

The European Higher Education Area: goals and achievements

**International Conference of Stipendium Hungaricum
Operational Partners, Budapest, Hungary
23 November, 2017**

Prof. Dr. József Temesi

Center for International Higher Education Studies
Corvinus University of Budapest, Hungary



Personal introduction

- Academic and management positions at Corvinus University: Dean of the Faculty of Economics; Vice-Rector for Academic and Scientific Affairs (1992-2004)
- Participation in the preparation and implementation of the Bologna-process (1999-2011): Scientific and Education Advisory Board; Bologna Committee, Credit Council
- Advisor to the Hungarian Ministry of Education (policy-making, financing, national qualification framework, quality assurance (1996-)
- International expert in the assessment of EU-supported grants, member of int'l accreditation teams (2004-)



Worldwide trends in the new Millennium

Worldwide competition: products, services, ideas, educational programs...

What is the role of the universities in the 21st century?

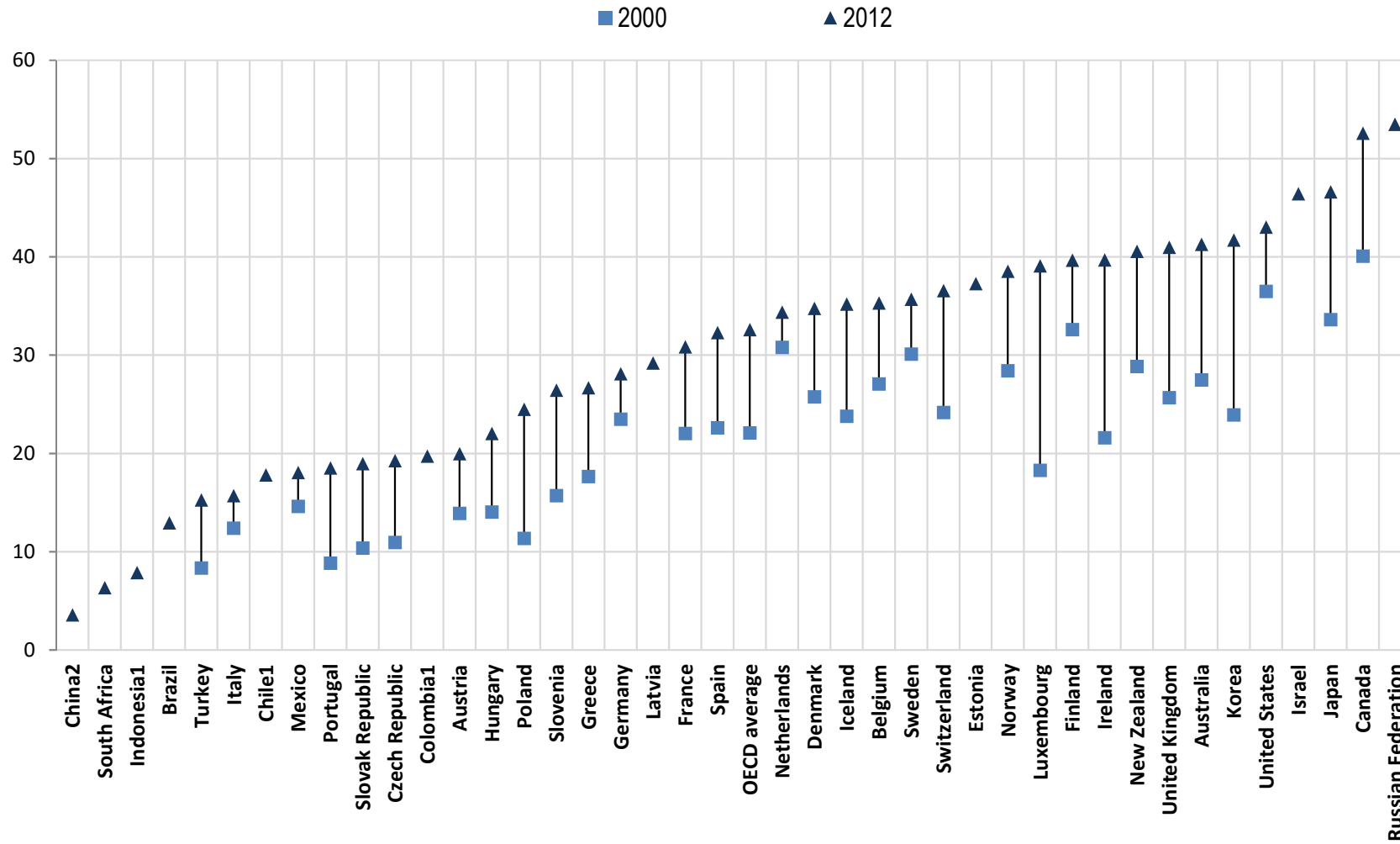
Quest for **new models**:

- business oriented institutions
- research universities
- network of universities

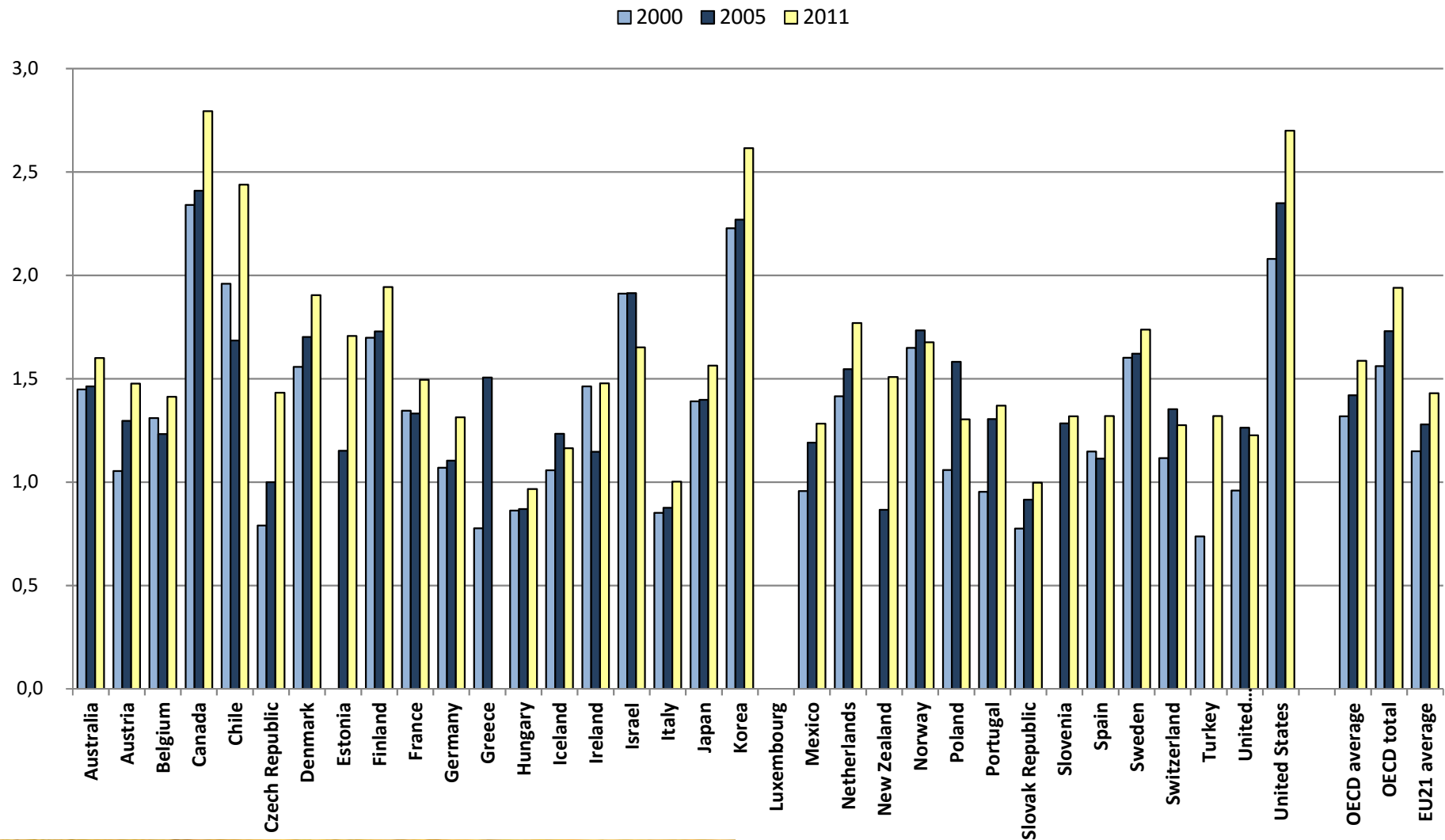
New higher education strategies

- Countries are investing in higher education to develop their **own human capital and competitive research**: only **quality institutions** are able to contribute to the economic growth
- The magic words: “**knowledge**”, “**innovation**” and “**creativity**”.
- Governments all around the world wish to **expand higher education** - without eroding quality and without substantial increase in funding.
- Expansion of HE in developing countries and emerging economies means that the global graduate talent pool is no longer predominantly in the US, Japan and Europe. According to recent OECD data China now accounts for 12%, and Brazil for 4% of graduates.

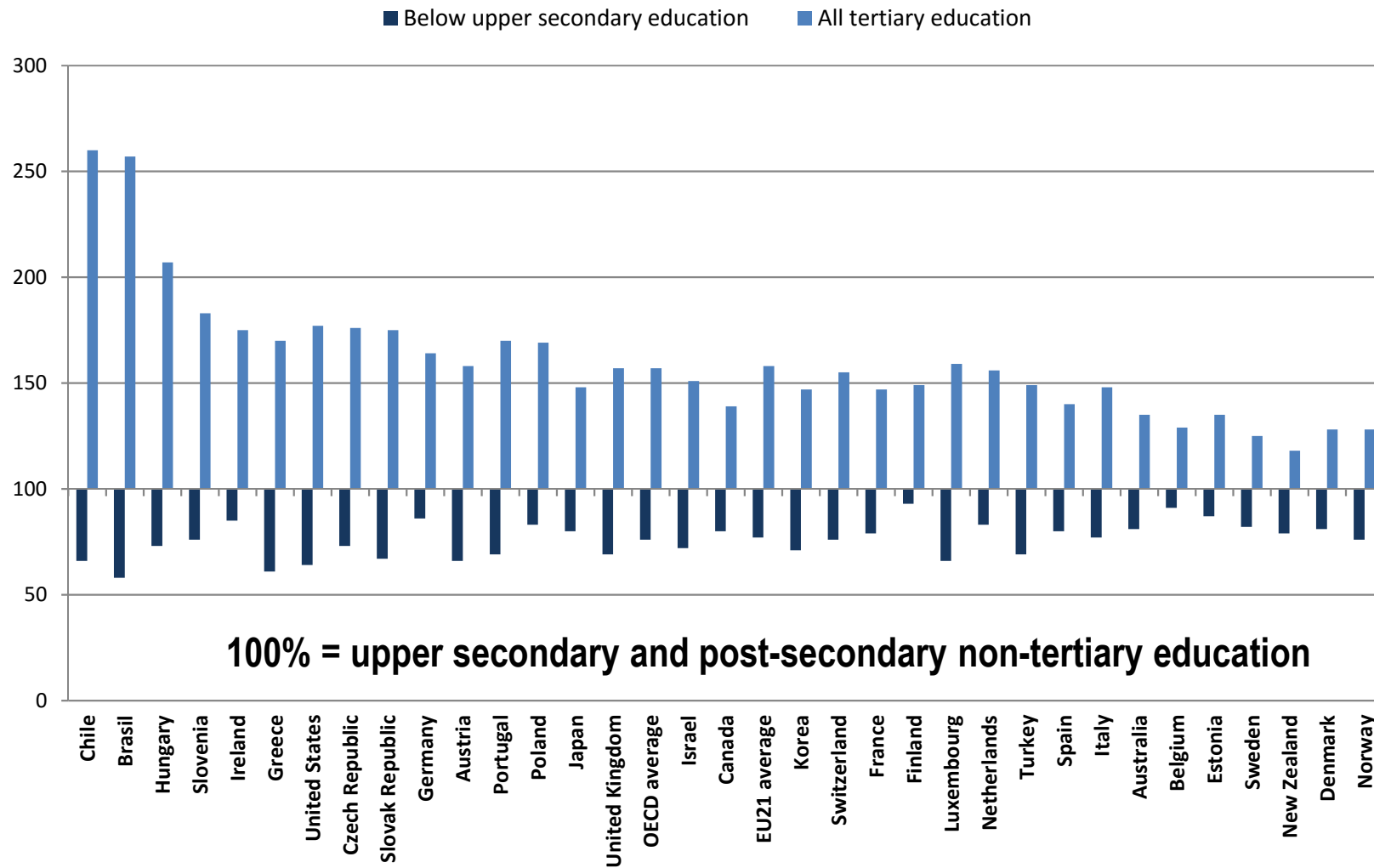
Percentage of tertiary-educated adults in 2000 and 2012



Trend on expenditure on tertiary educational institutions as a percentage of GDP



Relative wage rates of 25-64 year-old employed by educational attainment



European answer for the challenges

Bologna-process – led by the Ministers of Education: three-cycle study programs, quality standards, credit system, mobility, social inclusion; emphasis on **harmonization**.

Alternative approach: European University Association – led by the rectors: emphasis on **autonomy and diversity**.

Assessment of the results, measuring excellence:

- indicators, scorecards
- rankings, mappings



Short history

Sorbonne Declaration, 1998 (France, Germany, UK, Italy)

Bologna Declaration: 29 signatory countries

Ministerial meetings: Prague (2001), Berlin (2003), Bergen (2005), London (2007), Leuven (2009), Vienna-Budapest (2010), Bucharest (2012), Yerevan (2015)

Consequences

Enormous changes in the European higher education in the last two decades:

- massification / "new" universities (**quality**)
- decline of the traditional university model / autonomy (**transparency**)
- influence of the policy makers / politicians (**accountability**)
- budgetary problems / third mission (**social dimension**)
- internationalization / globalization (**mobility**)

European context

- Education is in the scope of **national authorization**
- The role of the European Union: **recommendations**, concerted actions, indirect tools (political, financial)
- Free movement of labor, free movement of products and services ↔ national regulation on degrees (accreditation)
- Establishment of the **European Higher Education Area (EHEA)** for harmonization purposes
- EHEA (**48 signatory countries**) has its impact beyond the European Union (28 member countries)



Key element of changes: internationalization

- *Global:* focus on **cross-border education**

Competition, overall rankings, economic contribution

- *European:* focus on **mobility and employability**

Diversity in education, quality research, third mission

- *National:* focus on **attractiveness**

Excellence, international accreditation

- *Institutional:* focus on **quality**

International students and faculty, additional funding



Internationalization

- The **Internet** made higher education more international. Electronic communication of students and researchers strengthened the cross-border character of providing higher education.
- Distance education and **new teaching methods** (e-learning, blended learning, virtual classrooms) had the same impact.
- **International market of higher education** products and services emerged. The language of delivery is mainly English.

Internationalization is a complex product of the globalized world with its specific features.



Internationalization and the Bologna process

- **Two-cycle system:** harmonization of the structure of study programs in the European Higher Education Area
- **Mobility** with the help of European funds (Socrates, Erasmus): increasing trend
- Establishment of **double (multiple) degree programs:** success story with European and non-European partners (most of the legal barriers have been removed)
- **Recognition, validation, accreditation** issues: gradual development



Tools

- European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)
- Diploma Supplement
- European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance
- U-Map
- European Qualification Framework

Europe in the long run: 2020 strategy

The Europe 2020 strategy is about delivering growth that is: **smart**, through more effective investments in education, research and innovation; **sustainable**, thanks to a decisive move towards a low-carbon economy; and **inclusive**, with a strong emphasis on job creation and poverty reduction. The strategy is focused on five ambitious goals in the areas of **employment, innovation, education, poverty reduction and climate/energy**.



European
Commission



Erasmus+

Higher Education



European Commission, DG EAC
September 2013

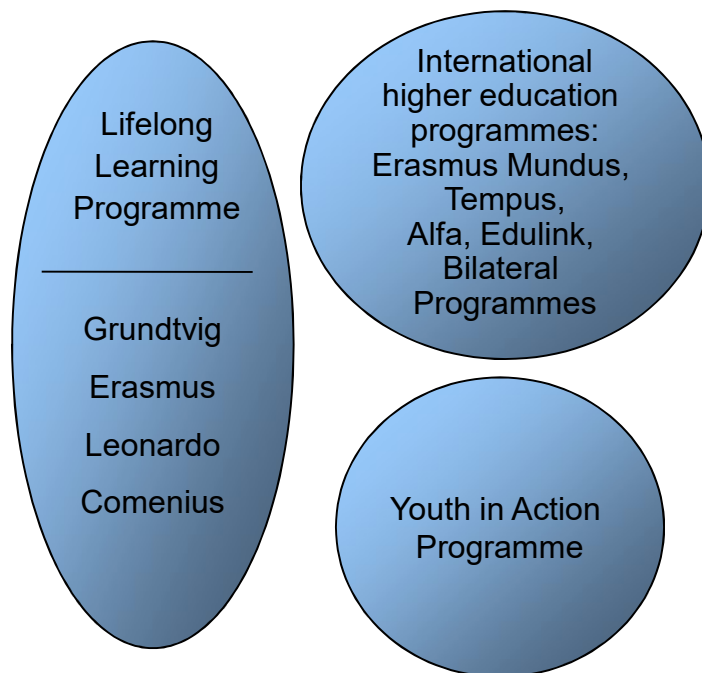
Education
and Culture



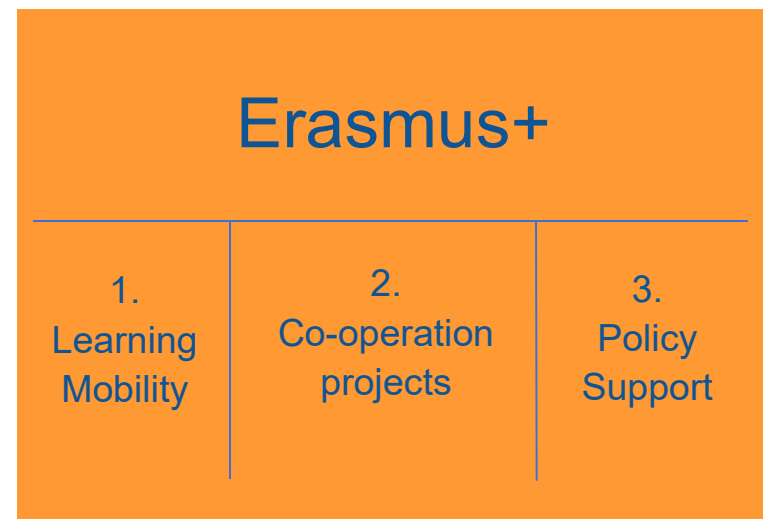
European
Commission

A streamlined architecture : 3 Key actions

Existing programmes



A single integrated programme



Specific activities:

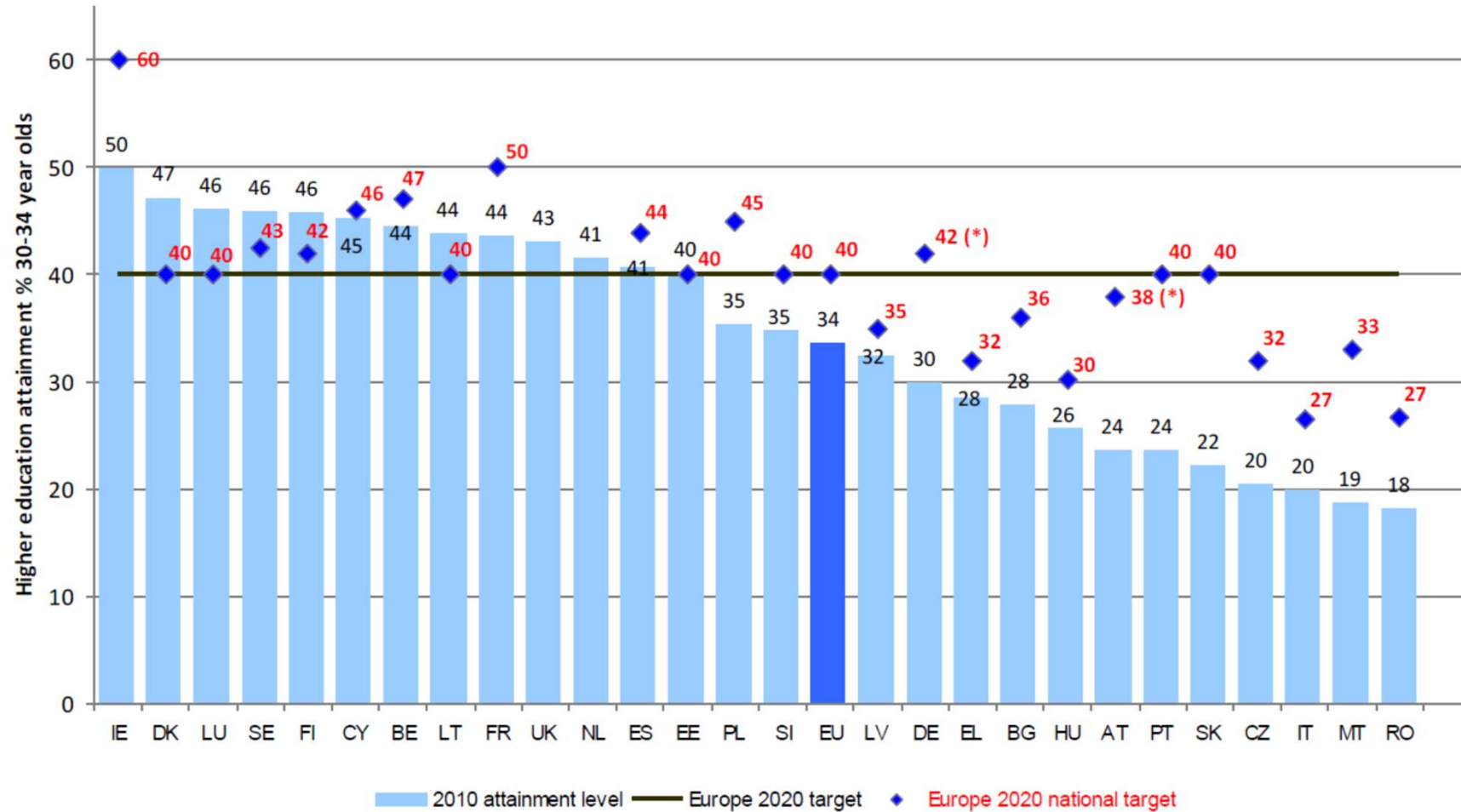
- Jean Monnet
- Sport

Education
and Culture

Targets in the field of education, research and employment

- Reducing the rates of early school leaving below 10% (2013: 12%)
- **At least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education (2013: 36,9%)**
- 3% of the EU's GDP to be invested in R&D (2012: 2,07%)
- 75% of the 20-64 year-olds to be employed (2013: 68,4%)
- Additionally: improving the position of European universities in international rankings

An example: the 40% target number



Challenges

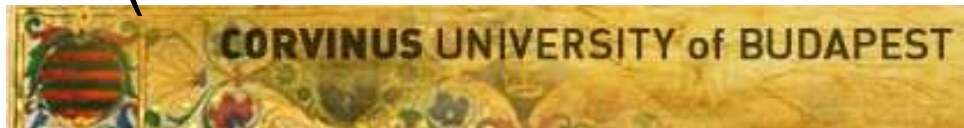
- A mismatch between the skills Europe needs and the skills it has;
- Persistent and growing social divisions;
- An innovation gap;
- The different components of higher education systems do not always work together seamlessly.

Renewed EU agenda for higher education

Priorities

- Tackling future skills mismatches and promoting excellence in skills development;
- Building inclusive and connected higher education systems;
- Ensuring higher education institutions contribute to innovation;
- Supporting effective and efficient higher education systems

(Commission Communication 30.5.2017)



Modernization of the EHEA

- Increasing attainment levels
- Improving quality
- Supporting mobility, international collaboration
- Strengthening the „knowledge-triangle”
- Implementing proper funding and governance schemes

Ministerial meeting, Yerevan, 2015

- Focusing on cross-border education
- **Direct implementation** of the large meta-systems (European Qualification Framework, European Credit Transfer System, European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance)
- Supporting the **convergence process** – integration of separate initiatives
- Management and funding: European Union (**Erasmus+**), national governments, international associations



Conclusions

- Bologna process: from a supranational political initiative to a successful European „project”
- **Diversity** is a value of the European higher education
- What is the role of the European Higher Education Area?– An open question:
 - ✓ tool for **integrating** national policies,
 - ✓ **harmonization** tool,
 - ✓ facilitates **convergence** in the long run.



Lessons learnt: preconditions

- Political (European Commission, European Parliament), economic (common market, EURO), and military (NATO) integration of the countries of a region with highly independent national governments
- Delicate balance of unified (market) regulations, supranational bodies (committees, courts), declarations and recommendations leading to harmonized activities even in non-regulated areas (like education and fiscal policy)

Lessons learnt: preconditions

- Free movement of capital, products and services, less restriction on free movement of labor
- Democratic governments, open borders
- Open consultations
- Agreement of the Ministers of Education on introducing unified measures into the national higher education laws

Lessons learnt: additional incentives

- To increase the economic competitiveness of the region
- Innovation and research, skilled labor force are needed for being competitive: education is a strategic issue in long term
- Internationalization is a stable trend in higher education: not only mobility, but other transborder activities (educational hubs, MOOC, etc.), too

Lessons learnt: institutional level

- Worldwide trends in HE curriculum development and pedagogy: student-centered learning, competency-oriented study programs (see TUNING)
- Institutions should move to new directions: internationalization, quality assurance, flexible life-long learning type programs, collaboration with the industry, third mission

Necessary conditions

- Governmental support (political and financial)
- Bilateral and multilateral collaboration of countries
- Support from the professional and civil bodies (Rectors' Conferences, Research Councils and other scientific bodies, Chambers of Commerce and Industry and other for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, Unions, Student Organizations)
- Establishment of proper institutional background (e.g. accreditation, recognition, validation).



Thank you for your attention!