

# CHANGING PATTERNS IN UNIVERSITY GOVERNANCE AND THE TURKISH EXPERIENCE

Prof. Öktem Vardar  
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The emphasis in this article is on the changing role of higher education (HE) in the modern world (massification, diversification, new models of research management and new forms of knowledge production, problems of intellectual property and the privatization of knowledge, accountability, managerial controls, deteriorating financial support from public sources,...). These changes are global and based on different expectations of students, faculty, business world, governments and society at large, which accumulated through several decades. The **implications** of these changes for university governance need to be carefully considered in shaping any legal framework regarding HE. It is particularly crucial for the Turkish **stakeholders** to recognize the dramatic changes occurring in HE systems world-wide since restructuring HE is on the agenda in Turkey. The Turkish higher education system is assessed with a critical eye and a set of proposals is developed.

## I. Environment:

The core activities of higher education institutions (HEI's) have been teaching and research for two centuries. The research component has evolved over the last decades to include, not only knowledge generation and dissemination but also knowledge acquisition and knowledge transfer. Knowledge transfer to society includes now lifelong learning activities as well, is treated under the heading of "services to society" and make up the third core activity of universities. It is essential to recognize this third function of HEI's because it forms the basis of strong influence of the non-academic environment: **society, market, governments,...** The influence of government is not limited to being the funding agency; social-economic benefits expected from research, regional development duty of HEI's, knowledge economy are a few of the short term interests of governments, and involve many more ministries than just education.

The mission of HE in a country dictates the HE system that country should develop. The mission is like the governing differential equation, to speak in mathematical terms, the solution of which gives the HE system. (The mission assigned to HE is the critical factor that determines how the system will be shaped or structured.) It is well known in mathematics that the **boundary conditions** (BC's) specify the solution to a differential equation; and the BC's in 2004 are vastly different. As far as a specific institution is concerned one may still claim the mission contains only teaching and research, as it was 30 years ago. But the 'solution' today is not that of 30 years ago, because the BC's have changed; the solutions of 1970's are **not valid** any more in today's complex, demanding and turbulent environment. Many influential academics who were young PhD's in the Seventies do not succeed to capture this change.

The major roles of HEI's in the 21<sup>st</sup> century were discussed in the Dearing Report in UK as:  
(Sir Howard Newby, OECD 2002 General Conference Opening Speech<sup>1</sup>)

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<sup>1</sup> Sir Howard Newby, HEMP, 15, pp 9-22,2003

- Lifelong learning
- Creation of a learning society
- Regional economic development
- Pure research and scholarship
- Technological innovation
- Social cohesion
- Public accountability

These bullet points would have looked quite different 30 years ago. Universities have to admit the environment has (BC's have) changed and the design of the internal governance of universities has to take into account these external forces or else friction will cause enormous energy and time loss.

Given this rough account of internationally recognized themes and HE agenda, the individual responses of different countries are set by the extent to which they are deficient in or overshoot the international averages of these themes. United States (US) and Australia have been using corporate styles to respond to market forces, whereas continental Europe tried to overlook these pressures. No wonder European University Association (EUA) together with Institutional Management in Higher Education (IMHE) program of OECD makes up for the deficiency by giving management seminars to newly starting university presidents. Sheila Slaughter and Larry Leslie<sup>2</sup> in the US caution against too much managerialism and write about "academic capitalism". Numerous books appear --in US and Australia-- despising management fads. It is difficult in Turkey, however, to find responses driven by such "potential differences"<sup>3,4</sup>. Interested parties are mostly emotional, reactionary, driven by ideological polarization and respond to a set of imaginary BC's such as "governments, if friendly, give more to HE (money, freedom, recognition)"; or "the residents of the ivory towers are the experts of HE"<sup>5,6</sup>. Few calls for change<sup>7</sup> receive the attention of the interested groups.

## **II. Turkish Experience**

Turkey has a single tier HE system; all HE institutions are universities (except two 'higher technology institutes' which are not any different in structure or mission, anyway). 53 public (state) and 24 private (foundation) universities are run by the same HE law. State universities by far carry the educational load, i.e. 95% of the student enrollment. Homogeneity and supply driven character dominates the whole spectrum, from two year postsecondary vocational to the advanced graduate (PhD) education. Demographic pressure for HE is huge; nearly two million

<sup>2</sup> Sheila Slaughter and Larry L. Leslie, Academic capitalism: Politics, policies, and the entrepreneurial university. Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1997

<sup>3</sup> Universities in the New Millennium, International Conference, Oct. 12-13, 2000, Istanbul, Boğaziçi University

<sup>4</sup> Universities and Changing Patterns of Governance, International Conference, March 11-12, 2004, Istanbul, Boğaziçi Univ. and Sabancı Univ.

<sup>5</sup> Ustun Erguder, Radikal Daily Newspaper article, 27.08.2003 (in Turkish)

<sup>6</sup> İsmail Tosun, What should be done, What is being done in HE, Nov 2003, (in Turkish)  
<http://www.che.metu.edu.tr/~itosun/>

<sup>7</sup> Mehmet Sahin, Keynote speech at the Opening Ceremony of the Erciyes University, 13.10.2004 (in Turkish)

students took the central entrance exam in 2004 and only 575 000 were placed in a HEI, of which only 193 000 could enroll in a 4 yr. traditional program.

HE budget accounts typically 25% of the education budget and 2.5% of the total budget. Per student public spending varies roughly between 1500 and 2000 USD. State universities typically receive 60% of their revenues through the budget appropriations, 5% from student fees and 35% through own resources, mainly by way of health services. There are no real tuition fees in Turkey, just a small contribution of the order of a few hundred USD. Poor quality, weak relevance, lack of mission differentiation and diversification, lifelong job security may be cited among primary weaknesses of the system.

The last major change in HE legislation was in 1980. The philosophy of that legislation reflected the then novel approach of strong, executive leadership; but it failed to be successful in Turkey because the power balance was not established through strong accountability measures and stakeholder participation. The command and control attitude prevailing then resulted in central appointments engineered by a small group of academics in the Capital. Autocratic rectors mostly chosen by random appointments without any deliberation led to highly unsatisfied academic staff. Political atmosphere in early 1990's tried to "cure" the law by replacing the appointment process of the rector through an election-based system. Changing one item in the system only caused incompatibility. Election by popular vote (of all the faculty members in a university) was a mechanism of the collegial system and the "cure" simply led to a chaotic development. Some HE institutions tried to move to fully collegial structures which are at odds with the recent trends world-wide; others remained focused in the election process converting the HE system to a local political arena, creating this time elected autocrats<sup>8</sup>.

Neither the government nor the academic circles seem to be after genuine solutions in line with current international trends observed in most countries in late 1990's and 2000's. Mutual mistrust introduced tension and apathy. After several detailed draft laws circulated in Turkey in 2003 and the beginning of 2004 the government chose to pass a very short piece of legislation – Amendment to the existing Higher Education Law – through the Parliament on May 13, 2004 postponing any major reform action to an unknown future date. This short piece of legislation was vetoed by the President on May 28, 2004, leading to a complete standstill since then.

Almost all constituencies of the Turkish higher education openly or silently complain today of the existing system<sup>9</sup>. Strangely enough there seems to be very few platforms within Turkey to discuss to develop a HE system conforming to the global practice of European and North American Universities which is reviewed in the following sections.

### **III. Entrepreneurial university:**

Typical elements of the enterprise culture in a properly functioning entrepreneurial university would include: a pronounced market orientation; a business portfolio approach to resource

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<sup>8</sup> TV discussion on HE, Channel: CNN Türk, Nov.27, 2003, M.A.Birand, facilitator

<sup>9</sup> TÜSİAD , Turkish Association of Industrials and Businessmen , Report on "Restructuring HE" , October 2003, (in Turkish)

allocation; leaders with more executive power; a differentiated organizational structure and specialist personnel; decentralized operations; and strategic planning especially related to research management and quality assurance. OECD<sup>10</sup> described in the 2003 Education Policy Analysis:

*"In most countries there have been efforts to reinforce executive authority of institutional leaders. Key common elements have been a transfer of power to the Rector, Vice-Chancellor and other leading administrative figures, and a loss of authority and decision-making power on the part of traditional participatory and collegial bodies."*

The managerial model is not a preference of the academic community. It is a requirement imposed by the BC's, to survive. The problems universities face got more complicated. They ask for professional, full time people to find proper solutions in due time. More than just a model, the entrepreneurial behavior needs a cultural change. Developing an entrepreneurial culture in a traditional university is analyzed and the contrasts between a pre-entrepreneurial and an entrepreneurial culture are elaborated by Davies<sup>11,12</sup>. Some rectors in the last 15 years in Turkey raced with one another to find discretionary funds; they were indeed very successful in raising such funds and built superstructures, such as buildings. This per se is not the enterprise model/ culture though. Institutionalization of the innovative and performance based behavior, coupled with university level strategic thinking and accountability to all stakeholders, are crucial parts to be associated with executive leadership and market awareness. Returning to the OECD report:

*"Pressures to change the traditional models of university governance have become more acute in recent years as public funding has often become more targeted (and in some countries reduced in per student terms), as institutional autonomy has increased and as, in parallel, external performance management and other accountability mechanisms have required universities to publicly demonstrate their efficiency and effectiveness. **Strengthening executive responsibility** can help institutions to sharpen their performance in a competitive environment by clarifying lines of responsibility and developing more of a strategic capacity."*

Burton Clark's<sup>13</sup> influential book is based on the notion that there is a growing imbalance between demands made upon universities and their capacity to respond if they remain in their **traditional** form. There is an impressive amount of data in Clark's book showing the insufficiency of the traditional model.

It is well known how resistant the universities are to shift into an entrepreneurial mode. Many threats (or opportunities?) introduced by the external environment are ignored by most academics, but they lead to some kind of uneasiness/ dissatisfaction. Having fled from the corporate structure of the business world into a collegial, protected, safe environment of the university system academics are less than eager to see solutions derived from managerial style

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<sup>10</sup> Education Policy Analysis, Chapter 3:Changing patterns of governance in higher education, OECD, 2003

<sup>11</sup> John L. Davies, "The Entrepreneurial and Adaptive University", IMHE, Vol. II, No.1, OECD, 1987

<sup>12</sup> John L. Davies, " The Emergence of Entrpreneurial Cultures in European Universities", Higher Education Management, Vol.13, No.2, 2001

<sup>13</sup> Burton R. Clark, "Creating Entrepreneurial Universities: Organisational Pathways of Transformation" IAU Press-Pergamon, 1998

of operation. The collegial system cannot cope with the new challenges, however. The entrepreneurial system with its accompanying structures deserves an opportunity given. After all neither the rector is a corporate manager (a chief executive in the classical sense) nor universities are businesses. Exaggerating the trend is as counter-productive as ignoring it.

#### **IV. Leadership:**

Sir Howard Newby in the above mentioned speech opines: “*As a higher education sector we face formidable challenges over the next decade. Meeting these challenges will require the highest caliber of leaders and managers who are prepared to embrace change through developing management practices and raising the level of strategic thinking within their institutions.*” The leadership described here is totally different than what draft legislations generated in the last two years in Turkey expect. The drafts assigned partial teaching loads to rectors, vice rectors, deans; full loads to department heads; i.e. it counts on “part-time” rectors and “no-time” department heads to transform Turkish universities to dynamic, responsive, innovative institutions. Similarly, the freedom to teach part-time for the president and the full-time members of the Council of Higher Education are misplaced incentives; the latter point was one of the modifications proposed by the Higher Education Council, itself. Full time professional university leadership is, actually, what the world is adopting.

Strong leadership is mostly connected to appointed as opposed to elected leadership. “*In many countries, the tradition has been to elect university leaders to ensure that they represent the constituency of the university. Although election of university leaders still continues in a number of countries, the trend seems to be rather moving towards appointment, often by a board with a majority of external members.*” says the OECD report. Countries where leaders are usually elected are Finland, France, Japan, Korea, Switzerland and Turkey, whereas leaders are usually appointed in Australia, Netherlands, Sweden, United Kingdom and United States. Three additional countries implemented reforms in 2003 (Austria, Denmark, Norway) to switch from election to appointments. It has to be underlined that appointments mentioned in this article do not imply “random” appointments without any deliberation. Turkey experienced random appointments at one extreme, voting following campaign periods at odds with the academic values, at the other. The happy medium is to appoint after a search period or to make appointments subject to consent / confidence (vote). The key issue is to give the responsibility of making a choice to the upper manager and insist on academic sensitivities being taken into account. The Turkish tradition of the strong state, with central planning makes a managerial model unpopular. One has to realize, however, that the entrepreneurial model is not the absolutely powerful, dictatorial leadership model; just the opposite, it has more transparency and accountability requirements built into the system than most collegial models. Being output sensitive, wrong decisions will stick out immediately and stakeholders’ involvement serves to counter the influences of internal politics.

University leaders have been elected in the last 12 years in Turkey. Complaints of mismanagement or autocratic behavior are related somehow to these elected leaders. A majority of deans are also elected, as this promise is made very often by the candidates when they run for the office of presidency. Elections yield untouchables and a lack of accountability is mostly due to the election system. Once the rector is elected there are no checks and

balances to keep him/her along the promised track. Academic values are not deeply rooted as universities in Turkey have not evolved over centuries but were adopted as a package from the western cultures mostly in the last 100 years. 68 universities out of 77 were established after 1970. Elections can easily turn into a race between interest groups or simply a popularity contest. In the least, the electorate turns to candidates promising minimum change in their personal settings, preferably protecting status quo.

In addition to local conditions, one may argue that when social and intellectual change was slow, the costs of weak administrations were worth the preservation of collegial systems. But today the need to change rapidly is so strong or the rate at which opportunities are missed is so fast that one needs moderation / intervention before the next election period if there is mismanagement. The time span between elections is too large to introduce corrective action for the mismanagement in the previous term. Reducing the time span between elections to avoid the last objection is totally out of context. The trend is obviously towards longer terms to allow continuity to realize strategically planned goals. Appointed managers always have a body to which they are responsible and such a system is open to short term corrective action.

H.de Boer and J. Huisman<sup>14</sup> searching for alternatives to give feedback to the higher education reform in the Netherlands conclude that “*the shift of power away from representative leadership towards executive leadership is in line with the main tenor of research on the latest developments in Europe’s university systems.*”

Martin Trow<sup>15</sup> delivered a paper through interactive video connection to a conference in Tel Aviv on April 8, 2003 called “On Mass Higher Education and Institutional Diversity”, where he said:

*“Currently, knowledgeable people in universities and government in every advanced society recognize the importance of strong institutional leadership responsible to a board of trustees rather than to the academics or their committees or Senate. ... The need for stronger institutional leadership is widely recognized in many countries, but many of them lack the political will or capacity to make the needed changes—drastic changes, as it seems, in the traditional and cherished forms of university governance....Decisions by senior administrative officers must be informed by consultations with the academics closest to the units affected. The quality of institutional governance depends in large part on the quality of that consultative relationship, and the trust on both sides that develops over time. It is the culture of the institution, especially the quality of trust that obtains between teaching faculty and administrative officer, that is decisive in the quality of those decisions and the state of morale in the institution. But this assumes that the final decisions on resource allocation lie with the president/rector who owes his appointment to a board and not to the academics who are affected by his decisions.”*

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<sup>14</sup> H.de Boer and J. Huisman ,“The New Public Management In Dutch Universities”, *Towards a Model of governance for Universities*, Braun, Merrien (eds), Jessica Kingsley Publishers, London,1999

<sup>15</sup> M. Trow, “On Mass Higher Education and Institutional Diversity”,  
[http://gspp.berkeley.edu/people/faculty/emeritus/Institutional\\_Diversity\\_Israel.pdf](http://gspp.berkeley.edu/people/faculty/emeritus/Institutional_Diversity_Israel.pdf)

Turkey managed to establish private, not-for-profit universities, but their trustee system has not been consolidated yet. Most foundation universities continue being dominated by one man or one family – the founder and the chairperson of the trustees; and state universities do not even dream of a trustee system, maintaining on narrow legal arguments that HE is a public good and therefore cannot be governed by trustees. Lack of trust to any stakeholder except the academic community is one of the major factors of such negative attitude. A trustee system for the established state universities (if they so wish) still may prove to be the best mechanism to protect the long-term interests of the institution; to guide the policies; to act as the board monitoring appointment of the rector; and to provide the top level link to community.

#### **V. Stakeholder involvement :**

The powerful executive authority of the university leaders in the managerial model is balanced by lay member involvement in the decisions to reflect stakeholder opinion. This may be achieved both through direct involvement in decision making chain, or using advisory boards. Part of the aim of bringing in such external representatives is to include more people with industrial or commercial experience and thereby hopefully strengthen links with the economy. Collegial checks and balances, i.e. collegial prevention of arbitrary exercise of executive power is normally performed in the Senate, but clearly the managerial system gives much less power to classical collegial bodies. Some of that is transferred to deliberative bodies of lay membership, and much better communication channels are provided between faculty members and the leadership to make up for the diminished role of academics in decision making processes. This aspect should not cause problems about since academics normally do not like administrative duties and prefer decreasing administrative loads as long as they know what is going on and are satisfied with the general progress at the institution. Amaral<sup>16</sup> compared US and European systems and concluded that communication channels have little to do with collegiality:

*“...while we feel proud of very democratic governance bodies the CRE (former EUA) audits in general demonstrate that the lower levels of the administration and the academics are quite unaware of the decisions and plans of the top administration: information does not circulate easily and as a result the democratic governance is more apparent than real, or at least not widely participated. Conversely, in the US, top management is stronger, and collective bodies such as the Senate have far less power than in the European model; to my complete surprise, at the University of Columbia, NY, there is much more awareness, at all levels, of the institution’s mission, its development and strategic plans, internal rules, etc., which shows that information circulates far more easily than in European institutions.”*

EUA started a project in 2002 to facilitate the Bologna Process. This “Quality Culture” project ran under six themes, one of which was “**Communication flow** and Decision Making Structures” showing the special importance attached to it. Poor communication flow compounded by the fear of the transparency has created the environment of un-accountability in the Turkish higher education system. Routine PR announcements/ publications are offered as pieces of transparency; general belief is that you do not volunteer to share shortcomings/ controversial issues and present selective information to emphasize achievements and strong

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<sup>16</sup> Alberto Amaral, “The US accreditation system and the CRE’s quality audits: A comparative study” *Quality Assurance in Education* 6(4), p.184, 1998

points. There is room for improvement of the communication within the academic community as well as between universities and the public.

It is very interesting that an agency was established in the Slovak Republic in 2005 called Academic Ranking and Rating Agency (ARRA) to lead academic institutions to supply relevant, accurate, unbiased, complete, reliable information. Although it is well known that it is very difficult and risky to rank academic institutions, the need for transparency is so great that it can justify such a move.

The system in Turkey needs urgently some input from outside the academy; not overwhelming contributions to re-route university life, but small boosters to make them look outwards, to remind them of the goals and strategies, of market reality and that time *is* a parameter. Faculty usually demands more participation; the collegial participation implied does not include any stakeholder other than the faculty itself, however. Neither the law nor the mentality of the academics allows lay members within the decision taking circles. The common attitude is that businessmen, alumni or public at large may contribute through donations but they should not interfere with the policies or the daily operation of the university. Even student participation is not organized fully. Rules and regulations exist but students do not grasp the need to get involved in the decision making processes or see the benefit of being an active constituent<sup>17</sup>

## **VI. Governance:**

University governance goes far beyond leadership. Relations between the rector, the deans and heads of departments, between the rector and the representative bodies or governing bodies need to be re-evaluated. Gerard<sup>18</sup> looked into this issue recently: As to the position of deans, *the deans may see themselves as primus inter pares and feel that their primary role is to represent the interests of their faculty, to defend their peers (and to act as the last resort for arbitrating interpersonal conflicts inside the university, but on the whole they are careful not to intervene too actively in the affairs of their colleagues).* Then they are not included in executive teams but *kept informed of the decisions made by executive teams and representative bodies.*

**Alternatively**, the deans may be seen as active partners of the executive committee responsible for preparing all decisions and developing the universities major strategic policies and they *give their support to institutional policies, even if those are unfavorable to their own faculty. Consequently, they can run the risk of losing the confidence of those who elected them. Confining themselves strictly to a role of defending the interests of their departments is incompatible with their participation in university governance.* Gerard claims “*In the vast majority of universities, deans are deliberately not included in executive teams...*”

This certainly is a by-product of the election system. It is unfortunate to waste that link i.e. the link to faculties through the dean. However, the rector then should have a share in the appointment of the dean. Burton Clark also recommends strongly (and in fact ties the success of the five innovative institutions he studied to) the “second” attitude above: formulating the

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<sup>17</sup> Personal communication with EUA Institutional Evaluation Program pool members

<sup>18</sup>Stephanie Mignot Gerard, “Leadership and Governance in the Analysis of University Organizations”, *Higher Education Management and Policy*, 15(2), 2003

decision taking mechanism as “rector + vice rectors + deans”, forming **a team**. It follows then that the deans should split their loyalty 50-50 between the faculty and top management.

Clear job definitions and responsibilities within the executive team are one of the major requirements today. Vice rectors should have well defined executive power and responsibilities. They are not assistants to the rector, but post-holders of specific functions. It is very unfortunate that the current practice and the draft legislations in Turkey contain arrangements exactly opposite to this trend. Even the Turkish word “assistant to the rector” which stands for “vice rector” implies that the Turkish culture favors looking at it as support personnel. It follows that these “assistants” do not have much of a responsibility and one-man (rector) dominance is the life-style in a typical Turkish state university. Vice-rectors today must commit themselves to their full-time duties of vice-presidency and need clearly understand that their action may pose a threat to the independence of academics and thus should be willing to accept the unpopularity of their decisions. In this case, the vice-rectors should be in charge of various *functions* of the university (research, teaching, administration, finance, ...) and the deans should manage the primary academic *bodies* of the university (faculties). Together they should make up the governance matrix, with the rector as the conductor.

**The Traditional department head** or dean has a short term mandate, is elected, is part-time in administration, is reactive to upper management, mostly presides over the academic council, does not develop policies, just facilitates information flow, is only responsible for routine administrative jobs; it is a non-career post and contains much ceremonial leadership. The Turkish sentiment is in line with this traditional style. Rotating among the senior members of the department, the post is perceived as a duty in many cases. The race to capture the command of minor advantages and having an extra entry in the curriculum vitae are also common motives in less developed universities to become the chairperson. It is not the responsibility, however, of the department head if the department loses prestige; it is that of the members. Accountability is not even on the agenda. **The executive department head** or dean of the managerial model, on the other hand, has a longer mandate, is usually appointed (subject to faculty consent), is full-time in administration, possibly has a career in management, is active in the strategic direction of the department/faculty, is active in resource management, and is active in formulating academic policies subject to faculty consent. Strong faculty management is strengthened through deputies with portfolios.

That power corrupts is a widely accepted maxim. Hence there is a strong opposition to executive department heads or deans. The fear is so deeply felt that all legislation currently in Turkey is towards reducing authority although the same legislation assumes the department as the fundamental unit of academic structure, which implies that the department is after all the source of productive power—where things get done. To balance that fear, effective accountability mechanisms and transparency requirements need to be devised.

Originally accountability was connected to the relationship between the state and higher education on fiscal issues, in many countries. Budgetary accountability has expanded to cover accountability to students (quality education, academic issues); accountability to industry/economy (graduates with relevant skills, research); and accountability to society at large

(developing good citizens, services). Now it is time to extend it further to managerial responsibilities, for **decisions** taken and not taken, and control of the powerful management / leadership, not to go corrupt! Transparency is probably the simplest cure: open reporting on the web of the positions of relevant parties on various issues, decisions, expected consequences, financial accounts, opportunities and threats; possibly public deliberation of crucial committees (research funds committee, budget appropriations committee, promotions and appointments committee,...)etc. The involvement of stakeholders is also to be designed. Hierarchical structure will not be complete without trustees, governing body or the equivalent. Rectors of state universities in Turkey may be removed from the office only by the president of the country, which understandably is very uncommon. A trustee system would bring a local self-check, preventing any abuse of power. Clear division of labor, the rector being responsible of the daily operations, the trustees more involved with long term policies and financial matters will help towards running a harmonious management. Unfortunately, there is almost unanimous objection to the governing body concept in Turkey today as everybody is afraid that the “other group” may get the control<sup>19</sup>. This seems to call for a redefinition of university governance. It may be attractive to recognize certain flexibilities to state universities which adopt the trustee system, in line with the characteristics of the trustee system such as appointment of the rector and the deans or allocation of lump sum budget, freedom to use their income as they see it fit, block allocation of staff positions.

Organizational structures, which the entrepreneurial attitude requires also need attention within the governance system. **Research management** is definitely one of them. As the sources of research funding have shifted from an overwhelming dependence on core funding towards reliance on a much wider range of bodies allocating support on a competitive basis and for specific projects, the need of managing research has become unavoidable<sup>20</sup>. Even developing countries are adopting the practice with the hope of providing incentives, guidance and making best use of the opportunities available. Commercialization of research takes two forms, either by selling research outputs to the market directly, or by establishing closer links (collaborations) with the business and industrial fields. Structures for facilitating this commercialization add to diversified funding, hence to autonomy. Most of research in Turkey is performed through universities. It is curiosity driven, discipline based, responding to frontier subjects of the international research arena and measured by internationally peer-reviewed journal articles. The concept of research management is foreign to most Turkish universities. Egalitarian distribution of resources not to endanger popular support continues to be the widely observed practice. Top down intervention to advance policies emphasizing research, to identify focus areas and niche subjects, to create the environment for multi-disciplinary, mode II research and awareness towards socio-economic benefits will wait for innovative leaders to come.

Another one is **strategic planning** and the associated organizational structure. The trend in public universities in many countries toward increased autonomy, greater freedom to define their own priorities and allocate their resources provides a considerable challenge for

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<sup>19</sup> Discussions following the presentation given by the author at the Inter-University Council, on 24.10.2003

<sup>20</sup> Helen Connell, “Issues in research management”, OECD/IMHE meeting Tokyo, 27-28 Febr. 2001

institutional management. It opens up more options, and also contains more risks. Institutions formulate priorities and plans, which build on institutional strength and engage productively with their local regions. This is an innovative process contrary to bureaucratic label some academics try to attach to it. It is unfortunate that HEI's in Turkey do not feel the need to develop academic plans, partly due to the limited autonomy to decide on their future, but also not to limit their options and impromptu creative ideas. Responding to short term opportunities bringing out personal preferences of administrators has been the popular approach in Turkey. The enforced homogeneity puts severe constraints on innovative approaches but also takes away risks and is therefore preferred implicitly by many in the academic world. Mission differentiation through careful strategic planning remains as one of the foremost problems of HE in Turkey.

Still another one is **quality assurance (QA)** system. Although international or national quality assurance and accreditation systems will push institutions to adopt certain quality measures it is imperative to institutionalize a quality system to develop a quality culture in the institution. Turkey lacks a national quality agency to organize and lead QA activities centrally. A pilot study<sup>21</sup>, <sup>22</sup>in 1997 and a national committee establishment for quality assurance in 2002 were two attempts without success. A few universities show varying degrees of sensitivity to quality. Some of them have applied to the institutional evaluation program of EUA; more or less the same universities have gone through program accreditations by international agencies, as well. Systematic internal assessment mechanisms have not been developed, however. Universities need to organize internal structures to assess not only teaching activities but also research, services to community, and the academic system as a whole. Improvement mechanisms upon assessment and the necessary reward system ought to accompany the internal quality structures.

These are managerial tools and would operate in managerial climates. Lack of managerial approach, weak forces of the market and strong commitment for status quo led the higher education system in Turkey mostly to ignore quality assurance, strategic planning and research management issues so far<sup>23</sup>.

## VII. Conclusions

The contemporary university is increasingly an entrepreneurial organization. Its governance needs to assume managerial features to cope with the evolving environmental conditions. Turkish HE system must realize the ongoing change and adopt typical features widely shared in HE systems in Europe, North America, and Australia. Universities of diversified missions, accountable to the public, responding to market forces by exploiting their niches and forming strategic alliances became the recipe for national success in the knowledge economy . Of course, the organizational cultures of such proactive institutions will evolve over time. Thus it

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<sup>21</sup> David Billing and Harold Thomas "The International Transferability of Quality Assessment Systems for Higher Education: the Turkish experience" *Quality in Higher Education*, Vol. 6, 1, 2000

<sup>22</sup> David Billing and Harold Thomas "Evaluating a Transnational University Quality Assessment Project in Turkey" *Journal of Studies in International Education*, Fall 2000, pp55-68

<sup>23</sup> Oktem Vardar " Fundamentals of a HE law", Newspaper article: Cumhuriyet, Bilim ve Teknik, Febr.19, 2005, (in Turkish)

is vital to start the transformation as soon as possible. Social resistance against change will hopefully be overcome if platforms are devised where international developments can be discussed over and over again. It is highly recommended that Turkey, through The Council of Higher Education or Inter-university Council or through other channels, forms standing committees on major issues (such as distance education, quality assurance, research management, internal governance, stakeholder participation, strategic planning, vocational education, autonomy and accountability, social cohesion, regional economic development) to study these issues, internalize them and adapt the changes to the local cultural environment. A healthy legislative reform is only likely to follow such preparations.