

**The comparison of higher education policies in Hungary and the
United States of America (1990-2020)**

The managerial role changes with new laws and regulations

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I. Abstract

The focus of this study is the managerial role change in Hungarian higher education institutions as a consequence of laws and regulations leading to the model change. The aim is to define the movement of the authority and compare it with the situation in the USA, and to have a short overview of the financial goals and realities. Many interviews were conducted besides the analysis of papers and studies. Policymakers, university presidents and researchers helped to gather all the relevant background information to have a full picture. It can be concluded that the Hungarian model change brought a huge shift in managerial power and with its growing freedom of monetary decisions, the structure is getting more similar to the one present in the United States of America.

II. Introduction

Higher education is a crucial pillar in a country's economic success, improves social cohesion, and provides education on the highest level, so it is worth examining how it can contribute to the prosperity of its citizens. The education system is influenced by inside forces through its direct participants: students, teachers, employees, and "beneficiaries" or "customers" of institutions (the market or local community), and by the wider society's needs (technological development, globalisation, etc.); but undoubtedly, the state runs it in many of the countries, in good case, reflecting on the needs.

Realising this setting as a student of one of the state-run universities and learning about school systems during my studies, curiosity naturally arouses. At the same time living through and experiencing first-hand one of the biggest, historical changes in the modern Hungarian higher education system, I started to wonder what had led to such a seemingly sudden change. The answer might lie within its history, which requires an analysis of the past thirty-two years, since the process can only be examined coherently after the socialist, Soviet Union-supported government was replaced.

It would be expected that the higher education model change is not an unprecedented step, but something which was already tested and proved to be successful. Therefore, it is needed to search for international benchmarks, similarities and find well-working systems to compare.

In my previous studies, I have read about and got a slight glance, insights into how higher education in the United States of America works, which helped me choose the country for comparison. Furthermore (and more importantly), it hosts some of the world's best universities. The American higher education institutions – besides being admired - cannot really be imitated by the Hungarian ones under the given circumstances: the amount of financial support institutions can receive, the mass of students they can attract, the volume of the market America

serves, and its multinational companies. However, Hungary does not have to strive for being the same as America – it must adjust its higher education system to satisfy its own citizens' needs, and be seen to the economy, size, and goals of the country.

III. Topic and context

“The Hungarian path of the higher education policy development in the twenty-five years following the regime change can be interpreted as it has been rushing through the advancement on which the developed countries' higher education was going through for more than half a century” (Polónyi & Kozma, 2020, p. 505, author's translation).

Recent changes in Hungarian higher education have led to a renewed interest in the topic from various aspects and from different interest groups. The latest introduced system has been the subject of many education researchers, university teachers and professionals in law as well (Bárány, Derényi, Polónyi, etc.). Debate continues about the best strategies for the management of universities and the Hungarian public discourse is still divided but loud about this.

This study goes through the past thirty-two years of Hungarian higher education policies and structure, emphasising the shift of authority as one of the most controversial topics in politics. The aim of this study is to examine the Hungarian system with particular emphasis on the recent model change and the current status (April 2022).

Besides, the paper looks for parallels between the new Hungarian structure and the American system and compares the two. Since public higher education in the USA is partially controlled by the states in the framework of federal laws and the American system was not set as a primary example during the development of the new Hungarian model, it is worthy to look for best practices over the ocean (USNEI, 2008). In contrast with the Hungarian, higher education system in the United States of America as a whole has not experienced such managerial changes but remained permanent for a long time (Shorelight Team, 2022). The paper looks for similarities with the American system and some particular universities in it.

The deeper analysis on the Hungarian institutions position occurs with the help of the Clark triangle. The triangle offers a visible comparison, demonstrating the managerial roles and governing power's division between the state, the market, and the so-called academic oligarchy.

The findings of this study have to be seen in the light of some limitations. Higher education institutions are often fundamentally different from each other which causes difficulties in comparisons. In this study, the American system is introduced as a whole, and characteristics typical for most of the institutions are mentioned. The same occurs in the case of Hungary, where the best (according to rankings) and in some way outstanding universities are noted but the system is described with the national attributes.

IV. Methodology

IV.A. Research questions

Since the aim of the paper is not purely to analyse from a historical perspective but to compare two completely disparate higher education systems and the background policies of two quite antithetic countries, questions arise both about their relationship and specifically about their individual characteristics.

Q₁: How has the higher education institutions' management changed in the past decades as a result of policy changes and how can we describe the new Hungarian structure?

Q₂: Do the financials reflect the policy changes and wills? What goals did the state support?

Q₃: What pieces in the two systems are alike in Hungary and in the United States? And if there are no, then are there any advantageous characteristics of the American way of managing higher education that could be effectively used in the Hungarian system?

IV.B. The main hypotheses of the research

Based on professional literature, the Hungarian model change in higher education was reasonable; and if carried out appropriately, as well as the financials will reflect the policy changes and the original goals, Hungarian universities have unprecedented possibility to thrive.

H₁: The new legal status allows Hungarian universities finding the balance of management between the state, the market, and the nascent academic oligarchy.

H₂: Financial support is based on the policy goals, reflecting on the global economic and ideological status.

H₃: Although the American and the Hungarian systems have roots in very distinct history and developed in a different environment, the latter one – in some respects - is approaching the structure of some of the most successful universities, at least their financial and managerial arrangement (ARWU, 2021).

IV.C. Methods of research

A significant part of this research is based on compiled data from analysis of studies, statistics, books related to higher education, supplemented with repealed and applicable laws and regulations from 1990 until 2022.

World-wide university rankings - as later can be seen - are a great tool of comparing institutions as well as countries, hence they were used, and consequences were drawn.

Besides the above-mentioned quantitative research, qualitative one was likewise conducted. Information, quotes were also taken from roundtable discussions, professional or political

debates attended by policy makers, former Ministers, presidents of university foundations, and other relevant actors. I have attended a roundtable discussion about higher education model change on 24 February 2022 organised by Scruton (café), where two university foundations' presidents and the Ministerial Commissioner responsible for the higher education model change had a symposium, moderated by the President of the National Union of Students (HÖÖK). On 21 March 2022 there was a debate organised by JövőKépp! with the title of "Change of Era: The development of national Higher Education" where Balázs Orbán (Deputy Minister of the Prime Minister's Office, Parliamentary and Strategic Secretary of State (2018 - present) and Political Director of the Prime Minister (2021 - present)) and István Hiller (Former Minister of Education and Culture (2006-2010), Member of Parliament) were having a debate about the recent changes and the past events in higher education policy making.

Lastly, another way of data acquisition was personally interviewing numerous participants connected to higher education. The first one was Péter Kádár-Csoboth, a Managing Consultant at IFUA Horváth & Partners, who worked closely with universities and the state during the model change and has a wide knowledge of the previous thirteen years of higher education strategy and planning, working at the former Education Development Research Institute. I also had the opportunity to ask Gergely Böszörményi-Nagy, the Chairman of the Board in the Foundation of Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design (MOME), and amongst others, the founder of Design Terminal and Brain Bar. Another Hungarian interviewee was Dr László Nádai, Dean of Óbuda University, former Chief Policy Advisor at the Ministry of Human Capacities and also worked as a Head of Department of Science Policy in the Ministry of Education and Culture. From the American side, I conducted an interview with Dr Gladden Pappin, an associate professor at the University of Dallas and an advisor to the University of Public Service in Hungary about the American Higher Education system and its challenges. Lastly, I consulted with the State Secretary for Economic Strategy and Regulation at the Ministry for Innovation and Technology (ITM, 2018 - present), Dr László György.

V. Systematic comparison

V.A. Global rankings: two worlds apart?

If Hungary and the USA are placed on a scale, we measure them with any characteristics, it is difficult to find a balance between the two. Hungary with its approximately ten million citizens, 93 030 km² land and 155 billion USD of GDP might seem a drop in the ocean compared to the United States' 329.5 million population on 9.8 million km² with its GDP of 20.953 trillion USD (World Bank, 2020).

But there is at least one thing Hungarians are ahead of their American peers: the first Hungarian university was established in 1367, the University of Pécs; on the other hand, Harvard University, the pioneer in its homeland, was established almost 300 years later in 1636.

Having a look at the Shanghai Academic Rankings of World Universities (ARWU)¹, Harvard University has always been leading it since it was first published in 2003. There have been barely any changes in the past years; Stanford University has been in second place in the past consecutive five years, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and the University of California has been around the top five places most of the time. According to the ARWU Ranking of 2021, out of the top ten universities of the world, 8 are American; out of the best 20, 16 are in the USA. Next to the ones from America, mostly prestigious British universities - such as the University of Cambridge and Oxford - could get in the beginning of the list (Shanghai Ranking).

However, the list of which publishes the best 1000 higher education institutions yearly shows only four respectable Hungarian universities in 2021. The Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE), regarded as the first on the national ranking (Bereznay, 2021) has its place somewhere between 601 and 700². Also, in that range placed the University of Szeged; the Semmelweis University and the Budapest University of Technology and Economics are way behind them. The University of Debrecen could also appear on the list in the year of 2020, but amongst the last institutions. For the record, the United States has been presented with at least 200 institutions recently (Shanghai Ranking).

As it can be concluded, the institutions at the forefronts seem to exist in two totally different worlds far from each other. In 2021, Hungary could insert four of its universities out of sixty-four institutions to the ARWU and they all were in the second half of the list, while the United States was represented with more than 200 universities in the top thousand and they earned prestigious places.

The rankings show how far exactly from the point of reputation of the top ones of the given countries are in international level, but the amount of expenditure on higher education per student shows how far they are financially. The data published on Statista represents how much they can spend on their people: in 2018 the United States had spent an average 34 036 U.S. dollars on each student, making it 2.5% of the share of GDP (if we accumulate public and private institutions). At the same time, this number in Hungary reached 13 738 USD which was only 1% of total (Szmigiera, 2022.; Worldbank 2018; proportions are calculated by the author).

¹ The Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU) is recognized as the precursor of global university rankings and the most trustworthy one. ARWU presents the world's top 1000 research universities annually based on transparent methodology and objective third-party data.

² There are no specific placements in this range anymore. <https://www.shanghairanking.com/institution/eotvos-lorand-university>

The vast amount of money flowing into American institutions comes from many diverse sources. If we have a look at the operating revenue of the remarkable Harvard University, its various revenue portfolio consists of three main sources: tuition fees, sponsored research, and philanthropy (Harvard University website). As Dr Gladden Pappin highlighted (personal communication, 1 April 2022), donations cover a substantial portion of private institutions. Harvard can prove it, as their webpage shows, 39% of their revenue for fiscal 2021 was made up by endowment income made available for operations, while in state universities the state provides a great portion of the revenue (Harvard University website).

Another aspect is the scope of managerial autonomy. In Hungary, in 2009 the Education Research and Development Institute published a paper in which the increasing autonomy of universities is paired with the change in their legal status. Amongst others, sets Japan and Finland as an example, where universities turned from public entities to independent organisations (Kováts, 2009). Two benefits are mentioned: first, a direct provider of any service possesses better understanding of the consumer needs, more data of them than a centralised managing authority. Regarding this aspect, Hungary gave the opportunity to higher education institutions to establish Foundations and create this new type of maintainer in the past years. From the American point of view, it has never been considerably different, since state-independent universities are part of its education culture; furthermore, even public universities, run by the state enjoy greater decision-making autonomy, so the power is not in the hand of the federal government (Kováts, 2009; Pappin, 2022). Secondly, the involvement of the private sector may motivate the public and community college/university owners entering competition. This rivalry could be new to many Hungarian universities, but it is not unfamiliar to the participants in the USA, as competition is a natural inherent of higher education, even within institutions.

V.B. A conceptual framework: the Clark Triangle

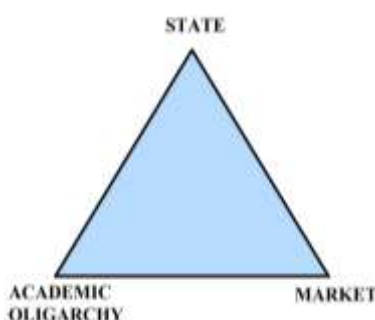


Figure 1 Clark Triangle of coordination (edited by the author)

According to Clark Burton, the order of an institution can be depicted by his multi-dimensional

“triangle of coordination” (Burton, 1983). An education system is placed inside the triangle considering the distance from the vertices: the closer they are to one corner, the greater force the actor on the given point exerts.

The triangle used in this study (Figure 1) differs from the original picture (Figure 2), in such a form that the triangle is not pointing to the right side but rather a “standing”, “grounded” version as Salazar and Leihy shows Brunner’s own edit (Salazar & Leihy, 2011, p. 5). In this study’s case, the state vertex is placed on the top, symbolising its hypothetical superior position and higher degree of power compared to the other two.

Each of the vertices illustrates one of the most dominant forms of the academic system’s coordinators: on one corner there is the market as a stakeholder, another vertex represents the state authority, and the third actor is the so-called “academic oligarchy”. As Jongbloed (2003) explains, a single higher education market cannot be identified, “rather a multitude of markets” (p. 2) consisting of markets for all sections in it. It can take on various roles: mutually favourable partnerships can be established; they can appear as owners, part of the directory board, and last but not least, big companies often sponsor chosen institutions. In the case of Hungary, the market side of the triangle became strongly visible with the dual education system - emerging from Germany and was introduced in 2015 in Hungary (Pogatsnik, 2018) - that offers work experience

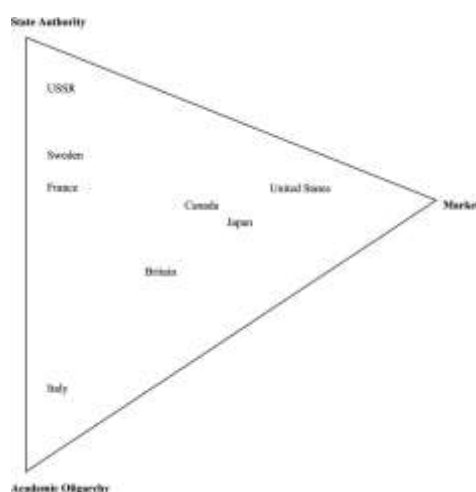


Figure 2 The triangle of co-ordination (Clark 1983, p. 143)

beyond higher education training, creating special cooperation in specific fields. Pogatsnik (2018) calls this a win-win model for each of the participants in the program. A Western-Hungarian institution, the University of Győr went even further and one of the biggest automotive manufacturers, Audi created their own faculty, the Audi Hungaria Faculty of Automotive Engineering there. Their goal is not less than “to train young engineers on a state-of-the-art international level” (SZIE website homepage).

The state can use two different approaches to intervene in the higher education system: it has

political power and bureaucratic capacity. As Salazar and Leihy (2011) differentiate, the first one is the tactic; the latter has the strategic style. As they list, setting tactics in order to increase influence can occur through expanding political involvement, “raising standards for university governance” by regulations and laws (p. 3). State influence - sometimes to the detriment of university authority - can be illustrated by the number of levels of coordination, administrators, and intermediate administrative agencies. Their essence lies in having a wider (or narrower) control and observation over the universities and as an aftermath, the institute highly depends on the administrators who make independent, quick decision-making burdensome. However, not only the human workforce can be increased to stand above – the study also mentions the number and complexity of rules as an enchanting effect of bureaucratic power of government. Moreover, the state has another trump card, namely the financial model which decides the amount of money higher education institutions receive either completed by direct funding or creating the circumstances it can be transacted (Salazar & Leihy, 2011).

That these two interest groups were first imagined in a continuum, and they stand on the two opposite extremes. Maggio portrays one end as “a highly formalised structure with unitary goals for the entire system” (2011, p. 4), while the completely market-led academic system would depend on numerous participants of the society who then do not have to take responsibility for their decisions and can stay in the background. Maggio (2011) refers to it as a “social-choice” context (p. 4). Whereas the consecutive fight between the two is not negligible, adding another influencing group is necessary to understand the complex system of these institutions since the employees of universities can have just as big an effect as the external actors, since they give the base of the institutions.

The professional side can be identified as “the ways in which academics can exert powerful collective voices” (Maggio, 2011, p. 4). According to Clark, with the use of their privileges, they can allocate “local power to regional and national levels” (Maggio, 2011, p. 5). By this, Clark means that they either establish unions or appear in “coordinating boards, governing boards or other managerial entities”, balancing between universities and the state, or they can work with the education ministry without any intermediate establishment (Maggio, 2011, p. 5).

John Brennan subdivides the academic oligarchy vertex, identifying two opposing authorities inside: in the Anglo-Saxon model a managerial authority can be found, led by the leadership of the institutions which opens doors to greater market influence. On the other hand, Humboldtian models have distributed faculties practising authority along with “considerable professorial autonomy and authority” (Brennan, 1983 p. 4), allowing stronger influence for the state.

The triangle has a zero-sum effect, which implies that if a system moves towards one force it excludes the possibility to move closer to any of the other vertices at a time. Consequently,

moving away from one interest group can favour only one other (Clark, 1983).

If one would like to highlight the greatest milestones in the Hungarian history of higher education since 1990, with the help of Clark's triangle, the significant changes can be depicted. His original aim with the triangle of coordination offered a heuristic approach to compare different national systems. Since this chapter represents progress in particular national systems, this is the approach used by Brunner and Jongbloed, who show evolution in time by a given system (Salazar & Leihy, 2011). They believe that "Clark's heuristic is simple, it is comprehensive and easy to follow" (Salazar & Leihy, 2011, p. 2), but they are aware that the world has changed a lot since it was created, so we must be able to differ from this simple frame and handle it with flexibility.

V.C. The deep structure of American Higher Education

Based on the 1991 study of Béla Pokol, one of the most successful higher education systems has grown out of a system established for preaching and moral education. American universities were based on the prosperous German ones, whose development began with the new Berlin University established by Humboldt in 1809. In the twentieth century plenty of German scholars flooded to the States and played a significant role in building a new system. Efficient initiatives were attempted, but the restrictive ones were replaced. Pokol underlines two main differences: on one hand, comprehensive departments were introduced where professors work interdependently, which came hand in hand with competition based on equity. The head of a department performs mostly administrative tasks thus does not act as a privileged superior. This structure facilitates progress by making scientific dispute possible, placing the driving mechanism of innovation within the institution. On the other hand, one of the department system's other consequences is the way researchers are being promoted. In the United States universities are economic and administrative units and the evaluating mechanism is carried out by nation-wide scientific societies (Pokol, 1991).

The other disparity between the American and the Humboldtian model was the existence of graduate training. They have given first the opportunity to choose between practical or theoretical knowledge by dividing the higher education training (today's bachelor's and master's level) and added the PhD as an individual rank for those who would proceed to become a researcher. This - until a certain degree - isolates research from the basic educational activities. The high quality of scientific research lies on these characteristics and on fierce competition between institutions (Pokol, 1991).

Competition is justified not only due to quality goals, but the universities financial stability can depend on it, since the greatest income consists of tuition fees from the students, but another

portion of the budget is what the state provides to universities based on the number of students enrolled. According to Pokol, since World War II, there has been an increasing monetary dependency on the state with this share. However, as Martin Trow (1988) declares, “one important and distinctive characteristic of American higher education is the diversity of its sources of support” (p. 19). When his study was written in 1988, the government at all levels covered about half of all universities’ expenses. However, they have an indirect way of financing the institutions and that is through students: university attendees receive federal aid to be able to defray their studies, which appears as tuition in the institutions’ revenue. Private sources like business firms and often churches can also support higher education institutions; and another option for increasing the income is to sell their services. It can be sold to other universities or colleges, but it also includes the living expenses and food services on campuses. Moreover, it is quite common to get support from a “mixture of public and private funds” in the USA (Trow, 1988, p. 19). Donations from individuals are common ways in the States to widen revenue, especially in the case of private institutions. The alumni system is very strong there which often leads to donations from them.

As Pappin (2022) highlights, one of the greatness characteristics of American higher education is the loyalty from students towards their university. As he says: “People remain passionately devoted to their universities forever” (personal communication, 1 April 2022). The reason can be the fact that these students live within the campus - unlike in most European universities – and their learning and socialising experience differ to a significant extent (Pappin, 2022).

“The U.S. education system is not based on one, or even a few, framework laws. Instead, there are a wide variety of federal, state and local laws, plus court decisions and regulations that define various aspects of our decentralized system. In addition, there are rules and policies adopted by educational associations and individual schools and institutions that often have legal status with respect to matters within their competence” – says the webpage of International Affairs Office, U.S. Department of Education, and about the specifics of the US federal system: *“While the federal government has a very limited role in running the U.S. education system, it does provide important policy leadership and provides assistance in support of education throughout the nation”* (USNEI, 2008, p. 1).

Closely examine the American system, descriptive characteristics can be found online by numerous education providers for students. As it can be read on the website of Shorelight, an international higher education expert, one can distinguish college from university - which are sometimes interchangeable -, and if none of the first two labels are used, the institution tag can appear, having the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) as a well-known example (Shorelight Team, 2022).

Another distinction can be made up by dividing institutions according to who is running it. Several private colleges were founded by churches or religious denominations (the University of Dayton was established by the Catholic Church as one example) or by other parts of the society: for instance, the above-mentioned MIT was an idea of a natural philosophy professor who could establish the institution with gathering support and raising funds (MIT website). These publicly founded post-secondary institutions are private colleges or universities.

The other group contains the state colleges or universities where – instead of the federal government – the “50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and other US territories have the authority to operate, fund, and (in some respects) control public colleges and universities within their boundaries” (Shorelight Team, 2022, State Colleges and Private Colleges para.1).

Additionally, in the United States, the apparatus of community colleges also exists; preparing both international and American students either for the workforce and their first entry-level job, or it is a jumping point continuing their education in universities or colleges. As its name implies, it essentially serves its direct surroundings, but its popularity is growing amongst international students as well, as a preparation of a four-year degree program (InternationalStudent website).

In order to understand the difference between a community college and any other state or private college, the curriculum should be compared primarily. A bachelor level university program starts with two years of “gen-ends” (general education requirements), where regardless of the specialisation or degree, students must take the same courses such as maths or history and in the following two years students can focus on their chosen profession. While in a community college, the timeframe is only two years which corresponds with the universities’ first two years, but there is no opportunity to move forward (InternationalStudent website: What is a Community College?).

In spite of its drawbacks, community college is still popular for many who do not wish to attend huge universities where it is not only arduous to get enrolled, but to be accepted in any student organisation, participate in events or get to know their surrounding better is much harder, and the tuition fee is much higher (especially, when it compared to the free community colleges). As an article describes on a website “students are finding that there are numerous benefits to starting at a community college such as saving money, smaller class sizes and one-on-one assistance” (InternationalStudent website: Community Colleges in the US, para. 1).

In this type of higher education institute one can also make categories according to their type; thus, there are not only public and independent, but tribal colleges as well. “A tribal college serves the population on Native American reservations and the population surrounding the reservations. (...) They not only provide an education, but also provide programs and curriculum

designed to preserve the languages and cultures of Native Americans” (Molly, 2017 para. 1-4).

In 2022, there are mostly public community colleges (935) and just a smaller number (107) of the other two types in 2022. When it comes to numbers in the case of the non-community colleges, there are several aspects to calculate them. The U.S. News mentioned only 1452 regionally accredited schools with four-year undergraduate degree programs in its rankings of 2021 (Moody, 2021). But the complete numbers with the colleges that offer only associate degrees or with fewer than 200 students would be around 4000. In the school year of 2019-2020, the National Center for Education Statistics tallied 3982 postsecondary institutions in the States. According to the Shorelight article, 37,8% of the universities were public and 39,2% were private, and a smaller portion, 23% of for-profit institutions existed in 2017, which rate has not significantly changed over the years. It was also investigated that among the twenty best national universities thirteen public universities can be found and the rest are private (Shorelight Team, 2022). The conclusion can be drawn that the maintainer does not necessarily determine the quality of the education or the institute.

Which can determine, however, is the quality of the human material. As Gergely Böszörményi-Nagy (personal communication, 31 March 2022) regularly emphasises in the case of Hungarian university leaders, the degree of change in a university is based on the performance, the amount of effort the directors put in. In the United States, where there is no need for rejuvenation, professors have equally, if not more important roles in keeping or increasing the standard.

József Pálincás describes in one of his recent interviews, that in the USA, if someone is eager to have an advantageous position in an eminent university, they have to stand one's ground in 3-4 different institutions before. Moreover, it is totally accepted and prevalent that an American attends not only one university but finishes their MA in another place not where they did their BA – and the same applies to teachers, they do not stop at one institution. He believes that this competitive approach keeps the teachers “fit” intellectually (Index, 2021, author’s translation).

The mindset of the educators in some universities also differs from the common in Hungarian institutions, since in the USA it is common that professors attend each other’s classes for their own improvement, shared Böszörményi-Nagy his own experience from 2018 at Stanford (2022). He also explained that teaching is based on Socratic principles, meaning that professors raise questions but with the help of the material students should read beforehand, they are able to find answers by themselves or by working together (Böszörményi-Nagy, 2022).

Management is the other crucial point which can revive an institute or lead it to the wrong direction.

“School governance is not a traditional hierarchy but looks more like a mountain range: different peaks represent students, alumni, faculty, president, the board, etc. Each institution has

its own unique mountain range and therefore each has its own unique power structure” citing Hodgins and Lubelsky a McKinsey article³ (2020).

The institutional type, culture, and history influence the organisational type, resulting in various ones over the country. Yet it is common to higher education institutions that tasks are shared and strategic planning and curriculum planning for instance are in the hands of different boards. As the article follows, most of the institutions imply the main authority structures such as a Governing Board, a President or Chancellor, administrative leaders, and an academic Senate (Education Encyclopedia).

The Governing Board or the Board of Trustees “possesses fundamental legal authority over the university. (...) Both public and private governing boards are generally constituted of citizen trustees. In the public case those trustees are often political appointees who serve as a fundamental link between the institution and state and national political structures” (Education Encyclopedia: Governing Boards, para. 1). This form of governance started with the founding of Harvard College and was deemed constitutional in the Dartmouth College decision in 1819. The Dartmouth College case unfolded the question of the appointments, giving its right to the state government. The argument was that if the state government has a broader power to intervene, it means that the local people can make their voice heard through the legislature for their own advantage. The academic oligarchy in this event followed the Federalist belief according to which the “the government should not interfere with private property, even for the purpose of benefiting the public welfare” (Trow, 1988, p. 17).

In the case of public universities, the state had a central role in the governance through the governors appointed Trustees and decided about legislative funding. With all the higher education-related laws the federal government strengthened the authority of the Governing Boards: with the Morrill Acts (1862), the G.I. Bill (1944), and the Higher Education Acts (1965) responsibility was conveyed to the state administration.

Worth mentioning that the composition of Boards differs in public and private universities, as public boards are subject to external intervention and benefit from governmental support, in contrast to the private ones where revenue is mainly made up of public subsidies. In public institutions, the board members represent the citizens of the state. They can be either appointed directly by the Governor or get gubernatorial appointments⁴ but the state legislature has to approve, they could also receive ex-officio appointment⁵ or can be elected by popular vote. On the other hand, new trustees in private boards are chosen by the standing board. The second

³ Cited in: McKinsey & Company: Shaping university boards for 21st century higher education in the US; Downloaded: 2022.04.10. <https://www.mckinsey.com/industries/education/our-insights/shaping-university-boards-for-21st-century-higher-education-in-the-us>

⁴ It is a process by which the governor appoints someone directly and does not have to choose from the committee’s selection.

⁵ It means that a person on board is not necessarily elected or appointed, but a member by virtue of the position one holds.

participant of American higher education management is the President, the highest-ranking executive officer of the institute who connects -, moreover, maintains a close relationship with - the Board of Trustees and the school. It has many responsibilities under overall leadership over the bureaus. “The president serves as the lead fundraiser and as a key representative of the university and its academic community to external agencies and actors” (Education Encyclopedia: The President, para. 1). They also try to preserve a positive public image of their

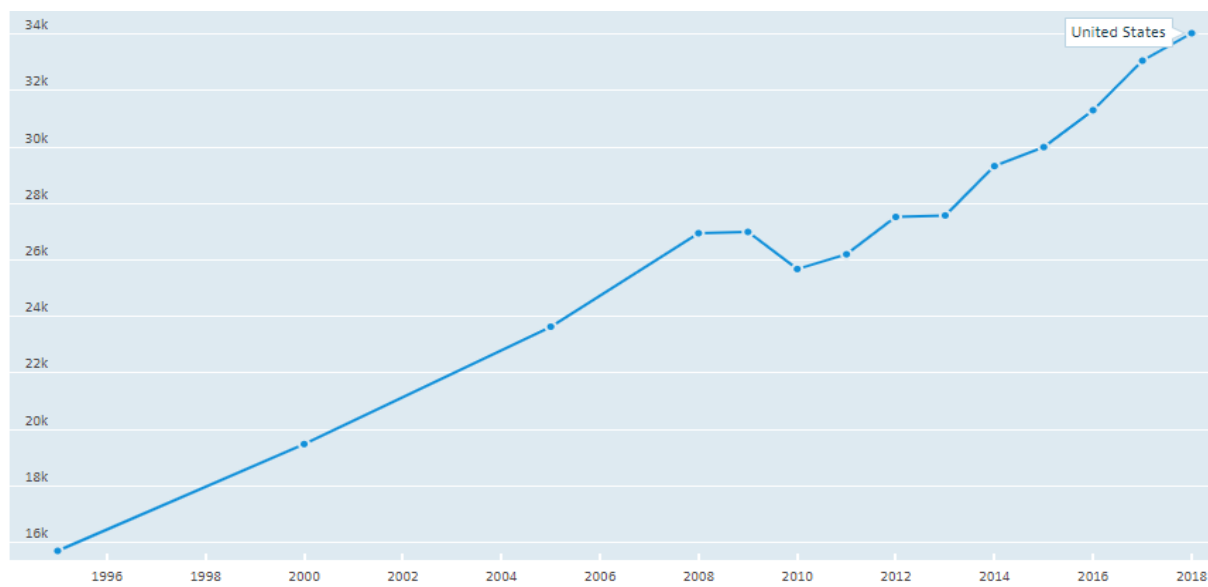


Figure 3 Tertiary education spending USD/student (Source: OECD)

university and work on common causes and to build a good community. Recently, the authority of the President is declining in favour of the governing board who gained more legitimate roles. The Academic Senate is the committee which “represents the voice of the faculty in matters of university governance” and connects to the board and the president. The head of each faculty is the Dean who supervises their department. In the beginning, the role of the faculty was mainly advisory, but now it is engaged in policy formation (Education Encyclopedia).

The Overview of American Higher education study from 2013 states that the previous 50 years has brought dramatic changes into the way colleges are interpreted, managed, and financed. In America, the massification of post-secondary institutions started in the early 1960s, coinciding with the “Sputnik shock⁶”. Dwight D. Eisenhower, president at that time signed into law the National Defense Education Act (NDEA). As its name implies, in order to meet the national security needs’ demands, the NDEA expended a great amount of money on school improvement. This is known as the beginning of the federal government’s involvement in education, although, the public opinion still held that it is not the government’s responsibility to fund college tuitions.

⁶ The public fear caused by the technological gap between the United States and the Soviet Union after the launch of Sputnik satellite.

At that time, most of the colleges were private non-profit ones and the state supported them financially. This support not only continued, but even grew in the following decades (Baum et. al, 2013). The figure (Figure 3) represents this - almost continuous – increasing in spending on tertiary education by the federal government. The data shows the amount of dollars spent on each student between 1995 and 2018.

V.D. The ever-changing structure of Hungarian higher education

According to Pálincás (2005), Hungarian higher education is a well-circumscribed part of the national economy and culture, where the tasks of the state can be clearly defined. The first is the legal regulation and public administration management of higher education, the second task is public funding for higher education as a whole. Lastly, the third is the maintenance of public higher education institutions (Polgári Szemle, 2005, author's translation). It is examined in this chapter, how these tasks were fulfilled and how these roles were changed in the past three decades.

After the political system change in 1989, the following period can be called “the long decade of Hungarian higher education” by Fábri⁷ (2002) because there were numerous changes in higher education. Until the first new protracted law was accepted, the Unified Education Act (1985) regulated the education system in the country. Its main ideology was to train socialist intellectuals and professionals according to the needs of the economy (Polónyi, 2015).

This could be seen as shared coordination by the state and the market, but in practice, the state-controlled and ruled the market with the introduction of a planned economy, thus one can place the system remarkably close to the state, excluding and occupying the other participants in the Clark triangle.

The Education law from the state socialism from 1985 was transformed in 1990, when the Németh government started emphasising the replacement of socialist training with raising democratic, humanist citizens (Act XXIII of 1990) after the peaceful transition to a democratic system. However, the Unified Education act was replaced when new, separated public- and higher education laws were enacted in 1993. The regime change brought along the multiparty parliamentary democracy wherewith competitive party platforms appeared. Education policy became a reflection of the change in different social strata and the augmentation of inequalities (Czibere, 2006).

The way the first elected Prime Minister (after 1989), József Antall, the Hungarian Democratic Forum's (Magyar Demokrata Fórum, MDF) candidate spoke about education, describes the

⁷ Cited in: Pusztai, G. & Szabó, P. Cs. (2008): The Bologna Process as a Trojan Horse, Restructuring Higher Education in Hungary; *European Education*, vol. 40, no. 2, Summer 2008, pp.85-102 (p.3)

party's program as well. He said in his keynote:

“Education is considered a core issue in the government's programme; the invested intellectual and material capital is the most efficient and fastest return as demonstrated by the numerous rising nations of the world. He detailed with: Our guideline is that the main leaders of the school should be a school board consisting of parents, teachers, educators and representatives of the municipality or organisation that runs the school - and the same will happen at higher education institutions once university autonomy is consolidated.” (Antall, 1990)

This modifies the illustration in the Clark triangle with a great shift from total government control towards the academic oligarchy vertex. Another possible vertex is also mentioned here, the civil society (parents), but this study uses the original triangle without separating this interest group. The significant turn here is the creation of a committee with not only the members appointed by government institutions, but the school's own representatives with vastly different priorities, creating the possibility for discussion and joint decision making.

The state's monopoly of establishing schools was ceased, opening up to the establishment of institutions with alternative maintenance. Amongst other Hungarian researchers, Böcskei acknowledged the decent quality, and the need for private universities, writing that creating private, foundation- and church-run institutions are reasonable and supported by numerous examples in the United States (Böcskei, 2003).

The Higher Education Act in 1993 (Act LXXX of 1993) was written exclusively about higher education and replaced the Soviet-type system with a modern, Western-European higher education type. As stated in the preamble, it is based on the constitutional human rights, the Magna Charta of European Universities, and the need to create better conditions for social and national life (Act LXXX of 1993). This was a framework law that created a Humboldtian model of structure and governance (Polónyi, 2015). This holistic higher education model is a concept of academic education, where the basic idea is a combination of research and studies. More importantly, in this model, individual freedom is highly emphasised. In teaching and research work academic liberty can be enjoyed. The independence applies to the economical, and organisational areas too in which the institution can make decisions. The real power lies in the hands of the government, professors, and university workers at the same time.

In 1996 higher education institutions became central budgetary entities which narrowed their freedom of asset management. In Associations (a temporary form of association for full merger), a Supervisory Council (Felügyelő Tanács) was set with the responsibilities of monitoring, commenting, and evaluating the management among others (Act LXI of 1996). This can be seen as a forerunner of the upcoming supervisor entities such as the Chancellor (which was already mentioned in 1991 and the following years (Bárány, 2015)). In 1996 the jurisdiction of the rector

and the senate was changed, making the rector a single responsible manager of economics (Act LXI of 1996).

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) was introduced in the 1996 law modification, as a crucial component in making Hungarian higher education “eurocompatible”, but it was only obligatory for universities to implement from 2002 (Pusztai & Szabó, 2008, p. 3).

In June 1999 among 29 Ministers of Education, the Hungarian one also signed the Bologna declaration which grants comparability in standards and quality of qualifications in all European countries. Although the European Higher Education Area was established to link together countries in the continent, today there are forty-nine members and many of them are from all around the world. Besides, the new BA-MA-PhD structure makes it interoperable with the American system as well. Whereas Hungary signed it among the first ones in 1999, the Bologna structure was only introduced in 2006 in the country.

Without neglecting the Erasmus mobility program and other further advantages of the Bologna process, Georg Winckler warned about its risk, the so-called “brain-drain” phenomena. He mentioned the USA as an example, where this free competition led to an overall increase in standards (Bakó, 2016).

A new amendment was added to the Act XCVII of 2000, transferring the right of professors’ appointment to the Hungarian Accreditation Committee (MAB). Some researchers suggest that this has led to the degradation of autonomy (Polónyi, 2015 p. 5), but we have to bear in mind that at that time, the plenum of the MAB consisted of 30 members, all proposed by higher education institutions and academic research institutes, submitted by the Minister of Education and appointed by the Prime Minister for 3 years (Gémes, 2003).

In the first years of the new century the Ministry of Education started a new program, joining the European Higher Education Area serving as a base concept in 2002. Later on, professionals came up with two new ideas: higher education institutions could choose from either staying within the system of public finances but with a special legal status and budget; or an institution operating a public benefit corporation established by the state (Derényi, 2020). As Derényi in the Education article quotes Polónyi, it aimed at increasing economic autonomy, the ability to manage public funds and assets more efficiently, and the possibility of more flexible, market-based operations (Derényi, 2020). It required a new status that does not fall within the scope of the Public Finance Act, and the Civil Service Act, and is independent of the Treasury. Moreover, it was also already recognised that not only the legal status and the external factors should be altered but the internal components as well, more precisely a new management structure should have been established with greater authority and create a freer possibility for the internal organisation of the institution (Derényi, 2020). Due to political debates and deals, opposition from the Ministry of Finances,

and many more components, the initiative became weaker and weaker until it was completely rejected.

The next Higher Education Law was enacted in 2005, indicating great alterations in management. Although the position in the Clark triangle would not show movement since the changes somehow balanced each other, a notable new committee was established, the Economic Council. It was involved in the preparation of strategic decisions and inspected the execution of them. A higher ratio of the members was delegated by the senate and a smaller one by the Minister of Education and the Minister of Finances, but even the latter mentioned members could not be instructed by their appointing authority.

In 2011 the new National Higher Education Law (Act CCIV of 2011) brought new features into the system. One of the most important ones was the installation of the so-called “student-pacts”, transforming funded students into scholarship holders; but the more relevant measure of our topic was relocating the right to appoint a rector to the Minister. This legislation has not been replaced yet, nevertheless, has gone through many amendments.

2014 was a remarkable year for all participants involved in higher education. The introduction of the Chancellor - appointed by the Prime Minister - led to dual governing in state universities shared by the Rector and the Chancellor. As Szabó has already identified, this caused a huge shift toward the state vertex in the triangle, as he formulated, “the university administrative process has become clear” (Szabó, 2020, p. 82).

While the Rector, elected by the Senate, was responsible for directing scientific and educational activities, the Chancellor received the organisational and management tasks (economic, financial, audit, accounting, labour, legal, administrative, IT activities, asset management, etc.). As Bárány summarised, the Chancellor’s task was to represent the interest of the state in the university’s management (2015). As Kádár-Csoboth (2022) was explaining, it seemed that the institutions’ management governance became more controllable by the maintainer in this way; and for higher education institutions, this change was a good possibility to receive the surplus resource (personal communication).

The reason the new system did not work was that when the institutions could not achieve to operate with a Chancellor - who knew the university and was supposedly easy to cooperate with -, then the conflict incapacitated the normal way of functioning. But the complete lack of success was caused by the transformation of its role from enforcing the will of the maintainer to the institution’s Chancellor, meaning it started to become the “agent” of it by putting its interest first – according to Kádár-Csoboth (2022).

The amount of obligation they had could seem huge; however, the requirements of the position set the bar high, including at least three years of leadership experience in a higher education

institution, company, or central or regional administration (Act XXXVI of 2014). The conclusion can be drawn that the government's goal was to make higher education institutions more professional (Kováts, 2016).

Happened in the same year that László Palkovics was appointed as State Secretary of Higher Education, who brought a new perspective with his industrial background. In an Index interview, he talked about the strategy they have worked out which aims to encourage universities to have R&D cooperation with businesses (2014). He believed that after many years, the Prime Minister wanted to finally finish searching for the right route in higher education that made his position possible. In this interview, he also talked about tightening upcoming requirements such as language exams and advanced level of the final exam as application prerequisites by 2020. However, he emphasised that the goal is not to decrease the number of enrolments; the efficiency for Hungary is if 30-35% of the specific age group gets a diploma (Joób, 2014).

An interesting stage of the prolonged process took place in 2015, when Consistory boards were established. Since the law and regulations did not explain in detail its tasks and goals, Zoltán Rónay explained its essence in his study (2019), and researchers agree (Rónay, Bárány) that it has a lot to do with autonomy, since the new boards had the right to consent and could block the decision of the Senate in the most significant questions, for instance, the institutional development plan and, as part of it, the research and development innovation strategy, the budget, the annual report, etc. The board consisted of five members, including the Rector and the Chancellor, the others were appointed by the Minister of Education. Their task was the “foundation of strategic decisions, and the professional support and control of management activities” (Rónay, 2019, p. 4). In a roundtable discussion in 2015, Palkovics described that Consistories are advisory, strategic boards and their aim is not to veto the decisions of the Senate (Bárány, 2015).

In the same year, the “Shifting of gears in higher education mid-term policy strategy” action plan was published with large-scale ambitions. This is one of the 2016-2020 period's most determinative documents, so in the following, some of its parts are going to be shortly summarised.

Amongst the reasons for the paradigm change, it mentions the national demands as economic and labour market needs, the demographic challenges the country is facing with, and that research-development and innovation projects must occur. Besides, there are the global issues to which we must react, globalisation and digitalisation, for instance. Thus, Hungarian higher education must align with the long-term economic and social plans to create prosperity in the country. The strategy uses four words to describe the future's higher education: “competition, quality, performance, and success” (ITM, 2016, p. 2). The upcoming policies will reflect on

these concepts, redounding a competitive higher education system.

In the beginning, demographic indicators are listed: the country is facing lower numbers of 18-year-olds; precisely, there were approximately 13% fewer of this age group in 2015 than it was in 2010. But according to the new plan, this can also benefit, because “the freed-up capacities can be utilised well in the quality transformation of higher education” (ITM, 2016, p. 7).

In order to facilitate social mobility, higher education should recognise and localise the needs and offer suitable education and career paths for the youth in less advanced areas (ITM, 2016). In my understanding, Hungary now is in an acceptable position to reach all regions with its universities, colleges, and their training locations with sixty-four institutions’ 191 departments - with proper infrastructure - reachable from most of the settlements (Oktatási Hivatal, 2020).

Since 1993, the majority of the students are women, so the problem here is not their equal access, but the proportion of genders in certain fields. As is common in other European countries, STEM majors are significantly overrepresented by men, while teacher training for example is a course chosen mainly by women. The solution would be that the already existing career orientations would be extended for younger students. Among the academic staff, the number of women employees is quite low, thus the government’s task is to make these positions more accessible for mothers (ITM, 2005).

The new system will be outcome-focused, meaning that those results which need to be achieved are in the centre. In the 21st century, these are: “entrepreneurial skills, digital skills, and foreign language proficiency” (ITM, 2016, p. 16).

Dual study programmes, as mentioned earlier, were introduced at this time, offering practice-oriented training besides higher education studies. In this programme, institutions have the possibility to cooperate with businesses, in order to provide experience in the labour market in one’s field of study (in 2016 these areas were: agriculture, engineer, economic sciences, information technology, social science, natural sciences) (ITM, 2016, p. 16).

According to the strategic document “the amount of money spent on research and development and innovation has been constantly on the rise since the economic crisis” (ITM, 2016, p. 16), but mostly as a consequence of corporate investments. As the government recognised that it is essential to fund R&D&I projects, it has approved an action plan to develop this sector (Investment in the Future: National Research and Development and Innovation Strategy 2020).

In this environment, where the government was strengthening its influence, published a new strategic action plan with ambitious new goals and the number of monitoring groups was increasing, the Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design started to analyse possible new operating systems. It started as a campus building project (in 2010), but organisation developer consultants got involved reflecting on the numerous new functions the university would receive

from the expansion (Derényi, 2020). Consultants were studying models and international benchmarks in order to propose a model, independent of the public finances and its regulations (Kádár-Csoboth, 2022).

They differentiated three operating models: traditional, progressive, and innovative. These models were scrutinised on the basis of the same factors which are the following: firstly, which we also inspect here, the strength of state control along with the ability to adapt to the flexibility of organisation and operation, and the market. Moreover, the options for inner control; what the expected funding opportunities are relating to the model; as well as the possibility of developing a system of interests from different points of view (MOME Laboratory, 2015). As Péter Kádár-Csoboth explained, the three feasible options - worked out by higher education experts – were more detailed. The first one is close to the one the administration has been trying for decades: to get rid of the constraining legislation but keep the universities under the public finances. This would mean numerous changes in different laws with many exceptions for different universities, but as the experiences show from the 90s and the 2000's, it is not the most effective way of operating. The second model included the idea of foundations established by the State which could detach them from public finances. The last idea was a completely new, “self-sustaining” idea “exercising maintenance rights over itself” (Kádár-Csoboth, 2022).

After thoroughly assessing the options and evaluating them, they drew the forthcoming conclusion:

The current operation is equivalent to the traditional model, but MOME's goals and future strategy are difficult to reconcile with it, so it seems necessary to go beyond it. (...) The model change should be seen as an experiment of which experience can bring important benefits to both the state as a maintainer, and to other higher education institutions (MOME Laboratory, 2015, p. 69, author's translation).

This was written in 2015, many years before several public universities started following its steps. And what causes the loudest outcry, the composition of the board, was also grounded in this well-prepared MOME document, which says: *We don't look at the creative centre as a private enterprise, but rather as a mixed-maintenance university whose board of directors includes representatives of the state maintainer, as well as representatives of our largest partners: the local government, the public sector, large companies, and creative small and medium-sized enterprises (MOME Laboratory, 2015, p. 70, author's translation).*

In a debate between Balázs Orbán (Deputy Minister of the Prime Minister's Office) and István Hiller (Former Minister of Education and Culture, MP) on March 21 (2022, Corvinus University) organised by the JÖVŐKÉPP!, the two politicians also covered the subject of appointed members in Boards. On one hand, according to Hiller, it is unacceptable that political

actors have a seat in the boards of the Foundations, and they should have been chosen from the scientific field. But on the other hand, Orbán reasoned that their office is not a university-, but a managerial, operative position, and their relevance is strategic and financial, and they should facilitate the implantation of the universities. Furthermore, he agrees that a higher education institution should have academic-, economical-, and cultural-; but also, political-governmental connections too. As a comment on this controversial topic, László György emphasised through examples that those active political actors who are members of any universities' boards are primarily there for a good reason, because they were students of the given higher education institution and born in the city which they still strongly bond to (personal communication, April, 2022). In a roundtable discussion on February 24, Gergely Böszörményi-Nagy emphasised the personal responsibility of these board members who act rather as property inspectors (2022, Scruton). Since they can be held accountable, this is an outer motivation that can encourage board members to actively take part in the work and take it seriously. Having a look at the lists of Boards of Trustees, the participants were selected aligned with the profile of the institution and according to their skills and knowledge, so their presence is profitable for the university.

In addition to the MOME investigation, the community of the university faculty-researchers and management was involved and interested in effective operation (MOME Laboratory, 2015). By studying the list of board members, we can conclude that they are holding firm that representatives of all interest groups are presented.

This document, the MOME Laboratory, was the base of the Ministry of Human Capacities' following studies on different conceptions and negotiations with the MOME. In fact, not only with them but during discussions with other universities about possible access to the experiment (Derényi, 2020). As Péter Kádár-Csoboth told me in the personal interview, the University of Győr and the University of Veterinary Medicine Budapest were planned to be the other two pilot institutions (2022).

During these events, in 2018, the Corvinus University of Budapest (BCE) - preceding the above-mentioned ones - unexpectedly announced the preparation of a Foundation in order to create a new operational model, and the maintaining rights were given to the Minister of Innovation and Technology, along with the obligation of assessing the contracts between the private-, the state sector and the university, and to make a proposal to replace the obligations by the state and to further secure the state guarantee and support associated with the assumed obligations (Government Decree 1459/2018. (25 September)).

The Act XIX of 2019 amending the National Higher Education stated BCE as a non-state university. Turning one of the country's most precious universities into this category and MOME already working on a structure change, it was expected that other institutions would embark on

the same path. This new policy strategy was published in the document with the title: “Shifting of Gears in Higher Education Mid-Term Policy Strategy” in 2016, which showed the direction of the model change. As it can be read on the web page (Modellváltás website), there are ambitious, but essential goals: achieve that all participants in higher education are interested in an excellent performance. A highly emphasised aim is placing universities into key roles in innovation, research, and development. An important aspect is that this change is completely voluntary, should the Senate support the idea in order to start the negotiations.

With this move, the state loosened the reins and gave much more freedom to universities and authority than with the previous years’ regulations, as Balázs Orbán put it: “we let universities go” (2022). As István Stumpf, Government Commissioner responsible for model change of universities said during an interview at Bonum Publicum: the universities are freed “from bureaucratic constraints, public finance and remuneration shackles”, but the state does not withdraw (Bonum Publicum, 2021). Nevertheless, it did not let go of the hands of the universities completely: the state turns from maintainer to partner, becomes the customer of the services (Modellváltás web page). Financial support continues to be given, which could extend until 50-70% of funding (Bonum Publicum, 2021), ensured by a framework agreement between the state and the University for 15-20 years, which includes long-term guarantees, plus 3-5 years of individual financing agreements will be concluded (Modellváltás webpage FAQ). Balázs Orbán accepted during the already mentioned debate that the amount of money they spent on the changing universities, which is often two-three times more than they previously received, is “a 30-year debt that is good to have been repaid” (2022).

Explaining finances, the official website mentions that it follows an Austrian model which uses pre-recorded performance indicators, taking into account the specificities of the different tasks. Stumpf also mentioned during the previously mentioned interview (Bonum Publicum, 2021) that not only Western Europe, but Finland and Hong Kong were an example to follow while the new model was under development.

By 2022, twenty-one out of twenty-seven state universities had decided to change their maintenance system to the new model. It leads to having six state universities, twenty-four church-run, and twelve private institutions. As Stumpf has mentioned in a roundtable discussion on February 24 (2022, Scruton), Hungary’s oldest and largest universities, the Eötvös Loránd University (ELTE) and the Budapest University of Technology and Economics are contemplating changing their model. As the Commissioner evaluated the last period during the discussion, the recent phase is about consolidation and peace. The model change is considered to be a success story - especially in terms of numbers, as I see, since the 7/9th of the state institutions have joined this “experiment” and the amount of money that flowed to these places is

unprecedented. Stumpf had pointed it out this way: “The government had replenished long-lacking money in higher education” (2022). But he also highlighted that “(money) is not a cure for all problems” (Stumpf, 2022). Gergely Böszörményi-Nagy, the Chairman of the Board in the Foundation of MOME, participating in the same roundtable discussion, agreed with the last point to the extent that believing that “model change is only a financial matter would be self-deception” as well as increasing the wages is only a tool (2022). Zsolt Hernádi, the Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Maecenas Universitatis Corvini Foundation (the foundation of BCE), the last panellist in that discussion has stated that the financial support did not solve the existing problems and emphasised the importance of people, the students, and the competitiveness. According to him, a “complex cultural change” is needed to succeed and achieve satisfactory performance (Hernádi, 2022).

In this colloquy, Böszörményi-Nagy stressed the need for state intervention, bringing the USA as a contrast, where universities were founded by wealthy families, on the money of the society. But in Hungary, only the state was able to invest such a vast amount of money; and the new structure also can provide greater autonomy and freedom than before, as mentioned in the narrative of all three of them (Böszörményi-Nagy, 2022).

In Hungary there are three types of higher education institutions now: universities, universities of applied sciences, and colleges. The difference between them is the number of Bachelor’s, Master and doctoral programmes, and the portion of their teaching and research staff’s doctoral degree. The university category offers the most of the first ones, but in the case of universities of applied sciences, having any dual training is also a requirement (Erydice, 2022).

According to the maintainer, we can distinguish state and non-state institutions. In the latter category belong the church-run universities, business organisations’ or foundations’ institutions, and from 2019 a public-interest trust foundation can also take over the maintenance responsibilities (Erydice, 2022).

By January 1, 2022, there are five state universities, including the ELTE, one of the most prestigious universities Hungary has, and the unique National University of Public Services, which will likely be run by the state in the future as well. The other twenty-four universities have either changed their system’s model, private ones or are run by churches. There was one institution, the Eszterházy Károly Catholic University which has not only lost one of its departments to become an independent university, but also changed its maintainer from state to the Catholic church. Amongst the universities of applied sciences there are two church-run institutions and the other eight are non-state schools. There is a higher number with church governance amongst colleges: 68% of all their higher education institutions are with seventeen schools. Seven more colleges are private, and the state still keeps one, the Eötvös József College

in Baja (Derényi, 2022; Act CCIV of 2011).

As the table shows (Table 1), there are barely any higher institutions left to rule by the state, twenty-one institutions have decided to change their structure model.

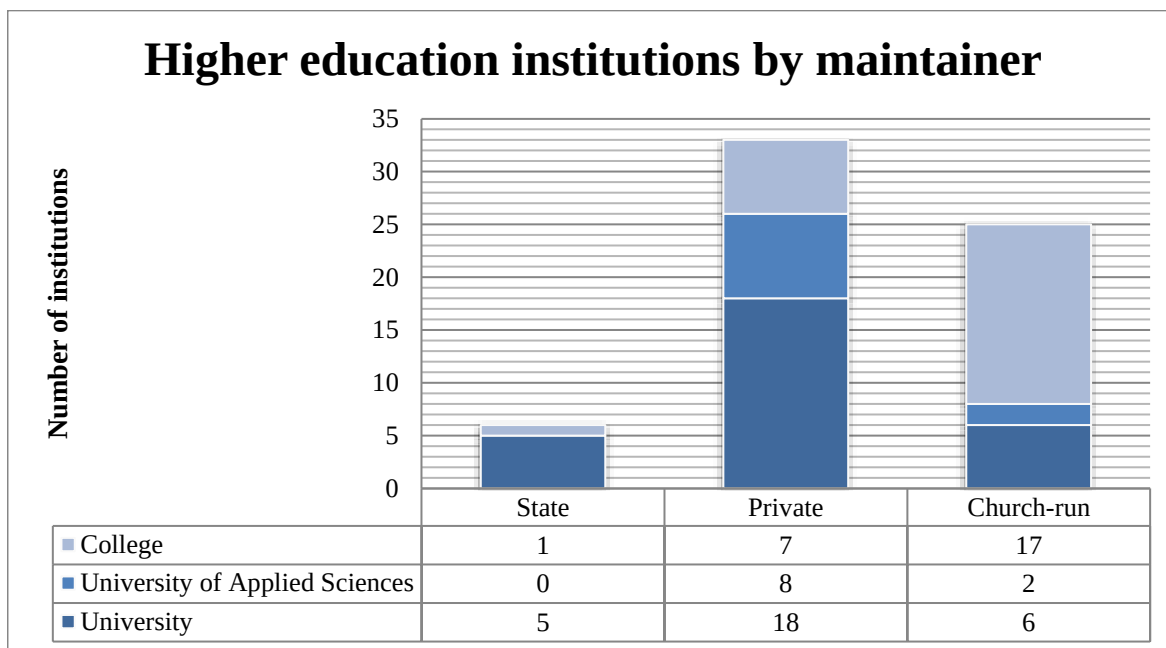


Table 1 Hungarian higher education institutions by their maintainer on 1 January 2022

Hungary is characterised by a high centralisation location-wise, since thirty-four institutions are located in Budapest (FIR).

The institutions' interest is protected, and they are represented by the Hungarian Rectors' Conference. Another representative body is the National Doctoral Council, which makes decisions related to doctoral programmes and degrees. The Hungarian Accreditation Committee is a national expert body responsible for the evaluation, assurance, and supervision of the quality of education, moreover for scientific research. The Educational Authority is the government's administrative body, technically a registration centre, operating the information system of higher education (Erydice, 2022).

In accordance with the Bologna Declaration, there is also a three-cycle degree structure since 2006: starting with a bachelor (BA/BSc) level which is 6-8 semesters, followed by a maximum of four semesters-long master (MA/MSc) level. If a student earned a master's degree, they are allowed to apply to doctorate programmes to earn a PhD. Some fields of education remained undivided, meaning that there is no division after the bachelor's level, but the 10-12 semesters are together.

VI. The results of the interviews – the Clark triangle

During the personal interviews, the respondents were asked to place the Hungarian higher education system in current time within the Clark triangle and its earlier positions.⁸ This use of the triangle attempts to display the managerial shifts in the Hungarian higher education from the system change until 2022 April. This figure ignores institutions in exceptional circumstances, strives to watch it as a whole sector and takes into account the provisions affecting everyone. Different perspectives and backgrounds resulted in quite diverse outcomes; three of them are represented as they portray several, different movements and dates.

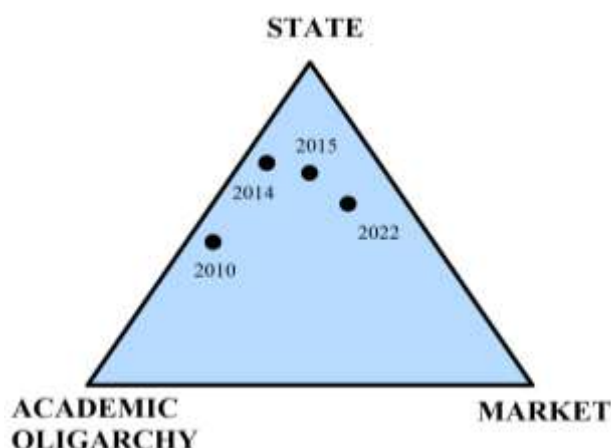


Figure 4 Hungarian higher education depicted in the Clark triangle (Interviewee 1)

The first triangle (Figure 4) starts with 2010 with a balanced control between the state and the academia, excluding any market influence. In 2014, when the Chancellor system was introduced, with the responsibilities and power it shifted, it moved the managerial control towards the state, as the Chancellor system's introduction's main goal was in fact to control the economic management of the institutions. Larger movements towards the market were recognisable with the dual training's appearance also in 2015. According to this interviewee, the recent structure of the national higher education system is close to a balanced position, but the market has an unquestionable, unprecedented influence on the universities' governance. On the one hand, because there are market representatives in the Boards of Trustees; on the other hand, many of the supported developments of the institutions are driven by the demands of the market. Compared to where it started, the managerial input of the academia decreased to a great extent. In the second illustration (Figure 5) the starting point is 2006 and the first shift was also caused by the appearance of the Chancellor (2014). Though, in this case, the coordination was originally

⁸ The participants' task was not to find the perfect spots as there is no one unequivocal correct solution; it rather reflects the different viewpoints from different aspects of higher education policy making.

thought to be strongly occupied by the professionals and even with the new managerial role, it did not move close enough to the state vertex to have it as an equally influential participant. This interviewee believes that the new model brings stronger state intervention, so the position of 2021 and the present is somewhere as far from academia as from the state and moved slightly towards the market. Effect of the market is as insignificantly expressed in this solution as it only appears when the Board of Trustees include people expressing the needs of the market.

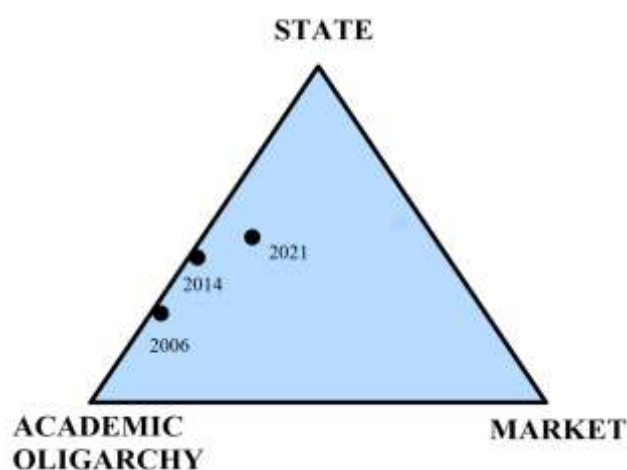


Figure 5 Hungarian higher education depicted in the Clark triangle (Interviewee 2)

The third triangle (Figure 6) seems the most dynamic with great shifts to and from the state. The timeline starts with 1990 when higher education was mainly state controlled, but academic participants also had a significant role. In the year of 1996, the academic oligarchy “had pulled the control” closer to itself, according to the responder. The next significant step signalled increasing market influence in 2010. Driving was taken back in 2014 due to the Chancellor by the state and expanded even to a bigger extent than it was at the regime change. As the position of the present state of governance is pictured, the government let universities go governance-wise and the market has the biggest role in its new management. 2022 is positioned away from the state and on the distance between the academia and the market it allows one-third of the power to the scholars. Thus, in light of the companies’ influence and the policy documents from 2016 emphasising the market-motivated outputs, obviously the market is the biggest player nowadays – according to this responder.

The conclusion can be drawn that it is not unequivocal whether the higher education system is to what extent is exposed to the different interest groups’ influence and the different regulations, policies can be interpreted in different ways.

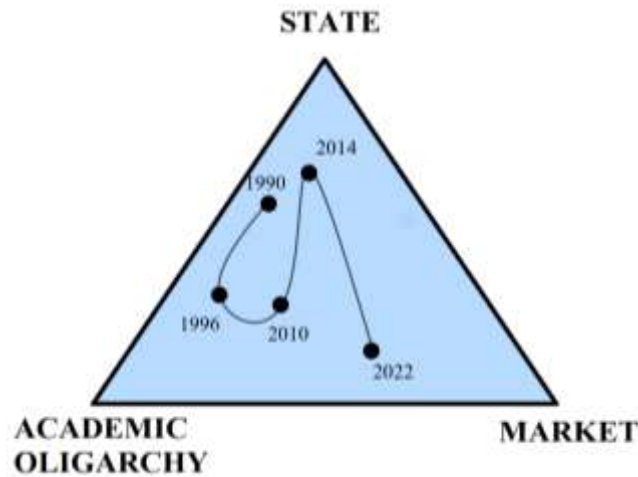


Figure 6 Hungarian higher education depicted in the Clark triangle (Interviewee 3)

Another illation is visible in the opinions of all three respondents: the market undoubtedly entered the field, although the importance attributed to it differs. Withal, this might be the most difficult to generalise as market relations and co-operations emerge from the unique properties or location of an institution; there are unquestionably distinct degrees of influence of the market on different universities.

VII. Policy goals and financial realities

At the beginning of the analysed period in many European countries, including Hungary, massification was the main higher education goal: many objectives were about the number of enrolments and graduate students. Looking at the numbers from the study of the Education Research and Development Institution (Kováts, 2009), interesting changes can be recognised (see Table 2).

Country	Change in expenditure on HEIs (2000 = 100)		Changes in student numbers (2000 = 100)		Change in expenditure per student (2000 = 100)		Change in expenditure of HEIs from 2000 to 2008, according to financiers (2000 = 100)	
	1995	2008	1995	2008	1995	2008	State	Private
OECD-mean	80	140	83	124	98	114	130	198
Hungary	78	131	58	149	135	88	140	-
USA	71	117	92	120	77	98	129	108

Table 2 Data of expenditure in the light of student numbers in higher education (Source: Kováts, 2009)

Undoubtedly, the growing Hungarian numbers show improvement and align with the goals of massification. The number of students had risen and almost tripled itself in the period shown in

the table (1995-2008), which is an extremely high portion; and according to the statistics of the Hungarian Education Authority (EA), this number equals approximately 340 000 students in 2008 (Education Authority statistics, 2019). At the same time, the expenditure also grew significantly in 2008 by fifty-three percentage points. It is visible that the number of students grew faster resulting in a reduction in the money spent on each student. While the roughly 120 000 million HUF was enough to spend more than 800 000 HUF per student in 1995, it started to shrink despite the fact that in many of the following years the state provided more. In 2000, the whole expenditure was again around 120 000 million HUF, but one student could enjoy only approximately 600 000 HUF of support. At the time of the global financial crisis, the expenditure per student was barely above 600 000, although, the complete spending on higher education reached 160 000 million HUF which was almost 5% of the GDP (Mészáros, 2012, p. 278; Kováts, 2009, p. 21).

According to the Századvég table (Table 3), spending significantly grew after 2008. In the following school year, the state support reached 788 000 Ft if the average is calculated from the numbers of students in state-owned and private institutions: the latter ones got half as much as their peers in state universities. Numbers grew progressively and have been exceeding 1 million HUF since 2014 (Századvég, 2021, p. 11).

	support per state-supported student in public higher education	support per state-supported student in non-public higher education
2009/2010	1053,1	522,3
2010/2011	1058,8	534,1
2011/2012	1105,2	527,2
2012/2013	1045,6	520,1
2013/2014	953,2	604,5
2014/2015	1061,6	1219,0
2015/2016	1153,6	1208,8
2016/2017	1197,0	1226,4

Table 3 Support per state-supported student in public and in non-public education (thousand HUF/ student/ year)
(Source: Századvég, 2021, p. 11)

Based on the same study on higher education finances, it can be summarised that until 2010, based on the higher education law of 1993, there was a multi-channel funding system that separated training, student, facility maintenance, research, and development appropriations. There have always been some indicators; mainly the number of students determined by the amount of money the institution received (norm-based financing). The norms and the indicators have always been a subject of the bargain between the Ministry and the institutions. According to Polónyi, as the study refers, norms worked the other way around as they were supposed to,

because, in practice, the funding of institutions was not adjusted to the indicators, but the amounts of the norms were adjusted to the institutional budgets (Századvég, 2021).

The Higher Education Law of 2011 retained the multi-channel funding with an extra, sport-aimed appropriation; however, the practice of allocating state-subsidised student numbers (and thus training grants) has changed (Századvég, 2021, p. 14).

A significant shift occurred when a core-activity support was introduced in 2016. It was distributed on the basis of the number of students with state scholarships and the norms differentiated according to the specialisations.

The strategic economic policy goal is to join the world economy on the highest technological level, as was mentioned in one of Prime Minister Viktor Orbán's speeches (2022). It means developing a higher education and innovation ecosystem that is driven by the local environment and cutting-edge research demands stemming from multinational actors. As the 600 largest multinational companies (MNCs) are responsible for 80 percent of total world exports, the newest market demands stem from their needs. Also, the reason is to find local answers to global challenges, i.e., incentivising, incubating, and accelerating local ideas to cope with global challenges (György, 2022).

In order to create more workplaces in the country, it is needed to attract big companies in which the technology they apply is advanced. For this reason, László Palkovics, Minister of ITM has encouraged the idea of knowledge centres. Each university has the possibility now to find their purpose, the area where they can become the best at and use a one-time support - they have received from the state - to develop their infrastructure and these centres. A good example is the Laser Centre in University of Szeged, the one-of-a-kind cooperative investment in Europe.⁹ The new mission is quickly reflecting on the challenging issues of the world and offering solutions to these problems. As the State Secretary said, only the universities can establish this engaging innovation ecosystem for the leading businesses. This ecosystem might not be rentable directly, although creating an attractive environment for foreign and local companies to re-shore their activities to these ecosystems it can pay off indirectly through taxes paid and high value-added workplaces created (György, 2022).

The country's interest is also to give rise to export-competent, technologically advanced businesses where the added value is higher, thus, the Hungarian economy can benefit from it. This notion actualised the Hungarian Startup University Program (HSUP), in which thirty market operators facilitate the construction and development of start-ups founded by university students (HSUP website).

⁹ The Extreme Light Infrastructure ERIC landmark project was created with cooperative coordination and shared research strategy between Czech Republic, Romania and Hungary; the latter one even hosted the Nobel-prize winner Gérard Mourou.

As the State Secretary expressed, we have brought universities closer to those to whom they belong. In his understanding, higher education institutions are not only for the students, but for the local community in a broader sense: the employees of the university, the local citizens, and businesses. Consequently, the institutions should not only react to the urgent issues of the world but bear in mind the local needs (György, 2022).

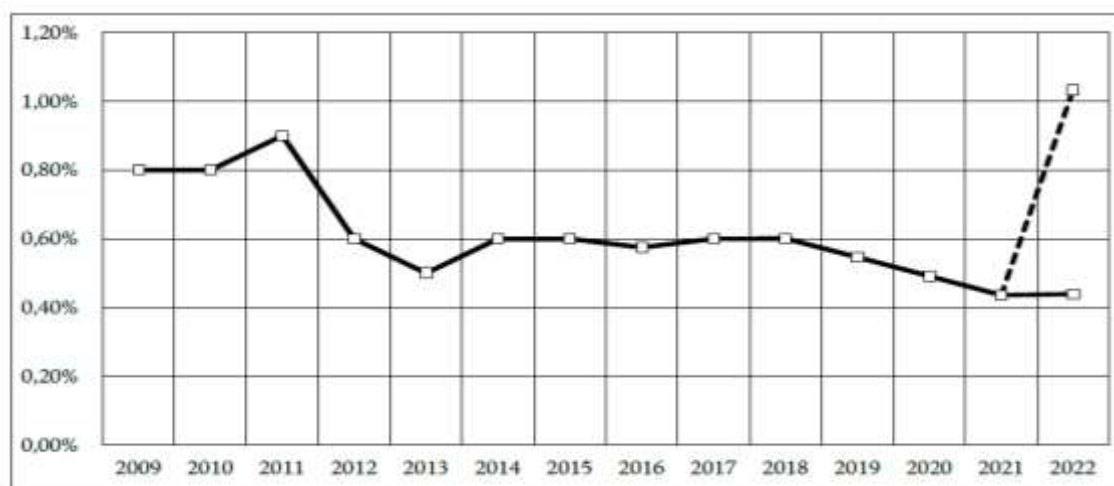


Figure 7 State support for higher education compared to GDP
(Source: Polónyi, 2022, p. 82)

As we can see in the figure Polónyi has edited (Figure 7), higher education expenditure compared to GDP can be seen decreasing in the past years, but overall, this still meant 259 739 (2019), 234 517 (2020), 224 931,2 (2021) million HUF. By 2022 this amount exceeds 277 249 million HUF, but 2700 billion extra support is expected to be given to universities for development from the Hungarian budget and EU grants. In the first phase, the model changed universities have already received 200 billion HUF (Polónyi, 2022, p. 81, György, 2022).

In the new financial model, the state concludes a strategic framework agreement for 25 years with each university separately. That includes, amongst others, the activities financially supported by the state, this supports planned volume and they set the rules for change management and monitoring. Within this agreement, there are 6-years financial agreements with the institutions and their maintainer. These include the agreements about the goals to be achieved, the state support by years and by tasks, moreover, specify the frame of control, guarantees, and the obligation to provide information (Bódis, 2022).

As Setényi evaluates, the development support Hungary received from the EU in the budgetary period of 2014-2020 is extraordinary, but in the next period higher education cannot rely on only subsidies. The higher education institutions' high degree of dependence on state funding is not sustainable, but to only base university management on market principles is impossible. Institutions need more sources of revenue, thus - his conclusion is that- government incentives

are necessary so universities can supplement public resources by attracting external supplies gained from their operations (Setényi, 2021).

VIII. Conclusion

“In the past 25 years, Hungary paid the decades-long debt of higher education to society. Access to higher education widened, groups excluded from education in the previous decades could acquire their desired qualifications, freedom of teaching became a reality, the institutional system and programme structure of the unified Hungarian higher education were created, the unity of education and research was restored, and a need to improve quality in higher education appeared. In one word: a change of regime in higher education was concluded” (ITM, 2015, p. 2).

After studying all aspects and changes, it can be concluded that the Hungarian model change has as much potential as challenges in it. However, in many cases, it has not brought a perfect balance so far from the managerial aspect, because the state still has a considerable influence besides the other participants, the market, and the academic oligarchy, which are in the process of strengthening their position.

Although the legal status has changed, and now state-independent boards rule the universities, there are still laws and regulations that institutions have to comply, and they did not get rid of the process of public procurement either, which makes the administration and the operational tasks burdensome and tardy. Besides, the state did not stop financially supporting higher education institutions: what is more, there is unprecedented spending; some model changed universities received three times more funding than in the previous years and an increased amount of support will continue to be given.

However, the market's influence has significantly grown in the past decade and the economy's aims - such as technological development – are the driving force of the funds, knowledge centres, and the projects. The remarkably huge amount of monetary support will supply those initiatives which enhance the advancement of the economy. These directions can be dictated by companies with enough political or economic influence and potential, often modelling more developed countries.

The proof of the intensifying position of the academia is the fact that the place of decision-making is localised in many issues and can bear the characteristics of the institutions through the Senate.

This process - which the state has started with the change - is an open-ended task and will resolve great differences between institutions in the country. The cessation of the centralised national higher education system is now reminiscent of the American higher education structure

and shifting towards it. The new setting will not continue the past hundred years' patterns but rather imitate the international path. The model changed institutions' managerial structure is now similar to the American private institutions in a sense that the decision-making body attempts to represent each sector interested in higher education. Moreover, the notion to complement the state support with other revenues is an idea which we can copy from the American universities and could be the assurance of future financial stability.

Thus, the analysis of the system in the USA could be continued in a deeper manner by drawing analogies on the institutional level, in order to help the future development of Hungarian universities. This study was just the opening of a profound examination, not the conclusion.

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