EHEA and Bologna reforms
- * Strengthen the University research base to support Doctoral schools
- * Collaboration with business and industry

Students – the raison d'être

- * Quality and outcomes of Higher Education critical to our future
- * **Students** and their future integral to Moldova and its future
- * Fail to change? - lose a generation

Euniam proposals

- * Critical review of status quo - including the 2014 Education Code
- * National framework for reform
- * Sector **restructuring**
- * **Effective** institutional autonomy
- * Programme for action

National framework

- * Government - Universities **partners** with **distinct** roles and responsibilities
- * Ministry of Education Research and Innovation (MERI) – **sole** Ministry for Higher Education with a dedicated Higher Education Division managing funding and relations with Universities
- * Autonomous, independent National Agency for Accreditation and Quality Assurance (NAAQA) - clear distinction between accreditation and quality assurance
- * Revised National Credit and Qualifications Framework

- * National Agency for Research and Innovation (NARI) responsible to the Ministry (MERI) – **dis-establish** Academy of Sciences
- * Universities Moldova
- * National Students Union
- * Collection, analysis and publication of relevant, consistent, comprehensive data

Sector restructuring

- * **All** Higher Education and research institutes,
integrated in **six** Universities (+1)

Why?

Current situation **not** sustainable -

* 2009-2014 student number **decline** - **25%**

* **19** Higher Education Institutions - **85,600** students (all cycles)

(University of Ghent: 42000 students; University of Leuven: 41000 students)

* Only **22%** of graduates employed immediately after graduation (National Bureau of Statistics 2010)

* **31** independent research institutes – quality? – quantity? – outcomes? -

* Need to re-invigorate University research to establish high quality Doctoral schools with critical mass and appropriate facilities

Benefits?

- * **Integrated** Higher Education led by strong, competitive Universities
- * End wasteful duplication
- * Strengthen subjects - offer students wider choice
- * Increase opportunities for interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary programmes
- * Stronger research base for doctoral schools
- * Incorporate research, knowledge transfer in **all** cycles, to stimulate research based learning and teaching

Institutional autonomy?

- * University powers and responsibilities fully recognised
- * Clear distinction between **Governance** and **Management**
- * Effective governance structure
- * Good leadership
- * High quality management
- * Engagement of staff and students

Organisational autonomy

Governing body (University Board) – 9 to 15 members, majority external, independent Chair - unambiguously, collectively responsible for oversight of all University activities

- * Code of practice and ethics for members
- * Strategic plan
- * System for risk management and control, prevention and detection of corruption
- * Ensure quality of learning, teaching, research and knowledge transfer
- * Establish appropriate performance indicators, monitor performance and value for money - annual external audit
- * Appoint Rector

Rector

- * Director / Chief Executive appointed and employed by University Board in open competition.
- * Five year appointment – renewable for three years (maximum two terms)
- * Clear job description and performance criteria
- * **Reports to evaluated** by the University Board

Rector

Responsible for:

- * Overall **leadership** and **management** - establishing - leading high quality, performance driven, senior management team
- * Implementation of strategic plan
- * Developing, sustaining, University autonomy
- * National - international representation and promotion of University
- * Annual report - detailed, accurate, timely data on University performance for University Board
- * Effective communication with and integration of students and staff in the work of the University
- * Diversifying income sources - generating an operational surplus
- * Appropriate delegation

Financial autonomy

- * Independence in the management of finances
- * Block grant funding for learning, teaching and research - based on inputs and outputs, using transparent, published formulae
- * Internal allocation determined by University Board on the advice of the Rector
- * Effective, transparent procedures for the management of all income and expenditure, respecting principles of accountability and international audit and accounting standards
- * Safeguards against corruption and fraud

Academic autonomy

- * Authority to establish and develop programmes of study and award degrees in **all** cycles (Short cycle / Bachelor; Master, Doctoral)
- * Responsibility for admission of students
- * Responsibility for quality assurance

Human resource autonomy

- * Power to: select, appoint, review, evaluate, terminate appointment of **all** academic and non-academic staff
- * Authority (subject to national legal requirements) to:
 - set conditions of appointment for **all** staff : remuneration, work load, titles, levels, career paths, criteria for tenure
 - maintain high quality development and training for **all** staff

Education Code 2014

Article 79 University autonomy

- * (1) The higher education institutions shall have **the status of university autonomy**.
- * (2) The university autonomy is the right of the university community for organization and self-management, exercising the academic freedoms without any ideological, political or religious interferences, assuming a set of competences and obligations in line with the national strategies and policies for the development of the higher education.
- * (3) The university autonomy shall encompass the areas of management, structuring and functioning of the institution, teaching and scientific research activity, administration and financing

Education Code 2014

Committed to autonomy but

- no clear separation between **governance** and **management**
- retains regulation and bureaucracy, impeding development of fully responsible, autonomous institutions
- establishes hybrid, ambiguous governance and management, dividing powers between Senate and Strategic and Institutional Development Council
- silent on the role of the Rector
- Rector appointed/employed by the Minister **not** the University Board
- does not address who employs **all** University staff - in an autonomous institution the effective employer should be the governing body which has implications for the legal status of the University not addressed in the Code

Article 106 - Administration of the patrimony

Distinguishes between assets which remain 'state property' and assets which belong to the Higher Education Institution

Recommendation:

- **all** existing assets 'owned' by the University
- transfer of **full** responsibility for the development and management of the whole estate (*patrimony*)

Article 110

Relations with the labour market and business environment

- prescribes how partnership relations shall be implemented
- a guide to the range of possibilities?
- appears prescriptive and may undermine - limit University autonomy – if it is **not** in the Code is it permitted?

Chapter V - Higher Education personnel

- * prescribes in detail categories of staff, status, titles
- * requires that the award of titles shall be **'ruled'** by Ministry regulation and **approved** by the Government.
- * establishes a Framework Regulation for the employment of staff
- * gives elaborate detail for defining and measuring workload
- * difficult to reconcile detailed prescription on human resource management with the commitment to autonomy
- * effectively inhibits institutional change, development, innovation in Human resource management

Change - imperative

- * Means overcoming:
 - Conservatism
 - Vested interests
 - Restrictive practices
 - Over-regulation

- * Requires:
 - Commitment to change
 - Accepting responsibility
 - Modernisation
 - Effective autonomy

Making it happen?

Whose responsibility?

- **All** the actors – Government
 - Universities
 - Rectors
 - Sponsors
 - Stakeholders – students and staff
- Waiting for others? - not an option
- If Universities wish to shape the agenda they need to take the initiative
- Leadership key

Delay?

- **Failure to act?**
- **a lost generation**
- future Government no alternatives
 - more radical policy
 - institutional closures
 - imposed integration
 - resort to the private sector.

Reflections?

- * **“A year from now you will wish you had started today”**

Karen Lamb

- * “Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we've been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.” Barack Obama

- * “The best thing you can do is the right thing; the next best thing you can do is the wrong thing; the worst thing you can do is nothing.” Theodore Roosevelt

- * “You must do the thing you think you cannot do.” -Eleanor Roosevelt
- * “Never, never, never, never give up.” –Winston Churchill
- * “It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change.”
Charles Darwin (1809-1882)

Reform through autonomy

- a way forward?

Thank you