

Introduction

The prosperity of country will depend how efficiently state is able to carry out the shift of educational paradigm. Alvin Toffler in his Powershift (1990) stated that in the past social change has been controlled primarily through force (i.e., military) or the market (i.e., money). Today knowledge is the key to power as guns and money were for earlier generations.

Information Age (also known as the Digital Age and Wireless Age) is a term that has been used to refer to the present era. Information age is coming through the educational shift.

University Nord held a conference "Changing World - New Challenges and problems in Estonia" (on April 30 and May 2 in Tallinn) to discuss the impact of Information Age and globalization on education, European integration and nation state. Special attention was paid to facing the European standard of quality assurance in private universities.

The number of authors (Peeter Kreitzberg, Ene Grauberg, Voldemar Kolga, Terence Kealey and others) are discussing the role of universities in Information Age. They proposed that the paradigmatic shift in education is needed to fulfil the new tasks in turbulent times.

The paradigmatic shift has happened also in thinking, jurisprudence and legal proceedings (see Raivo Palmaru, Jaak Roosaare, Maret Merimaa and Meelis Eerik papers). The new legal problems have appeared which need the different approaches in comparison with former times. In the legal proceedings the opposite sides try to find compromise, not just to win.

All countries pay more attention to security problems and threats in the globalizing World (see Antanas Makstutis, Peeter Miitirsepp, Jan T. Knoph and Victoras Justickis articles).

According to Terence Kealey only democratic universities in modern world are private universities as only these universities can act more or less independently from states. Ene Grauberg has analyzed how elite education is transformed into mass education, and what kind changes have happened in value systems. The most universities are now at the market, competing with each other as enterprises.

Peeter Kreitzberg has discussed changes that have happened with universities when the world is moving from modern into postmodern one. The university has lost the monopoly as knowledge producer. Information may be bought, because knowledge is produced to sell.

Voldemar Kolga argues, that education from postmodern perspective is not only goal oriented, but also process oriented, cooperation between students and teachers are encouraged by e-learning, and that essential to postmodern discourse. Education and knowledge production are moving towards interdisciplinary stand.

The paradigmatic shift supposes globalization and networking between universities, and free education market. However in Estonia there is no such thing as "free higher education market" because of dominating by one big university. Brusselex is currently demanding to split Eesti Energia because it is the monopolist at energy market in Estonia. It can be compared to the present university landscape in Estonia. It is supposed that the splitting of dominating university into smaller units would be useful for the development of higher education in Estonia, and it will in accordance with postmodern perspective.

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