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Session I

**Challenges for the future of Universities –
Prof. Tomáš Zima, Rector**

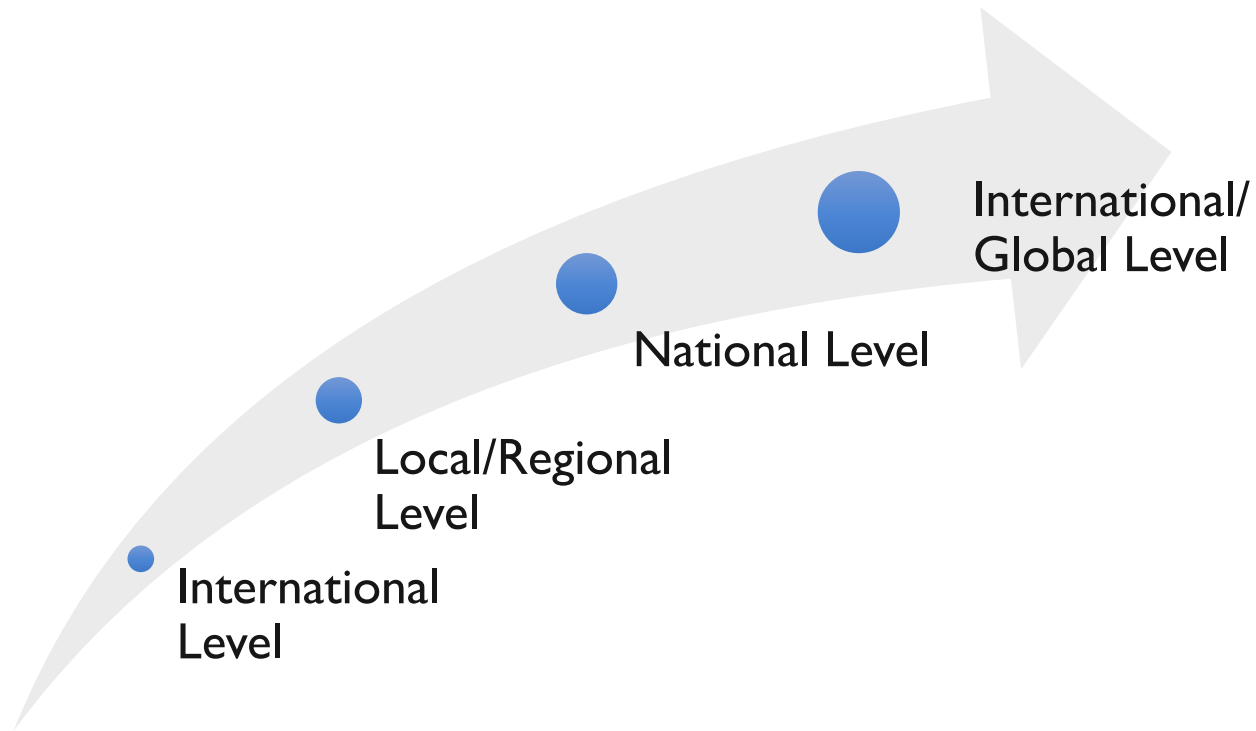
Role of the Universities in the Changing World

- dynamic, unstable, unclear, unpredictable era
- new challenges related to **economic and social development**
- new **security issues** - war conflicts, terrorist attacks, social tensions, natural disasters, digital risks
- **internationalisation**
- exploitation of resources and **global environmental problems**

➡ Universities can contribute to solutions



Universities and their Impact has changed during centuries



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Priorities for Universities:

I) Freedom of research/academic autonomy

Recommended actions to be taken:

- scholarship must be free from external influences (e.g. political, social, business) or ideological pressures
- high degree of responsibility, taking into account ethical implications of research
- ethical principles in science, teaching and management
- independence of academics in research and teaching
- clear vision and common goals of the whole institution are essential



Priorities for Univesities:

II) Sustainable **long-term financing** of higher education

Recommended actions to be taken:

- to provide adequate funding (national/private) and incentives for higher education
- finding new ways of financing – new partnerships, international development projects, cooperation with business on innovations, new technologies and training
- creation of ambitious but realistic short-term and long-term strategies



Priorities for Universities:

III) Quality of education

Recommended actions to be taken:

- quality assurance processes and their implementation and enforcement
- free access to higher education without any gender and social restrictions
- support of communication, presentation skills, team work, capacity to adapt extracurricular knowledge (IT skills, intercultural communication, language skills, techniques of speech, etc.)



Priorities for Universities:

IV) Security issues – adapting to new threats (for domestic students abroad and for international students “at home” within exchange programmes)

Recommended actions to be taken:

- services helping students with problems abroad in dangerous situations
- university support for foreign students
- up-dated information for out-going and in-coming students

In 2016 Charles University adopted a system to support students within exchange programmes in crises situations abroad or in the Czech Republic caused by human activity (road accident, terrorism, etc.) or natural disasters.

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Priorities for Universities:

V) Growth of **modern technologies** and their demands on critical thinking

Recommended actions to be taken:

- mutual exchange with stakeholders (industry, NGO, public, etc.)
- better-trained research workforce and an increase in collaboration between universities and other sectors nationally and internationally
- introduce and develop new technologies in education: eg: Education 4.0, on-line education, distance education (e.g. MOOC)
- increase accessibility of information online – challenge for universities to transform the masses of information into knowledge, critical thinking



Priorities for Universities:

VI) Bureaucracy

Recommended actions to be taken:

- To decrease administrative and financial barriers to student engagement in work-integrated learning opportunities
- Simplification of processes, electronic administration, interconnection of various databases

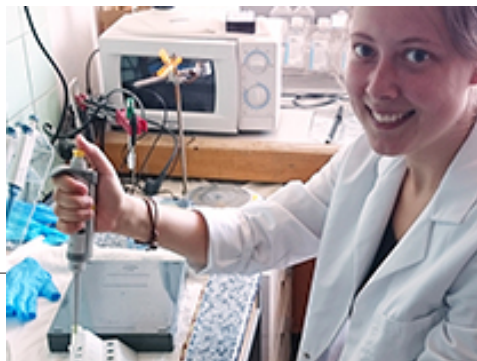


Priorities for Universities:

VII) Fragmented research policies both within countries and across Europe

Recommended actions to be taken:

- research policies shall reflect the priorities and needs of all key stakeholders
- in research the balance between basic and applied science needs to be preserved
- research policies need to reflect also social priorities and needs of all stakeholders



Other Priorities:

VIII) Security of work – employability (e.g. employability of graduates will be among indicators of the future quality enhancement system at CU. Unemployment of CU graduates on average: 2,0%)

IX) Public relations and media – growing importance – implementing marketing strategies

X) International comparisons (rankings) - important factor but should not be idolized, position in a ranking is only a by-product, it should not be a goal for itself

XI) Gender equality in academia and personal ambitions - equal conditions for men and women, support for academics with small children family planning, carrier options, status in society, income – current and future, number of students from diverse social groups, minorities etc.



Adapting to the new developments – Well-being of society

I) Universities have impact on well-being of society - cooperation with communities, governments and international entities

Actions to be implemented:

- responding to environmental problems and greening university infrastructure and facilities (energy efficiency in buildings, water efficiency, recycling, gradual replacement of paper by electronic administration, etc.)
- implementing sustainable development strategies (economic, social and environmental principles) into academic sphere
- integration of environment and sustainability concerns into teaching, research, community engagement and management of universities (increasing awareness through workshops and trainings)



Adapting to the new developments - Industry

II) Universities need to have closer connection to industry - industry and other sectors need graduates

Actions to be implemented:

- include more entrepreneurial skills and support of interdisciplinary cooperation, replacing the traditional introversion of the disciplines
- systematic support of interaction between the sciences and the humanities
- to develop alumni relations
- to become digital leaders – impact on teaching and learning methods
- to achieve a better-trained research workforce and improved cooperation between sectors, including public sphere, industry etc.

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Adapting to the new developments - Internationalization

III) Universities must perceive internationalization as an integral part of their activities

- internationalization has an essential importance for universities, it is beneficial for students, researchers and other staff as well
- it is not a new concept, it is a return to the roots of the original idea of **university**
- international collaborations help to facilitate sharing of experience and contribute to dissemination of new ideas
- international cooperation helps university in providing better environment for its researchers



Adapting to the new developments - Internationalization

Actions to be implemented:

- closer co-operation and coordination globally (international organisations, bilateral and multilateral relations)
- involving in volunteering activities in conflict areas and being active in International foras
- efficient use of mobility tools and programmes for student exchanges
- joint programmes, projects and events
- enhanced international research cooperation

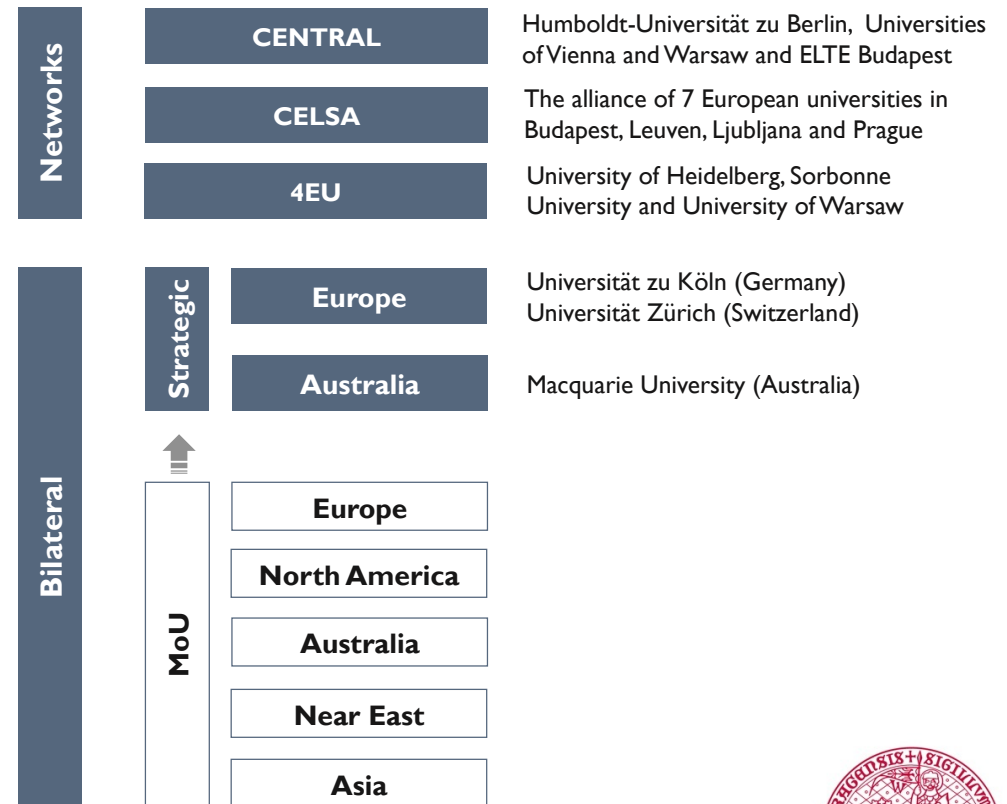


Strategic Partnerships in Focus

Development of exclusive partnerships:

- Global presence
- Top down & bottom up approach
- Emphasis on excellency & synergies
- Strong quality control mechanism

Three networks, **three** bilateral partners and other **nine** potential partners.



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New Challenges - European University Alliances



- March 10, 2018 – a Declaration on formation of **European University Alliance “4EU”** signed among four universities – Charles University, Heidelberg University (Germany), Sorbonne University (France) and the University of Warsaw (Poland). The cooperation is based on a common understanding of the idea of the European university that builds on academic freedom and autonomy and ensures fair accesss to education.

Aims of 4EU:

- to create a new quality of cooperation in research, teaching, education and administration
- to establish the appropriate infrastructure which will bring together researchers, students and staff from the four institutions

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Conclusions

- Universities **open to new trends** in education and **react flexibly to new conditions and suggestions**.
- Universities are the driving force for changes towards better economical and social situation.
- Universities should contribute to the **positive relationship** of society to cultural values, education and research **across continents**.
- Universities are not „victims“ of changes but rather **agents for change**, bridging the gap between science and bringing solutions alive.
- **International university partnership** is a great tool to overcome existing differences among European countries.





Thank you for your attention!

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