

# **The End of Alternatives to Universities or New Opportunities**

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# Conditions for the Emergence of the Non-university Sector in Europe

- **Expansion of higher education: actually occurring, beneficial for economic growth, chance for equalisation of opportunities**
- **Not desirable within a more or less homogeneous university system characterized by institutions**
  - 1. serving both research and teaching,**
  - 2. comprising a broad range of disciplines,**
  - 3. setting intellectually highly demanding standard at entry and within the programmes,**
  - 4. having a strong theoretical emphasis,**
  - 5. having a high degree of “autonomy” and “academic freedom”.**
- **Reasons for diversification: less demand for research, too costly, differentiated demand of the employment system**
- **Consequence: Diversification primarily through types of higher education institutions**
- **Other modes of diversification played a secondary role: intra-institutionally through grades, levels of programmes, comprehensive universities etc., inter-institutionally through reputation hierarchies and profiles of individual institutions and departments**

# Potential Modes of Diversification

- **Formal (visible categories) versus informal (e.g. reputation, labour market success)**
- **Vertical (strata) versus horizontal (profile)**
- **Inter-institutional (e.g. types of higher education institutions) versus intra-institutional (e.g. level of programmes and degrees, comprehensive higher education)**
- **Formal diversification: e.g.**
  - 1. Types of HE institutions**
  - 2. Types of study programmes**
  - 3. Grades**
  - 4. Levels of study programmes and degrees**
- **Informal: e.g.**
  - 1. Reputation**
  - 2. Profile**

# The Challenge of Stratification

- **Martin Trow (1970): “Elite”, “mass” and “universal” higher education: “mass HE” exists alongside “elite HE” and “protects” “elite HE”**
- **Degree of vertical diversification**
  - 1. Extreme stratification in U.S. and Japan**
  - 2. Substantial vertical stratification: UK and France**
  - 3. One of a few excellent institutions somewhat distant to all the others (many small European countries, e.g. Sweden, Austria and Finland)**
  - 4. Marginal/flat hierarchy: Germany, the Netherlands etc.**
- **In the 1960s and 1970s: Controversial debates in Europe about vertical stratification, dominant policies aiming to keep it in bounds**
- **The “research debate” called more strongly for steep vertical stratification than the “teaching/learning debate”**
- **The establishment of the non-university sector called for a mix of vertical and horizontal diversification**

# The Actual Emergence of the Non-university Sector

- **The start in the 1960s: Polytechnics (UK), IUT (France) and Fachhochschulen (Germany)**
- **Spread in the 1970s (e.g.) along counteracting developments of moving towards a unitary system in Finland, a comprehensive system in Sweden und some comprehensive universities in Germany**
- **Continuity of varied solutions in the 1980s; late upgrading of HBO to a non-university HE institution in the Netherlands**
- **Contrasting developments in the 1990s**
  - 1. Upgrading of polytechnics to universities in the UK**
  - 2. New institutions of non-university HE in Portugal, Finland, Austria and Switzerland**
  - 3. Varied developments in Central and Eastern European countries**

# Varied Options of “Binary” or “Dual” Structures

## Variations of non-university higher education within Europe

- **Entry requirements:** identical to universities or other secondary education routes (e.g. vocational), the same years of prior schooling or one year less
- **Length of study programmes:** identical to universities or (often one year) shorter
- **Degrees and certificates awarded:** clearly distinct, somewhat similar or identical to those awarded by universities
- **Curricular thrust:** strongly vocational, moderately vocational, general
- **Involvement in advanced programmes:** in a few cases master programmes, doctoral programmes; frequently continuing professional education
- **Graduate careers:** Considerable overlap vs. clearly distinct
- **Research function:** No, marginal or substantial; applied research
- **Academics:** Similar vs. clearly distinct to academics at universities as regards entry qualification, job assignments, status and salary
- **Legal rights:** e.g. “autonomy” and “academic freedom” similar or dissimilar to universities

# “Academic drift”

- 1. Everywhere at least to a certain extent**
- 2. Major causes**
  - 1. Shared values and often shared socialization of teaching staff**
  - 2. Vertical diversity**
- **Different conditions for academic drift**
  - 1. A clear distinction combined horizontally and vertically ensures a higher degree of stability**
  - 2. National higher education policies matter**
- **Everywhere at least to a certain extent**

# Trends During the 1990s

## Growing efforts to increase informal vertical diversity

- Competitive funding
- Deregulation
- Ranking
- The “globalisation” issue

## “Tertiary education”

- Enrolment rates in the 1960s: less than 20% on average in Europe; at the beginning of the 21st century: more than 50%
- Initiatives by supra-national organisations
- In some cases, new types of “higher education”, in others “short study programmes” (e.g. junior colleges, community colleges), in other advanced vocational training
- From the old “binary” system (universities vs. “Fachhochschulen” etc.) towards a new binary system (universities and Fachhochschulen etc. vs. “tertiary type B” etc.) or towards a “three-type” system?



# The Implications of “Bologna”

- **Levels of study programmes become the single most important element of formal diversification in higher education**
- **Relative “devaluation” of the role of inter-institutional diversification through institutional types**
- **National decision-making about the programmes to be offered by non-university higher education: no master, “professional” master, “continuing education” master, formally the same master as universities?**
- **Acceleration of academic drift? Up-grading for stabilization of horizontal diversity?**
- **The current state of information: Premature to draw general conclusion**