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# European Universities: Driven by (which) values?

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# Two main dimensions

- Values to drive a university as an **institution**
- Imparting values to their **students?**



# What are values

„a widely held collection of stable beliefs which determine the attitudes and behaviours which condition how the *university* does its business“

„important and lasting beliefs or ideals shared by the *members of an organization* about what is good or bad and desirable or undesirable. Values influence a person's behaviour and attitudes and serve as broad guidelines in all situations.“

*Living values project of the Magna Charta Observatory*



# Two Bologna declarations

- 1989: Magna Charta
- 1999: Ministerial declaration



# Values central to the academic endeavor

- *Academic freedom*
- *Institutional autonomy*
- *Participation of students*

*(Accession criteria to EHEA / Ministerial conference Bergen 2005)*

- Curiosity: Search for truth
- Honesty: Integrity in research and learning



# The counterpart of institutional autonomy:

## social responsibility

- serve (local) communities
- tackle global challenges
- technology transfer
- ...
- accountability of public institutions



# The „external dimension“ of academic values

- International cooperation
- How to deal with partners who don't share or don't respect values like academic freedom?
- Stand up for your values *and* be respectful towards others



# „Societal values“ / „European values“

- Democracy
- Human rights
- Rule of law
- Equity





# Treaty on European Union

The Union is founded on the **values of respect for human dignity, freedom, democracy, equality, the rule of law and respect for human rights**, including the rights of persons belonging to minorities. These values are common to the Member States in a society in which pluralism, non-discrimination, tolerance, justice, solidarity and equality between women and men prevail.  
(Article 2)



# „European“ and „universal values“

- Europe and North America may have „invented“ human rights – but when have we lived by them, and do we now?
- “Mr. Gandhi, what do you think of western civilization?” – “I think it would be a good idea.”



# Other values that may (or may not) drive an (individual) institution

- Excellence / „world class“
- Sustainability
- Global outlook
- Entrepreneurial culture
- Serve a region
- ...



# Impart values to students?

- Which values?
- How?
- Who?



# Conflicting expectations

- (Higher) education vs. individual freedom of adult students to determine their own values
- Teaching, research, „third mission“ – and yet another burden on institutions and faculties?



# Different kinds of values

- Teach and learn values fundamental to the academic endeavor (like academic freedom, research integrity, equity ...)
- Provide opportunities to reflect on individual and societal values



# How to teach / impart values

- **Live** by them
- Make place for values in the **curriculum** (e.g. „business ethics“, „engineering ethics“ ...)
- **Service learning**



# Teaching „European values“ through academic mobility

„Strengthening European identity and fostering the active participation ...in the democratic process is crucial for the future of Europe and our democratic societies. **Going abroad to study, learn, train and work ... contributes to strengthening this European identity in all its diversity and the sense of being part of a cultural community as well as to fostering .. active citizenship, social cohesion and critical thinking** among people of all ages.“

(Proposal for regulation for the next Erasmus programme)





# Questions and critical comments, please

Some sources for further reading and reflection:

Living Values Project of the MCO

[www.magna-charta.org](http://www.magna-charta.org)

Promoting Core Higher Education Values

<http://www.unica-network.eu/project/academic-refuge>

