

Programme of Celebrations



**UNIVERSITY
OF LATVIA**
ANNO 1919



Network of Universities
from the Capitals of Europe

September 30, 2019

10:00–12:30 Ceremonial meeting of the University of Latvia Senate,
light refreshments

13:30–17:30 **International Symposium**
“University and Society: Renewed Focus on
National Growth and Values”

Welcome speeches:

Gvido Straube, Acting Rector, University of Latvia

Luciano Saso, UNICA President

Chair: **Jānis Ikstens**, University of Latvia

13:50–14:10 **Valdis Dombrovskis**, EC Vice-President

14:10–14:30 **Tibor Navracsics**, EC Commissioner

14:30–14:50 **Toomas Asser**, Rector, Tartu University: “Role of the National
Universities in Ensuring Country’s Smart Development”

14:50–15:10 **Juozas Augutis**, Rector, Vytautas Magnus University:
“Rethinking Academic Citizenship”

15:10–15:30 Coffee break

15:30–15:50 **Geoffrey Boulton**, Regius Professor, University of Edinburgh:
“Liberating the Potential of the University for the Modern Age”

15:50–16:10 **Indra Karapetjana**, Dean, the University of Latvia Faculty of
Humanities: “Opening Minds: Recognizing Societal Value of
Humanities”

16:10–16:30 **Marc Depaep**, Professor, University of Leuven: “Universitas
non moritur...”

16:30–17:30 Discussions

19:00 Concert “CENTUM” in celebration of University of Latvia
Centenary at Latvian National Opera and Ballet Theatre (with
invitations)

Reception

October 1, 2019

- 9:30–15:30 UNICA Rector’s seminar “Role of Social Sciences and Humanities in Innovation”
- 9:30 Bus transfer to the new Academic Centre from the UL main building, Raiņa bulv. 19
- Rector’s seminar “Role of Social Sciences and Humanities in Innovation”**
- 10:00 Chair: **Ina Druviete**, Vice-Rector, University of Latvia
Welcome address: **Luciano Saso**, UNICA President
- 10:15–10:35 **Mircea Dimitru**, Rector, University of Bucharest: “The End of Humanities? Why Do We Still Need Humanities in Higher Education”
- 10:35–10:55 **Uldis Balodis**, University of Latvia Livonian Institute: “Small Nation, Big Vision: Bringing Livonians into the Digital Space”
- 10:55–11:15 **Ann Katherine Isaacs**, Vice-Chair of the Bologna Follow Up Group, Professor, University of Pisa: “Future Priorities for Higher Education: Why Social Sciences and Humanities Matter”
- 11:15–11:45 Coffee break
- 11:45–13:30 Panel discussion
Chair: **Sibel Suzen**, Vice-Rector, Ankara University
Participants:
László Borhy, Rector, Eötvös Loránd University of Budapest
Hanna Snellman, Vice-Rector, University of Helsinki: “The Human Factor in Innovation”
Inna Šteinbuka, Professor, Faculty of Business, Management and Economics, University of Latvia: “How to Face Growth Challenge? Boosting Investment in Research and Innovation”
- 13:30–14:30 Lunch
- 14:40–15:30 Tour of the new UL Academic Centre
- 15:30 Bus transfer back to the main building, Raiņa bulv. 19
- 18:30 Dinner hosted by the University of Latvia Rector



JĀNIS IKSTENS is Professor of Political Science at the University of Latvia. His main research interests are related to political parties, political funding, elections and electoral behaviour. He has worked for several national and international bodies, including the OSCE Core Group of Experts on Political Parties.

Professor Ikstens has gained extensive administrative experience as a Rector of Vidzeme University College, Acting Rector of Riga Graduate School of Law, and Vice-Rector of the University of Latvia. Currently, he is the Dean of the University of Latvia Faculty of Social Sciences.



VALDIS DOMBROVSKIS is the Vice-President of the European Commission responsible for the Euro and Social Dialogue, also in charge of Financial Stability, Financial Services and the Capital Markets Union.

Prior to that, he served three consecutive terms as Prime Minister of Latvia, becoming the longest serving elected head of government in Latvia's history.

Before becoming European Commission Vice-President, Valdis Dombrovskis was elected for the second time as a Member of the European Parliament (first, 2004–2009) and Head of the Latvian Delegation in the EPP Group.

He served as a Member of the *Saeima* (Parliament) of Latvia (March 2004 to June 2004; January 2014 to June 2014) and was Latvia's Minister of Finance from 2002 to 2004.

Valdis Dombrovskis was born on 5 August 1971 in Riga, Latvia. He graduated with a degree in physics from the University of Latvia (1993) and economics from Riga Technical University (1995). He received his master's degree in physics in 1995 from the University of Latvia. From 1995 to 1998, he worked as a research assistant at Mainz University, Germany, at the Institute of Solid-State Physics in Latvia and at the University of Maryland (USA).

Prior to joining politics, he worked as a senior economist and chief economist at the Bank of Latvia (1998–2002). Together with Anders Aslund, he co-authored the book "How Latvia came through the financial crisis", which was published in 2011.

In November 2014, Valdis Dombrovskis was awarded the Order of the Three Stars (*Triju Zvaigžņu ordenis*), the highest State Decoration of the Republic of Latvia.



TIBOR NAVRACSICS is the European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Youth and Sport, in this office from 2014 to present. Previously the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Public Administration and Justice, Member of Parliament. T. Navracsics holds a degree in law (Eötvös Loránd University, 1990) and a higher degree as a judge (1992). He also received a PhD in political science (Eötvös Loránd University, 2000). His present tasks include working with Member States to reform and modernise Europe's education systems, notably by building a European Education Area, to enable people to find rewarding work and support economic growth, developing the Erasmus+ programme and broadening its outreach to people from all backgrounds.



TOOMAS ASSER, Rector of the University of Tartu is a graduate of the Faculty of Medicine at Tartu University. His professional career has been connected with the field of medicine at his Alma Mater, Institute of Clinical Medicine, Department of Neurology and Neurosurgery. The main fields of research: cerebrovascular diseases, surgical treatment of cerebral artery aneurysms. He has

specialised in functional surgery, deep brain stimulation, pathomorphology and epidemiology of brain tumours, participated in development of new approach for the treatment of malignant gliomas, functional magnetic resonance imaging. Member of the Estonian Academy of Sciences, member of European Association of Neurosurgical Societies (EANS), member of Estonian Society of Neurologists and Neurosurgeons, Vice-President since 1996, member of European Union of Medical Specialists (UEMS), member of the executive body of the UEMS Section of Neurosurgery, member of the Estonian Movement Disorders Society, member of the Neurology Commission of the Estonian Ministry of Social Affairs.

Role of the National University in Ensuring Country's Smart Development

The University of Tartu is the only Estonian-speaking university in the world which, despite its small size and the small number of Estonian-speaking people, has been recognized as the best university in New Europe. The University has a duty and mission to preserve and develop the Estonian language, education, culture and heritage, and this role transcends all strategies and development plans. This is its greatest value not only in Estonia but with regard to the entire world, confirming the competitive advantages of internationality, quality and diversity of teaching and freedom of research.

Building on academic freedom, the university creates and develops research schools, which form the main foundation of knowledge around the world. The stronger the research conducted at the university, the more comprehensive and attractive the education it offers. Openness and internationalization are a breeding ground for innovation and new ideas. The university's involvement as a strong partner in international research co-operation enables solving global problems and, in addition to transferring knowledge to Estonian society, bring

competitive resources to Estonia from international co-operation programmes in step with the times.

In order to ensure the best competence in existing disciplines and to develop new, promising research directions, the university fills academic positions through international competitions. The Estonian economy needs a major revolution towards research-intensive and high-value-added entrepreneurship. As a recognized entrepreneurial university, the university contributes to development of entrepreneurship among its members and society.

The different roles of the university must not be oppose one another. The university will remain a *universitas* only if it covers a wide range of disciplines and acts both as a national university, an international university and an economic and social developer. The University of Tartu enables everyone to discover and realize their potential.



JUOZAS AUGUTIS is the Rector of Vytautas Magnus University (VMU), Professor at Department of Mathematics, Head of the Energy Security Research Centre at Lithuanian Energy Institute and VMU, Senior Researcher at Lithuanian Energy Institute and former Vice-Rector for Research at VMU. His research priorities include probability theory, risk

analysis, system reliability, energy safety. He has led and is currently implementing international scientific research projects in the frameworks of FP6, FP7, HORIZON 2020, TATENA and other programmes of international funding and organisations.

Professor Augutis is a Full Member of the Lithuanian Academy of Sciences (Academician), Member of the International Expert Society for Risk Analysis (SRA), Expert in the NATO programme “Science for Peace and Security”, Member of the International European Safety and Reliability Association (ESRA), Deputy Chairperson of the Lithuanian Education Council, Chairperson of the Ignalina Nuclear Power Plant Safety Committee (until 2010).

In 2005, Prof. Augutis received National Science Award for the cycle of research “Deterministic and probabilistic research, engineering solutions and their implementation in improving the security and reliability of the Ignalina NPP” (1994–2004); in 2010, he received Zigmąs Žemaitis Medal for contribution to Lithuanian education, science and national spiritual culture, and in 2012, he was presented with the World Energy Council (PET) Lithuanian Committee honorary award for achievements in the field of energy.

Rethinking Academic Citizenship

Today we witness the return of anti-democratic, populist movements and the rise of anti-intellectualism. The idea of the university – as a space where diverse ideas are discussed and peacefully argued about – is challenged. Therefore, the world’s oldest academic institution is facing serious challenges and is looking for its new role and voice in the constantly changing world. The need to rethink the values of the academic life is crucial, as the spirit of education should be

about cooperation rather than competition, and a space where people share and exchange ideas.

Currently we see the tendencies toward establishment of a more networking- and dialogue-oriented, as well as organic relationship between the university and the society. In this kind of university, the staff and the students, educational developers and teachers work together in critical-creative partnerships to co-create societal values and future knowledge. In this mode lies the potential to create the future university through inviting students, society, industry, government and the public to 'participate in the idea of the university'.



GEOFFREY BOULTON OBE FRS FRSE is Regius Professor of Geology Emeritus at the University of Edinburgh and former Vice Principal of the university. He is a member of the Governing Board of the International Science Council, chairs the Academic Advisory Council of the University of Heidelberg, a member of the Strategic Council of the University of Geneva and a member of

the Council of the African Open Science Platform. He has contributed to many national and international bodies including the UK Prime Minister’s Council for Science and Technology and Chair of the Research Committee of the League of European Research Universities, and together with Colin Lucas, he released an influential paper “What are Universities for?”

His research is dedicated to environmental science and glaciology. His scientific work recognition includes the Lyell Medal of the Geological Society, the Seligman Crystal of the International Glaciological Society, the Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society, the Kirk Bryan Award of the Geological Society of America, the Croll Medal of the Quaternary Research Association, the Tedford Medal of the Society for Contemporary Scotland, the UK Polar Medal and is Commandeur of de l’Ordre des Palmes Academiques (France). He has been awarded the honorary doctorates from the Universities of Heidelberg, Chalmers (Sweden), Birmingham and Keele.

Liberating the Potential of the University for the Modern Age

Half a century ago, the common perception of the purpose ascribed to universities was to teach skills, to produce cultivated men and women, to maintain research in balance with teaching and to promote common standards of citizenship. Since then, the balance of effort has shifted from teaching towards research, primarily driven by personal and institutional metrics that prioritise research performance in belief that research, particularly in science, is an essential factor of national prosperity. It is a trend that implicitly sees research as a greater public good, and education as a private good. Has this trend been beneficial? Should it be intensified even further? Or has it been a mistaken drive? Should it be redirected, and what does the future require?



INDRA KARAPETJANA, *Dr. philol.*, is Professor of applied linguistics at the University of Latvia. Her main academic and research interests include political and academic discourse analysis, critical discourse analysis, ESP and CLIL. Prior to assuming the role of Dean of the Faculty of Humanities, University of Latvia, she gained extensive experience in administering

undergraduate study programmes “English Philology” and “Modern Language and Business Studies”, as well as heading the Department of English Studies. Dr. Karapetjana is the founder of the Centre for Applied Linguistics and a board member of the “Slavic Countries Discourse Linguistics Committee”. She is the initiator, manager and participant of numerous European and transcontinental projects, her scientific outputs include published books, journal and conference papers on cross-cultural communication, professional, political and academic discourse, ESP and CLIL. She is a member of editorial boards of several international scientific journals.

Opening Minds: Recognizing Societal Value of Humanities

The modern science is inseparable from studies of humanities; however, the current discourse about the divide between exact sciences and humanities and their value to society has gained currency. It is especially important at a time when adequate education and science funding is lacking, growing policies favouring STEM subjects as the key to economic growth and unfounded claims that education and research in field of humanities are comparatively inconsequential in the modern labour market. In fact, employers seek graduates who can think creatively and critically, speak and write clearly, who have developed teamwork skills, which are only some of the soft skills graduates of the humanities acquire. Historians, philosophers, literary scholars, linguists and other specialists of humanities substantially contribute to understanding of various societal issues. Therefore, the humanities should enjoy recognition and parity in financing with other sciences. On the other hand, the humanities should reassess themselves critically and evolve, acquiring the shape that corresponds to contemporary humanities in the current digital area.



MARC DEPAEPE is Professor Emeritus of history of education at the KU Leuven, and a Deputy Chancellor between 2013 and 2017. Since 2005, he is the co-editor-in-chief of *Paedagogica Historica*. The former President of the International Standing Conference for the History of Education (1991–1994) and a Member of the Board of Directors of the International

Academy of Education (2012–). He has authored and co-authored abundant resources on the history of educational and psychological sciences in Europe and the United States; the history of schooling in Belgium (particularly primary education); the theory, methodology, and historiography of the history of education as a discipline; the history of colonial education, especially in relation to the former Belgian Congo (1908–1960). In 2015, he was awarded an honorary doctorate at the University of Latvia in Riga.

Universitas non moritur

The author will defend the thesis that universities are the best places in our modern world to develop critical thinking in line with the older ideas of *Humanitas* and *Bildung*. At times, a critical distance in viewing what is usually considered as the most important developments of the day remains, in his view, indispensable for continuation of a healthy democratic society and the university with its long-standing intellectual traditions of freedom, hospitality and orientation towards the global world, and this consideration has to play a crucial role here.



INA DRUVIETE, *Dr. habil. philol.*, Vice-Rector for Humanities and Educational Sciences at the University of Latvia, *Dr. h. c.*, Daugavpils University, Full Member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences. An author of more than 300 publications in general linguistics, history of linguistics, sociolinguistics, language policy, translations of scholarly literature. The

Minister of Education and Science, Republic of Latvia (2004–2006, 2014).

Vice-President of the European Federation for National Institutions of Language (2006–2009), a member of the editorial board of the journal *Language Policy* (Springer) (2003–2010), present member of the editorial board for *Studies in World Language Problems* (John Benjamins), *International Journal of Indo-Baltic Culture and Studies*, *Taikomoji Kalbotyra*, *Linguistica Lettica*. Vice-Chair of the Presidential State Language Commission.



Dr. MIRCEA DUMITRU is Professor of Philosophy at the University of Bucharest (since 2004), the Rector of the University of Bucharest (since 2011), the President of the European Society of Analytic Philosophy (2011–2014). A Fellow of Academia Europaea (since 2019), a Corresponding Fellow of the Romanian Academy (since 2014). The Minister of Education and

Scientific Research (July 2016–January 2017). His academic work includes the offices of Visiting Professor at Beijing Normal University (2017–2022), the President of the International Institute of Philosophy (2017–2020), the President of Balkan Universities Association (2019–2020).

He holds a PhD in Philosophy from the Tulane University, New Orleans, USA (1998), awarded for the thesis in modal logic and philosophy of mathematics, and another PhD in Philosophy from the University of Bucharest (1998) with a topic in philosophy of language. Invited Professor at Tulsa University (USA), CUNY (USA), NYU (USA), Lyon 3, ENS Lyon, University of Helsinki, Peking University (Beijing, China), Renmin University (Beijing, China), CUPL (Beijing, China). The main area of research: philosophical logic, metaphysics, and philosophy of language. The main publications: *Modality and Incompleteness* (UMI, Ann Arbor, 1998); *Modalitate si incompletitudine*, (Paideia Publishing House, 2001, in Romanian; the book received the Mircea Florian Prize of the Romanian Academy); *Logic and Philosophical Explorations* (Humanitas, Bucharest, 2004, in Romanian); *Words, Theories, and Things. Quine in Focus* (ed.) (Pelican, 2009); *Truth* (ed.) (Bucharest University Publishing House, 2013); article on the Philosophy of Kit Fine, in *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*, the Third Edition, Robert Audi (ed.) (Cambridge University Press, 2015), *Metaphysics, Modality, and Meaning. Themes from the Work of Kit Fine* (ed.) (Oxford University Press, forthcoming, 2020).

The End of Humanities?

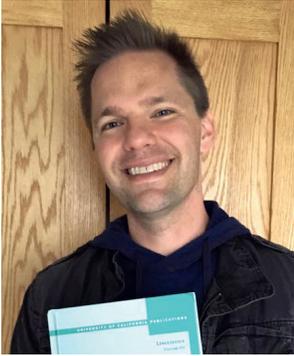
Why Do We Still Need Humanities in Higher Education

In recent times, many notable authors have raised the issue of “the end of the humanities”. This situation is in stark contrast with the well-known and documented seminal role played by the humanities in the history of democracy.

Without being fully aware of this situation, we live and experience a “silent crisis” (Martha Nussbaum), in which governments and policy makers, having a mistaken social and cultural educationalist outlook, equate the economic growth with the development of human personality. They nourish the superficial belief that the simple growth of the GDP would trigger a simple causal process, through which all our political and cultural problems would be solved, and, moreover, almost automatically would lead to the development of the individuals’ capacities and personality, and eventually end up in a consolidation of the democratic processes.

What this childish equation, viz. “economic growth = the development of the individuals’ capacities and skills to consolidate democracy”, obscures, is the fact that the educational model, which almost entirely belittles liberal arts and humanities will in the near future produce a serious erosion of all those qualities that are essential for citizenship in mature and solid democratic regimes. The great educators and the visionaries who contributed to building of modern, free and affluent nations, very lucidly perceived the modes in which liberal arts and humanities helped young students to think critically, which is a specific capacity required for mature and independent actions, and for intelligent resistance to the blind force of tradition, as well as the despotic and tyrannical political power.

Against this background, in my talk I shall discuss a couple of arguments, which aim at grounding the seminal role of humanities in the general curricula of higher education.



ULDIS BALODIS received his doctorate in linguistics from the University of California, Santa Barbara in 2011 for his dissertation (“Yuki Grammar with Sketches of Huchnom and Coast Yuki”), a reference grammar of Yuki, a dormant Northern California indigenous language. Balodis is a native speaker of Latvian who grew up as a member of the Latvian

diaspora in Arizona in the southwestern United States. His work has focused on endangered languages of the Baltic region and the western United States. His current research focus is the Lutsi language, a dialect of South Estonian historically spoken in Latgale (eastern Latvia). He is a researcher at the University of Latvia Livonian Institute and the President of the Western Institute for Endangered Language Documentation.

A Small Nation with a Big Vision: Bringing the Livonians into the Digital Space

The Livonians are among the most endangered nations in Europe, and yet they have consistently set their sights high in terms of aspirations for their nation. Recognised as one of Latvia’s indigenous nations shortly after the restoration of Latvia’s independence in 1990, the Livonians have founded several significant community organisations (the Livonian Union, Livonian Culture Centre) and most recently established the world’s first scientific research institute specifically focused on studies dedicated to the Livonians and other Latvia’s Finnic communities – the University of Latvia Livonian Institute. However, during these decades, the number of native speakers of Livonian is on decline. This talk examines a part of Livonian history since 1990, and reflects upon the efforts of the UL Livonian Institute to spread knowledge of Livonian and create resources for language learners utilising the opportunities offered by today’s digital technologies.



ANN KATHERINE ISAACS, Professor of the University of Pisa, was born in Astoria, Oregon, studied at the University of California, Berkeley, and the State University of Milan, where she received her degree in Modern Letters, *summa cum laude*. Research and teaching fellow at the Superior Normal School of Pisa from 1971 to 1975, from 1975 to 2013 she has been a

professor, at first of Renaissance, then of Early Modern History at the University of Pisa.

Active in various key projects dedicated to modernisation of higher education, she has participated in the ECTS Pilot Project since 1989. As a coordinator of the European History Networks, she has edited and published the research results and the teaching materials created in that context, totalling 61 volumes. Isaacs has been deeply involved the Tuning Process around the world (Europe, Latin America, Canada, USA, Russia, and Central Asia); she is ECTS/DS counsellor and Bologna expert; her work is recognised with the Erasmus Gold Award for Innovation and Creativity in 2008, and Doctor *honoris causa* degree awarded by the University of Latvia, Riga, in view of her contributions to the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area.

From 2013 to 2016 she was Rector's Delegate for European Programmes (Research, Learning and Teaching) at the University of Pisa. At present, she coordinates the University of Pisa Erasmus+ projects including KA107 mobility with non-European countries, and assists in the coordination of an Erasmus+ Capacity Building project for Latin America (DHIP: Development of Higher Education Institutions' Internationalization Policies).

She participates in the projects "Tuning Southeast Asia" and "Tuning China". She is the Erasmus+ Ambassador for Italy and an expert for the European Commission on the implementation of the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE). From 1 July 2018 to July 2020, she is the Vice-Chair of the Bologna Follow Up Group of the European Higher Education Area, currently comprising 48 countries, numerous consultative members and partners. She also co-chairs the BFUG's Coordination Group on Global Policy Dialogue; serves as a member of the BFUG's Bologna Implementation Coordination Group and the Chair of the

Drafting Committees for the Ministerial Communiqué to be agreed by the EHEA Ministers who will meet in Rome in 2020, and for the statement to be agreed upon by the participants in the Global Policy Forum to be held in conjunction thereof.

Future Priorities for Higher Education: Why Social Sciences and Humanities Matter

In the Bologna Follow Up Group, we are now reflecting and conducting consultations on the future of higher education and the priorities for the European Higher Education Area in next decade and beyond. The results so far point to a rapidly changing educational and societal context, in which universities will need to respond to increasing needs for flexible educational paths, and in particular to growing demand for smaller or even much smaller pieces of learning, needed or desired at various points of people's lives – rather than or in addition to full degree programmes. The demand for flexibility and for an array of brief educational experiences (of 3 to 5 ECTS credits) is linked to the rapid technological change, particularly with regard to ICT and AI, which will make it necessary for citizens and employees, as well as students, to form new competences in several stages of their lives. In this context, we will discuss whether the Social Sciences and Humanities will have a role in this new scenario, and what will it be. We foresee that the role of SSH will be more vital than ever, comprising as it does the knowledge and the ability to use the tools and the prospects of such areas as linguistics, language and literature, history, geography and sociology, not to speak of political science and law – all necessary to achieve the new level of critical understanding required by our rapidly changing world.



LÁSZLÓ BORTHY, Rector of Eötvös Loránd University in Budapest. Before taking office as a rector, he was the Dean of the Faculty of Humanities at ELTE from 2015 to 2017. He is an archaeologist, historian, and a professor at the Department of Ancient Archaeology, the Institute of Archaeology of ELTE. His extensive research interests include Roman history, Latin epigraphy and archaeology of the province of Pannonia. He is a Corresponding Member of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences. Since July 2018, László Borthy is the co-chair of the Hungarian Rector's Conference.



HANNA SNELLMAN, *DPhil.*, Professor of ethnology at the University of Helsinki since 2012. Her responsibilities of Vice-Rector encompass international affairs, partnerships, public engagement, alumni cooperation and fundraising, particularly on the international stage, as well as the Finnish cultural heritage.

Before being appointed the Vice-Rector, she served as the Dean of the Faculty of Arts at the University of Helsinki during 2017–2018, and as a the Vice-Dean of the same faculty during 2014–2016.

The Human Factor in Innovation

In my presentation, I will discuss the role of humanities in today’s academia. How “a university campus without humanities is a quiet campus, a campus without a future” and how “not everything that counts, can be counted”. I will give examples of scholars from fields other than humanities emphasizing the value of humanities and their concern regarding the current trend to reduce resources allotted to humanities both in secondary schools and universities. The attributes of humanities are crucial for innovation: creativity, artistry, intuition, symbology, fantasy, emotions.

“Remarkably, while representatives of the humanities shy away from, or flatly reject, arguments supporting their practical value, scholars who do not make their homes in traditional humanities disciplines are actively promoting them”, as written by a professor from the Stanford University. Examples from entrepreneurship studies, science and engineering, and medicine illustrate this tendency.

How to do research in humanities in an inspiring and innovating way? In order to answer this difficult question, I turned to the professors in my own university, the University of Helsinki, and asked them how they would see the role of humanities and social sciences in their own research. In my talk, I will summarize thoughts of a historian (Josephine Hoegaerts, Associate Professor of European Studies), a philosopher (José Felipe Silva, Professor of Medieval Philosophy), an archaeologist (Volker Heyd, Professor of Archaeology) and an adept of digital media (Xenia Zeiler, Professor of South Asian Studies). How do they see the role of humanities in innovation in the research they implement themselves?



INNA ŠTEINBUKA, *Dr. habil. oec.*, Professor, currently – the Director of master’s degree programme “European Studies and Economic Diplomacy” at the University of Latvia. Inna Šteinbuka is a full member of the Latvian Academy of Sciences (LAS) and Chair of the Board of the LAS Institute of European Policy Research. She is a Member of Latvian Fiscal

Discipline Council, a Governor in Asia-Europa Foundation (ASEF, Singapore) and a Special Advisor to the European Commission Vice-President Valdis Dombrovskis.

Since September 2011, she has served at the European Commission as the Head of EC Representation in Riga. Her experience includes versatile perspectives on economy and policy: from 2008 to 2011, she was the Director of Social and Information Society Statistics in *Eurostat*, European Commission, from 2005 to 2008 – the Director of Economic and Regional Statistics, while from 2001 to 2005, the Chair of the Latvian Public Utilities Commission in charge of regulation of electricity, gas and telecommunication markets as well as railway and postal services. From 1999 to 2001, Inna Šteinbuka was the Senior Advisor to Executive Director in the International Monetary Fund in Washington DC, and from 1991 to 1999, she held the position of the Director of Economic Analyses and Fiscal Policy Department in the Latvian Ministry of Finance, and the Advisor to Minister of Finance.

How to Face Growth Challenge? Boosting Investment in Research and Innovation

Low productivity growth and low competitiveness in Latvia are matters of serious concern regarding the future growth. Although productivity has risen in Latvia since the financial crisis at around 2% per year, this is only at half the rate it was growing before the crisis. Easy gains from catching up are over, and the risks of falling into the “middle-income trap” are multiplying. Weak innovation performance, a diminishing talent pool due to emigration, and insufficient supply of STEM skills all raise concerns about the economy’s ability to expand the share of knowledge-intensive activities. The moderation of the investment rate suggests that there are no “low hanging fruit” left, and the

country's growth model will need to change by shifting the focus to ascending in the global value chains.

To enable this process, Latvia needs a better strategy for investments into research, innovation and human capital. As comparative examples show, without sustained and reliable funding of the science base, structured, independent and regular expert advice on productivity-related policies and a strong academy-industry-government cooperation, there cannot be any great leaps forward in the national productivity and competitiveness performance.

