

# Supporting the Contribution of Higher Education to Regional Development

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# The Regional Engagement Challenge

- Developing a common understanding of the mutual interests of universities and regions
- Communicating to university members regional development needs/opportunities (i.e. the political and economic drivers)
- Communicating to regional stakeholders what higher education is about (i.e. HE drivers)
- Enhancing of institutional capacity to respond to regional needs and to shape the trajectory of territorial development.

# Communicating Understanding of the Political Drivers

- Challenge to autonomous teaching and research role of universities
- Old concerns – raising general education levels and output of scientific research
- New concerns – harnessing teaching and research to specific economic and social objectives
- Specificity most clear in field of regional development
- Universities located IN regions but what contribution does their teaching and research make to the development OF the region?

# Communicating Understanding of the Higher Education Policy Drivers

- Shift from elite to mass HE
- Meeting needs of a larger and more diverse client population
- Lifelong learning needs created by changing skill demands in the labour market
- More stay at home students
- Increased global competition from new providers
- New modes of delivery (ICTs)
- Changing nature of knowledge production

# Communicating the Regional Economic Development Drivers

- Globalisation and localisation of the economy
- Corporate decentralisation and growing importance of local production environment
- Regionalisation of regulatory capacity of the nation state (e.g. chambers of commerce, training agencies)
- Networks: “Partnership governance”; “soft infrastructure”; “untraded interdependencies”

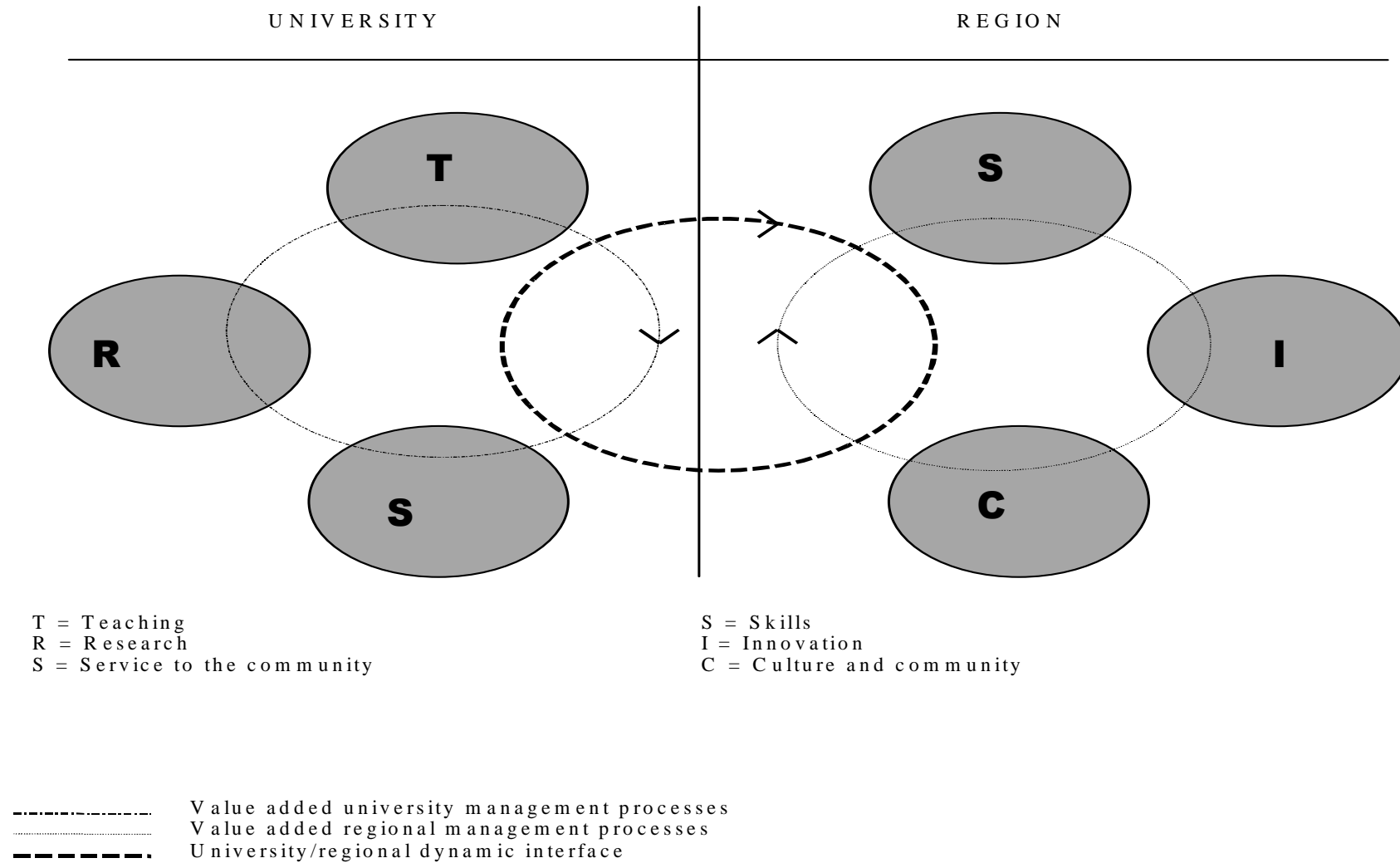
# Knowledge Exploitation Drivers

- Shift from mode 1 knowledge creation (homogenous, disciplinary, hierarchical) to mode 2 knowledge (non-hierarchical, transient, transdisciplinary, developed in the context of applications)
- New local/regional clients for research and graduates
- Demand for work based learning and tacit skills
- Universities as “nation builders” to universities as “region builders” – active role in capacity building

# Learning Regions

- “To be effective in this increasingly borderless global economy, regions must be defined by the same criteria and elements which comprise a knowledge-intensive firm: continuous improvement, new ideas, knowledge creation and organisational learning. Regions must adopt the principles of knowledge creation and continuous learning; they must in effect become *knowledge creating or learning regions*”  
(R. Florida)

# University/region value added



# Integration of Teaching, Research and Third Strand Activities in a Regional Context

- Knowledge creation through research and its exploitation via technology transfer (spin out, IPR, consultancy)
- Knowledge transfer via teaching (workplace learning, graduate recruitment, professional development / continuing education)
- Students establishing the social relations on which knowledge exchange is built
- Cultural activity and campus development contributing to vibrant places that attract and retain creative people
- The university's role in local civil society, joining up separate strands of national policy (learning and skills, research and innovation, culture and social inclusion)

# Managing a Contested Terrain within Academia

- Managerialism as a threat to academic self governance
- Pursuit of knowledge for its own sake vs. an instrumental and innovation endangering subordination to external expectations
- Concern that quality is sacrificed in the name of relevance
- Serving external expectations vs. critically challenging existing views of society
- Differences between disciplines in their relations to society
- Connotation within the academic community of insularity and parochialism associated with regionalism (cf. metropolitan / cosmopolitan)
- Role of academic leadership breaking down barriers in the understanding of the relationship between knowledge creation and its application

# Managing the Challenge of Engagement with Territory

- HEIs operate within multiple territories – local, regional, national, international
- Closed territories of local stakeholders (municipalities, regions etc)
- Potential threat to institutional autonomy from the need to prescribe division of task between institutions within and between cities / regions
- The tension between national higher education, science and technology, regional policy and the development needs of a region (location *in* a region vs. the development *of* a region)

# The Challenge of Uneven Development

- Polarised nature of economic development in the “high tech” knowledge economy focussing on core regions and major cities
- Leading universities as global players generating and transferring new knowledge
- Emerging global and national hierarchies of universities underpinning the hierarchy of cities and regions
- New and expanded universities (and airports) (new knowledge and connectivity) as “magic bullets” in tackling regional disparities
- The challenge of establishing regionally engaged universities with global standing to counter polarisation in the knowledge economy

# OECD/IMHE (1999)

## Recommendations to National Governments

- Mapping the geography of higher education
  - What courses are taught where and how
  - Where do students come from and graduates go to
  - Highlight good practice in regional engagement
- Foster inter-ministerial dialogue
  - Industry, technology, labour market, interior, other specialist agencies
  - Identify common interests in universities and territorial development
  - Build joint strategies
- Design and establish an incentive and funding programme for “Regional Development and Universities”
  - Incentives to encourage HEIs to establish programmes/projects to strengthen regional links
  - Promotion of partnerships and dialogue between regional education providers such as schools, FE and HE and other training providers.

# Recommendations to Local and Regional Authorities

- Develop understanding of HEIs in the area
  - Goals, mission, profile, organisation of institutions
- Use HEI expertise for regional analysis
  - Participation in regional Future Search
- Incorporate HEIs into regional action plans/programmes
  - Inward investment
  - Technology transfer
  - Skills/training/physical plans
  - Cultural initiatives and institutional capacity building
- Financial support for collaborative projects
  - Joint bids for national funds
  - Mechanisms for regional interface

# Recommendations to HEIs

## (1) Economic Audit

- Direct employment
- Staff and student expenditure
- Employment structure
- Geography of industrial interactions
  - research grants and contracts
  - consultancy
  - exchange of staff
  - spin out companies
- Geography of teaching
  - home origin of students
  - destination of graduates
  - work placements
  - continuing professional development

## (2) Social and Community Audit

- Contribution to raising regional participation in education
- Vocational programmes in health, social services, education
- Audiences for the arts
- Leadership in civil society (voluntary activity, media, regional analysis)

# (3) Stakeholder Mapping

- Central government
- Local authorities
- Employers and employer organisations (e.g. Chambers of Commerce)
- Arts organisations
- Regional media
- Other tiers in the education system, including schools and colleges
- Recent graduates, present and prospective students

# (4) Stakeholder Analysis

- Each stakeholder with distinct:
  - goals and missions
  - means of delivery
  - financial drivers/constraints
  - customer/client relations
  - interest in the well-being of the region
- Different administrative geographies and permeability of boundaries create need for common overarching framework for engagement

# (5) Dialogue with Regional and Local Authorities

- Open the university “black box”
- Explain HE drivers
- Provide detailed knowledge of teaching and research portfolios
- University staff on regional boards

# (6) Internal Mechanisms

## The Regional Office

- Co-ordinate and manage regional links
- Contribute to marketing
- Input to strategic planning
- Framework for engagement and regional understanding
- Pressure for mainstreaming

# (7) Internal Mechanisms

## Human Resources

- Staff rewards for contribution to the third role
- Adjust balance between individual, departmental and institutional incentives
- New emphasis on institutional/departmental responsibility to regional stakeholders
- Develop skills and competencies of staff concerned (animateurs)

# (8) Internal Mechanisms Animateur Development

- **Know how:** management of change; building and management of networks; facilitation and mediation; working with different organisational culture; project planning and implementation; raising financial support; organisational politics and dynamics
- **Know what:** structure and responsibilities of organisations involved in development; central and local government powers and responsibilities; different timescales and drivers; institutional overlap

# Finnish Science and Technology Policy Council: Knowledge, Innovation and Internationalisation

- “The success of Finland in combining extensive production and utilisation of knowledge with other areas, such as promotion of welfare and sustainable development”
- “Education, science and technology and innovation policy must be able to guide and support regional development to ensure measures taken at the national and regional level support each other”
- “Challenge to raise knowledge and know how and their utilisation to a level which withstands international competition in all regions”

# The Policy Debate (contd)

- “The issue in terms of national higher education policy is to merge this and regional development policy together in a rational and expedient way”
- “The aim is to achieve internationally higher quality, and structural development is required to meet this goal”
- “The danger in a decentralised HE system is that it is dispersed into increasingly small and numerous units. HE units must be sufficiently large and versatile to achieve their aims. The universities must carry on defining their profiles, and smaller polytechnics must be combined into larger multi-field entities”

# The Policy Debate (contd)

- “One major questions is how the university as an institution will be able to manage the pressures and growing expectations directed at it with regard to social, cultural and economic development – whether the university has the internal capacity for renewal”
- “The need to address these questions is tangible because the changes taking place in university missions and funding structures is systemic, shaking up the institution to its core”

# Finnish Higher Education Evaluation Council – Regional Engagement Reviews

- Initiation of processes of institutional adjustment to enable the university to both respond to and shape the development of the wider society
- Adjustment not a downgrading of aspirations to solely reacting to local needs but the creation of mechanisms linking the locality to global body of scientific and cultural knowledge
- Local and regional engagement a crucible within which more dynamic and open institutions are forged

# The Finnish Reviews

- Towards the Responsive University: the Regional Role of Eastern Finland Universities (1998)
- Learning Regional Engagement: A Re-evaluation of the Third Role of Eastern Finland Universities (2003)
- External Engagement and Institutional Adjustment: An Evaluation of the University of Turku (2000)
- Progressing External Engagement : A Re-evaluation of the University of Turku (2003)

# Reflections on the Evaluations

- External engagement requires strong institutional management
- It must be an active process and is never a completed task
- Key words: responsive, learning, adjustment, progressing
- Evaluation plays a key role in raising institutional self awareness, learning and development and partnership with external stakeholders
- While external engagement is a matter for all universities the regional context varies: it is not a level playing field.

# The Place of Institutional Evaluation and Re-evaluation

- Bottom up shaping and testing of national policy – will it work at the institutional level?
- Development of outcome metrics (performance measures) relevant to institutional policy and practice and regional development
- Benchmarking outcomes and practice across institutions
- Re-evaluation not to enforce compliance to recommendations but to facilitative institutional development
- Development of communities of practice within and between universities, regional stakeholders and different departments of central Government.

# OECD/IMHE 2004-6 Programme

- OECD/IMHE report: Response of HEIs to Regional Needs 1999
- Organisation around a common framework of local case material gathered from regional seminars
- Growing number of national, regional and local initiatives yet to be systematised into a coherent body of policy and practice to guide future developments
- Requires evaluation sensitive to local circumstances
- Evaluation as a learning and development process for HEIs and regional stakeholders (i.e. capacity building)
- New project emphasis on in-depth working based on regional case studies + international networking + literature review

# Objectives of the Programme

- Raise aware of the need to evaluate efficiency and effectiveness of regional initiatives and partnerships
- Provide a methodology for monitoring and international benchmarking
- Provide an opportunity for dialogue between stakeholders (HEIs, regional agencies, private sector, various central government departments)
- Assist with identification of role and responsibilities of stakeholders
- Assist HEIs with their individual development
- Foundation for international network for sharing good practice

# Participants in the Programme

- Nationally recognised administrative regions
- Regions with some history of working with HEIs
- Public authorities concerned with economic, social and cultural development
- All HEIs operating with the region (to identify division of tasks)

# Participating Countries / Regions

- Australia – Sunshine Coast, Queensland
- Denmark – Jutland-Funen
- England – North East
- Finland – Jyväskylä
- Korea – Busan
- Mexico – Nuevo León
- The Netherlands – Twente
- Norway – Mid Norway (Trondheim)
- Spain – Valencia and the Canary Islands
- Sweden – Värmland
- Sweden & Denmark – Øresund

# Methodology

- Common framework for regional self-evaluation developed by OECD task group
- Self evaluation report by regional consortium using OECD guidelines
- Site visit by international peer review team
- Peer Review Team review team report and response from the region
- Analysis and synthesis by OECD task group drawing upon regional case studies and commissioned review of literature
- Production and dissemination of synthesis report

# Self Evaluation Report

1. Regional context
2. Regional higher education systems
3. Contribution of research to regional innovation
4. Contribution of teaching and learning to labour market and skills
5. Contribution to social and cultural development and environmental sustainability
6. Contribution to regional capacity building