

## HIGHER EDUCATION

Three characteristics are outstanding in the Greek higher education system. It has expanded enormously since 1980/81, from over 120 000 to just under 300 000 enrolled students in 1993/94. Secondly, it benefits from the all-pervading ambitions of Greek families for the advancement, through education, of their children. Thirdly, however, given the increase in resources and strong social support that it attracts, it is astonishing that the system is so ill-fitted to meet the present and future demands that should be made of it.

Greek higher education is caught within a cat's cradle of economic circumstances and political and cultural policies and assumptions. These inhibit its ability to meet the needs of Greece as it takes its place among the most developed nations of the Western world. Its educational style is both the product and the producer of an upper secondary system which puts a premium on rote learning and memorisation. Its content and ways of working are conditioned by factors exogenous to learning and scholarship, including a high level of politicisation, tight coupling of higher education to certification for one major segment only of the labour market, and a bizarre rendering of principles of equality and equity that does little to reduce social inequality.

All of these influences are reinforced by a governmental and administrative system that depends upon archaic principles of control; these pay no heed to the need for institutional and professional self-development, or, for that matter, the principles of good public administration. There is a lack of trust between government and the institutions and between professors and their students which signals the need for radical reform of both the administrative and the educational procedures at present in place.

The economic context affects higher education deeply. Certification for the labour market is its key imperative and it is that which accounts for the strong pressure on higher education places. That imperative is accentuated by the acute level of unemployment. First time job seekers, mainly young people, have the highest unemployment rate. The unemployment rate is more than 30 per cent of people under 25 years and 6.5 per cent for people over 25, as already noted.

The Greek economic and social system favours job stability in almost all occupations. The large number of people working in the wider public sector have a job guarantee; massive lay-offs in the private sector are also difficult because of the law forbidding dismissals of more than 2 per cent of the labour force per month, so dismissals are rare. This underlies the premium put on appointment from long waiting lists, rather than on merit or suitability for the job.

Higher education is thus caught within constraining employment arrangements and cultural assumptions that go well beyond its own boundaries. At the same time, if Greece is to emancipate itself from practices conducive to inefficiency and inequity, higher education would be no bad place to start.

### **MANAGING THE DEMAND FOR HIGHER EDUCATION**

Greece does not stand low in the list of OECD countries in terms of its people's participation in higher education. Between 1960-84 the number of students in higher education rose by a factor of nearly-6; those studying abroad rose by a factor of 7 between 1965-74. In the 1980s higher education enrolments grew, although much of the expansion of numbers was due to student retention rather than increases in first time registration. In 1992, 28.1 per cent of 18-year-olds entered higher education but no less than 47.4 per cent of 18-21-year-olds were enrolled. 12.5 per cent of those between 25 and 64 years had participated in tertiary education in 1991, and the ratio of men to women was 69 to 100, lower than in some countries, but on its way to parity. Yet candidates for university entrance stand a chance of only one in four. The numbers attempting to enter have risen and the number of those failing to enter has risen with it. Another third enter Technological Educational Institutions (TEIs), and many of the others attend the Centres for Liberal Studies or take places in universities abroad.

The demand for higher education is great, in spite of the inability of the labour market to absorb all of its graduates in jobs appropriate to their educational level. We share the view of parents, students and many others in Greek society that even if jobs are not available, Greece will benefit from a highly educated population, particularly if reforms are made in the content and style of what is offered to encourage the creativity and initiative which will enhance economic diversity and performance.

At present, however, demand is managed by observing what we have called the principles of mechanistic equality rather than of either human resource planning or of the free market. No attempt even at indicative planning is made; in determining the numbers admitted to university on a *numerus clausus* principle no account is taken of the needs of the economy or of the likely retirement patterns of the public services to which the great proportion of the graduates are destined. We do not propose that Greece should follow any simple manpower planning procedures

which have proved inefficient elsewhere. But we do suggest that an economy which has so far failed to exploit fully and to market the prodigious agricultural capacity of the country, and which has as yet failed to catch up with the many sophisticated technologies, could provide higher education offering a better balance between general and humanistic education and education that will produce highly trained manpower for a changing labour market.

### **ENTRANCE EXAMINATIONS**

Because the universities do not meet the demand for places, in spite of large increases in numbers of enrolments and the recent creation of new universities, there is a debilitating competition for places which affects the quality of education offered in the lyceums and conditions student academic habits in higher education. The examinations are conducted with scrupulous concern for objectivity and security but are widely regarded as archaic in style and content in that they depend on the memorisation of a large amount of facts or of set procedures and hardly call upon candidates to display individual judgement or creativity. Our scrutiny of examination papers in four subjects confirmed this opinion. They also encourage intellectual parochialism: for, example, the history examination was wholly devoted to Greek history, all the more bizarre in that Greece's future depends to a large extent on its ability to work and produce co-operatively with the rest of Europe and, indeed, the whole world. Where exercises are set that seem to test the ability to use formulae or to construct foreign language responses, these are all a replication of the very exercises that can found in the prescribed text books. Hence the flourishing trade in private cramming schools. The examinations also encourage over-concentration on the examined subjects.

The reasons given for these contra-educational practices are that they make patronage or clientage impossible, and that questions requiring the exercise of judgement would allow examiners to favour opinions acceptable to themselves. The entrance examination system is thus a prime example of the lack of trust in teachers and examiners, the eradication of which, in its present form, must be a prime objective of educational reform.

These academic attitudes are then reiterated in the single-text book characteristic of higher education itself which are then recycled to the schools where most graduates will eventually find employment as teachers.

We emphasise that education should be an enjoyable and stimulating experience. Needless memorisation and frustration of creative and individual work are punitive experiences. Greek education should be reinforcing the natural creativity and enterprise of its people, and not stultifying them, particularly during the years when young people are at their most optimistic and energetic.

## **EDUCATION OVERSEAS**

There is a costly egress of students to foreign universities. Some take this option because they are dissatisfied with the quality of what is offered at home. But many spend large sums in finding places in universities abroad which are reputedly less good than their Greek counterparts. In 1994 over 29 000 were studying in foreign universities, of whom 6 500 were postgraduate students. There ought to be ways of using these monies to expand and strengthen the Greek higher educational system.

## **NUMBER AND VIABILITY OF INSTITUTIONS**

There are 18 universities, eight of which are located in Athens. There are 12 Technological Educational Institutions (TEIs). This gives Greece a somewhat larger number of institutions than the OECD norm of one university for a population of one million, but centres of population are dispersed. Some institutions are, however, quite new and small and the paucity of resources allowed to institutions inevitably raises questions of the range and quality of what can be offered.

### **Proposals on numbers**

Most informed Greeks are already aware of what must be done to remedy the unsatisfactory access system, but it is also clear that to achieve change will require a major cultural shift and careful recruitment of diverse political interests. The main points for attention are:

- A thorough appraisal should be made of the needs of the economy and of the extent to which higher education provision is matched to them. It is widely recognised that university offerings are matched far too much to the expectations that most graduates will seek employment in the public sector and that Greece's economic potential is not well served by the existing patterns of courses.
- A thorough estimation should be made of the true capacity of the universities. Relatively small annual enrolments are enforced by the retention of large numbers of students who do not complete their courses within a reasonable period of time, and the large number of "inactive" students who further swell the enrolment figures. This tolerance of non-active students is allowed mainly for political reasons. Higher education has in fact the function, not unfamiliar elsewhere, of "parking" the unemployed. It may be desirable that unemployed young people should be able to retain some occupational identity which can be provided by registration for higher education. But it leads to distortions of the enrolment figures and may mean that fewer admissions each year are allowed than are required to meet demand.

More important, it seems appropriate that institutions should require some kind of continuing educational activity on the part of those who are enrolled, even if they are unable to participate fully in the courses being offered.

- Informed opinion believes that more students could be admitted if professors' average teaching duties were increased to more than the present 3-5 hours a week. This would involve a careful elaboration of teachers' duties and conditions of service. Salaries are too low to ensure that teachers do other than regard their jobs as part-time. A full-time commitment in return for adequate pay should become the norm. We make proposals for staff development that should accompany such changes.
- On the basis of needs and capacity estimations admissions should be determined through negotiation between the Ministry and the universities. There are justifiable complaints that large increases are decided by the Ministry unilaterally and without proper notice, often the last moment, apparently in response to political rather than manpower or other needs.
- The number of places could be increased if they could be funded by local authorities and by private donations, scholarships and sponsorships. Local taxes could thus be recruited to meet local demands for places.
- If the state universities became stronger, academically, economically and institutionally, it might be possible to authorise certain forms of private higher education to produce graduates with the same professional rights as those from state universities, but at no cost to the tax payer, and only after rigorous accreditation of courses. We recognise that to thus sponsor private higher education would run counter to a deep belief that higher education should remain a public provision. But it is clear that public finance is not capable of meeting the demands for university education, in spite of the recent gradual increase in the higher education budget.
- Many parents are already paying high fees for education followed abroad. The numbers of Greeks studying abroad account for 35-40 per cent of those studying in Greece. In 1988 this cost about 30 000 million drachmas a year, or half of the total cost of higher education in Greece. This is a waste of Greek resources, inasmuch as it includes education that could be provided at home for the same or less cost. It is also evidence that it would not be politically impossible to charge fees, and to reduce students' rights to free text books and food, as long as a liberal scheme for enabling the less well off to participate in higher education accompanied the reinstatement of fees which were charged until 1965.
- We understand that the right to free education is enshrined in the Constitution. But apparently this does not include the right to free food, lodging and

texts all of which accentuate the creating of a young pensionariat debilitating to the exercise of good education.

- The restriction on the recognition of doctorates earned abroad at reputable universities by those without the possession of the presently recognised Greek diploma should be removed, in line with the trend under EU general practice.
- A further measure to meet demand would be the accreditation for upgrading of TEI courses to which we refer later. In addition, the establishment of the Hellenic Open University could be a flexible alternative to the existing provision.

### **The quality of higher education**

In spite of the great demand for it, university education falls short of what a people so committed to education has a right to expect. One commentator has described the faults as follows:

"With no effective criteria and modes for evaluating teaching staff, undergraduates and academic competence; with no institutionalised research, nor really structured postgraduate courses; with many professors considering – by necessity or not – their jobs as subsidiary, and a large percentage of "undergraduates" who in certain disciplines (e.g. social, economic and political sciences) are never seen in class, it is doubtful if one can really speak of a "university" at all. To be even more precise, within the European context most of the major issues in the ongoing debate on higher education, irrespective of their content and orientation, are non-issues in Greece.

(...) The structure of courses is adapted to the specific aptitudes, ideologies and ongoing interests of the teaching staff, irrespective of internationally accepted epistemological criteria and of social, economic and cultural needs. Ninety per cent of staff are tenured and there are few visiting teachers. Obligatory core courses are adapted to the senior professors' interests and optional courses are left to junior teaching staff. Scientific and research work is narrowed down to adapt to the minimal preconditions of promotions instead of being used to develop the interests and curiosities of the individual academic in directions which would vitalise the undergraduate curriculum and postgraduate research programme."

(Stephanos Pasmazoglu, "Government, Ideology and the University Curriculum in Greece", *European Journal of Education* Vol. 29, No. 3, 1994, pp. 291-304)

These criticisms, which are consistent with what we have heard from many others with whom we have discussed the quality of Greek higher education, are not

of course meant to apply to all universities. As in other countries, there are big differences in quality and performance among universities, as well as between faculties and departments in the individual universities.

The same commentator also points out that "a major external determinant of university functions and of the nature of the learning process is the long standing role of the state as the employer of the vast majority of graduates". This has far reaching implications for the organisation of studies, the curriculum and the weight of various disciplines. "The universities' primary function (is) the production of civil servants, bank employees and teachers for the entire education system." This accounts for the over representation of certain disciplines. Few are linked with the major productive sectors of the economy and then only indirectly.

We have noted the following criticisms of academic quality and behaviour:

- The universities take in able students but many are then trained rather than educated, because of the dependence on set text books and lecture notes written for fees by their professors who thus have a financial interest in producing texts for a monopoly market. We are told that some professors do offer book lists which should enable those students who wish to go beyond the set text book, but the libraries are inadequate, key foreign texts are sometimes not available in translation, and students are not in the habit of buying their own copies of monographs or other texts.
- Assessments tend to be related to what can be found, and presumably memorised, from the set text. The modes of assessment, which are in the hands of individual professors without external moderation, make no allowance for independent thinking, and, indeed, professors are sometimes under pressure to give good grades irrespective of the quality of students' performance.
- Teachers complain of the overwhelming burden of grading students at the end of each course in each semester. But the grading seems to have no function in the adequate monitoring of student performance or in giving feed-back to students. The whole structure of assessment seems to be in need of reform.
- Because text books are free there is little use of libraries which are poorly stocked. The money spent on free texts should be transferred to library purchases. This should lead to production of wider range of literature which will enhance the scholarly output of professors and give students more choice in their reading.
- Departmental structures remain impermeable so that joint or interdisciplinary degrees are not possible.
- Students are not free to pursue the subjects of their own choice. They are required to opt for one of four groups of subjects and are then allocated to

what is available, according to their position in the competitive entry examinations.

- Within courses leading to the diploma students have little choice between optional subjects. Credit unit systems suffer from disadvantages but do allow free movement between academic preferences.
- Students are allowed to continue with free tuition after failing assessments. Some power to relieve the universities of unwilling or incompetent students is necessary, perhaps by assessment of total progress at the end of the second year. We understand that an attempt to introduce such a provision was withdrawn because it encountered strong opposition. Excessive continuation should be discouraged by the imposition of tuition fees once the right to a second attempt is exhausted.
- The presence of non-active students is presumably allowed because it is a method of “parking” the young or, in some cases, the not so young, who would otherwise be unemployed. Universities do indeed provide an identity for young people who might otherwise be simply unemployed. Because, however, movement through the system is thereby slowed down, fewer admissions each year become possible because the numbers of non-active students are not accurately recorded.
- Many professors have second occupations and, in order to discourage this, recently a 35 per cent addition to salaries is allowed to those without outside employment. The employment of part-time teachers may be beneficial in some, particularly applied, subjects but only if there is a substantial core of full-time teachers engaged in curriculum development, and the effective teaching and counselling of students. We have been told, and not only by students, of the lack of care for the tutorial and teaching functions displayed by some professors with whom it is often impossible to have any advisory or other contact. This is partly the result of many teachers regarding their duties as part-time work to be supplemented by other occupations.
- The pressure caused by unemployment encourages students to hang on and expect predictable teaching and assessments to secure grades enabling them to queue for public sector jobs.

We believe that full scale evaluation of teaching will do justice to those who do perform their teaching duties well and encourage the participation of senior academics in the development of the curriculum and the effective organisation of teaching arrangements and groups so that student get the help they need. If teaching practice comes more into line with perceived student needs this will surely increase social approval of the universities and support for better conditions for their staff.



## RESOURCES AND FUNDING MECHANISMS

Increases in student numbers are imposed on the universities without notice or a commensurate increase in resources. The decision is taken late every year and based on political considerations, even though, by experience, universities know roughly what to expect!

Nor are the institutions given freedom or incentive to engender their own sources of income. There is excessively tight financial control. They are controlled on budget by line items. Law 1268/82 on the structure and functioning of universities states that institutions are completely self-governed. But there is mistrust between the government and institutions which exaggerate their needs because they expect the government to cut them arbitrarily. Attempts to formulate criteria have failed. The mistrust that prevails between institutions and government, often exacerbated by mismanagement, is demonstrated by the fact that in 1984 the grants received by universities varied from 23 to 93.6 per cent with an average of 52.1 per cent of the amount requested of the government. Complementary grants in the middle of fiscal year often have to be paid. Other institutions were not capable of spending the full amount of their appropriations. Institutions do not have freedom to reallocate resources among various budget items and monies have to be returned unspent. Planning is impossible because they have no idea what money they will get next year. Audit is not directed to improvements in the current system.

Recruitment of teaching staff is formally the responsibility of the ministry so that the institution cannot ensure that staffing relates to the numbers of students, the improvement of quality and research.

In general, the system suffers because of the almost exclusive dependence of institutions on the public budget, the absence of allocation criteria which enable institutions to estimate their budgets based on student and teaching staff activities, and the lack of criteria enabling a just allocation to be made. As a result, allocations are based mainly on the past year's expenditure and guesses at additional needs. It is to be noted, however, that, as far as university research is concerned, considerable additional funding comes in from industry and European Union sources and much allocations are accompanied by acceptable forms of evaluation.

It is essential that Greek universities are treated as mature institutions which should be able to determine their own future through the use of funds allowed them within an effective and transparent national planning framework, and with accountability ensured through strong evaluation procedures.

## PATTERNS OF GOVERNMENT

The governance of Greek higher education institutions involves three linked elements. There is first the degree of autonomy from the state that they enjoy, and

what should be the resulting relationships with the state. The second issue concerns the requisite pattern of internal governance. The third issue is the relationship between the institutions and external bodies other than the state.

On the first issue, it is clear that institutions already enjoy autonomy on the key issues of what will be taught and what will be researched. Indeed, our proposals for external evaluation imply that some of those freedoms should be moderated by the introduction of external peer monitoring. They do not, however, have any of the autonomy over the conduct of their corporate affairs that would result from a rational system of financial and personnel control. The leading universities in the world negotiate their budgets with the state, or in the case of private universities, their trustees, and then are free to allocate money to the purposes that they define for themselves.

It is not surprising that the planning capacity of Greek universities is weak, because their main sponsor is the Greek government which enforces a decision making framework that does not encourage good institutional planning. Universities and TEIs should be expected to create an institutional plan that goes forward to reasonable time horizons, that judges the type of courses that should be provided in order to meet students' needs and the needs of the economy and society, that estimates the kind of staff, physical plant and equipment that is needed, and negotiates on that basis with the government. The controls on expenditure should rely on agreements reached on objectives and on ensuring that spending is related to them. The present requirements of Ministry approvals should be abandoned because they are based on no rational considerations.

It is said that giving freedom to institutions would invite the operation of patronage. This invokes a problem running throughout the education system, namely the lack of trust. It should be tackled by effective audit systems and transparent appointments and contracting procedures of the kind which universities in other countries have found it possible to work within, without restriction on their freedom.

A thorough examination of existing controls is needed and this should lead to a bonfire of unnecessary impediments to institutional development.

Self-governance, however, transfers problems of management to the internal structure and the following points arise:

- Outside groups, including employers, could be involved in universities, perhaps by the establishment of advisory groups who could strengthen the credibility of universities.
- Greater freedom for universities must mean the creation of effective management and planning within universities. This may mean some shift of power to rectorates; the resulting relationship with senates on decision-making will

require redefinition. It will also throw into contention such arrangements as those whereby undergraduates have equal representation in electoral bodies as members of academic staff, and rectors have tenure for only three years.

- More enlightened approaches to teaching, university governance and evaluation will require well planned and authorised staff development of faculty and administrators.

Consideration must also be given to the role of the student unions. After the collapse of the military regime in 1974, “party politics were brought directly into university administration”. Formerly 50 per cent of places were taken by student representatives but “in effect there was student majority rule”. It has been said that “by the mid-1980s what was left from a fragmented party-dominated syndicalism could be summarised in one word: favouritism. Student representatives were pursuing favourable provisions such as securing the minimum possible number of pages to be examined and securing numerous exam periods each year, therefore inducing adaptation of the curriculum and teaching methods to these ends and forcing vulnerable teaching staff to grant a pass grade to those who failed exams. Educational aims linked to the structure of the academic curriculum or content of studies were absent” (Pesmazoglu, 1994).

We have been unable to fully ascertain the validity of this critique but have been made aware of what seems to be an unacceptable level of student pressure on teachers in such matters as retaining the single text book and in resisting competent assessment procedures. These matters are rightly within the professional competence of higher education teachers, and although students’ views should be taken into account, they should certainly not determine such issues which concern the duty of universities to certify the competence of those they graduate. But students also maintain that political or other forms of bias and favouritism will enter into assessments if the present practices are not maintained. Thus a bad system is maintained for fear of worse. This line of argument should not be acceptable. Higher education teachers should be safeguarded from such pressures by strong forms of external assessment which put the fear of bias, clientism or favouritism out of court. We turn to proposals covering the whole of education in these respects in Chapter 4 but here propose that all assessment procedures should be subject to external moderation.

A charter stating the duties, obligations and conditions of work for both teachers and students should be directed towards the creation of full professionalism which is definably concerned with advancing the welfare of students and their education rather than responding to political or patronal pressures. The credibility of Greek higher education will become all the more important as links with the rest of Europe are strengthened.

## **GRADUATE STUDIES**

A high proportion of those with advanced academic training have received their doctorates abroad. This may be desirable in a system which is just getting under-way, but it is leading to undesirable effects in that the Greek doctorate is not held in sufficient respect, and the level and amount of research undertaken in Greece in relation to the total size of the higher education system and the country as a whole is small, even though research done in universities is disproportionately higher than that in industry

A review of existing doctoral and other advanced training is necessary and this should be coupled with an examination of existing research activities in universities and TEIs. This should be a preliminary to consideration of a plan for graduate education which should take account of the future staffing needs of higher education and industry and business. This is all the more important because otherwise developments may occur opportunistically rather than systematically as a result of the somewhat random donations made by the EU to research programmes in member countries.

## **UNIVERSITIES AND TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS (TEI)**

The demand of non-university post-secondary institutions of the right to offer degrees follows a pattern of evolution familiar in most countries. It is one that has been allowed in some other countries where a binary system is in place.

Two separate questions arise from such demands. First, what are the scope and type of course offered? This depends on how higher education of a degree-granting level is defined. The second question is whether the courses offered are in fact of a degree level.

On the first question, higher education's core activities derive from the creation and use of knowledge that is tested, verified and applied according to the rules of logic, evidence and demonstrability which academics create. In many areas academic creation of knowledge is, of course, affected by interaction with outside sources of knowledge. In its teaching functions higher education is defined as the post-school study which takes place in institutions in which the staff is engaged in or conversant with knowledge coming from research or scholarship. This includes in many countries those institutions whose teachers are more concerned with the application and transmission than with the generation of knowledge but whose work is grounded in current research, development and scholarship.

Such a definition would be the test of degree level work, rather than teachers' possession of a doctorate, which is being questioned elsewhere as a necessary qualification for teaching to the first degree level. Other considerations apply when post-graduate qualifications are offered.

Given the wide range of both the teaching to be performed and of staff qualifications in TEIs, it seems necessary to specify the requisite qualifications for each type of course and it would thus be inappropriate to tie either the salary gradings or the academic designations to those of the universities. In particular, the title of professor should be reserved to those who have demonstrated leadership beyond the confines of their own institution in the scholarship and research of their subject area.

It is possible that some TEI work could be defined as to its content and teaching objectives as higher education – it was outside our remit or resources to assess the courses now on offer. But there remains the quality dimension. Acceptance of courses as being of a degree level would require accreditation procedures in which curricular objectives and content are judged, the qualifications of teachers ascertained – and these do not always need to be those of the traditional university teacher – the assessment procedures monitored and, if possible, the quality of teaching directly observed. Mechanisms involving the TEIs, the universities and the employing professions would need to be established. These procedures have been found possible in other countries. We hope courses of such a level will increasingly be on offer and accredited accordingly.

We emphasize that this would not mean that TEIs would “become universities”. Accreditation would be of courses, not of whole institutions.

The admission of TEIs, on these rigorous conditions, would have several advantages. It would add to the stock of acceptable, if not the most preferred, courses at a time when pressure on the universities is great. It would make it possible for a range of subjects which lay claim to using disciplined enquiry in the solution of practical problems to be tested and recognised for their academic credibility. The possibility of accreditation would raise the quality of student entrants and of TEI staff. It would also raise the larger issue of the relevance and quality of teaching in both sets of institutions, both of which should be subject to evaluation.

## **RELATIONS WITH THE WORLD OF WORK**

In one sense, Greek higher education is too strongly connected to the world of work. Its graduates are mainly destined to enter the public service and it is this which largely explains why it is dominated by general studies and is weak in technical and vocational education.

We are told that connections with industry and business are growing in both the universities and in the TEIs and we were impressed by the evidently strong connection between some engineering departments and industrial and governmental sponsors who use them for testing and development services. Projects financed by the European Union encourage connections and some part-time teachers in

universities are recruited from industry. Universities and TEI based consultancies are also increasing in number.

But in general the teaching and research agendas are not well matched to the pattern of the Greek economy which depends largely on small, often family owned forms. The overwhelming dependence on public sector for employment remains a key feature. In order to exploit these small firm characteristics of the economy, studies related to high technology industries, marketing and the sophisticated development of tourism would be obvious candidates, but these are not conspicuously present in existing provision. Nor would a text book, teacher-dependent form of higher education equip graduates with generic entrepreneurial qualities. These would be associated with patterns of learning which encourage innovation, critical questioning of existing knowledge, and the ability to produce work based on continuous application.

Institutions could consider how to improve their offerings in terms of potential developments in the economy, and this could be assisted if employers were brought in an advisory capacity. Lay representation is conspicuously lacking in university and TEI governance.

### **STAFF DEVELOPMENT**

In most advanced systems there have been major steps forward achieved through the creation of staff development resources in institutions.

In Greece the tasks would be formidable. The creation of committed and expert teaching force would require deep analysis of the deficits in existing curricula and teaching methods, in the patterns and practices of assessment and in the expectations placed on students. It would be aimed at weaning teaching from its dependence on set texts, helping teachers to make curriculum more responsive to employment needs beyond traditional outlets and to encourage creativity.

It would be necessary to begin by providing a central staff development capacity which could act as an advisory resource to the institutions.

The extent to which staff development is taken seriously would be an aspect of performance to be judged in evaluation of a department and institution.

### **EVALUATION**

Evaluation has taken hold of most systems of higher education and if worked out and carried through with care could help Greek higher education tackle many of the problems which face it.

Evaluation serves multiple purposes and it is important to determine its aims before it is installed. It can be used to reinforce accountability to the institution or to client groups and thus take on a judgmental and summative form. In this form it

is likely to lead to proposals for action. It might also be used as the basis for allocations of resources.

It can also be used for self-critique and development. In that case it is likely to be formative in style and to lead to those being evaluated determining what actions they themselves should take.

In our view both types of evaluation, that related to accountability and that related to self-improvement, are seriously needed in Greek higher education.

There are also choices to be made on the techniques to be used in evaluation. For most purposes open ended peer review is appropriate, as long as the criteria being used are explicit, and the selection of the "peers" is carefully made. Some limited use of performance indicators for research and teaching could be made, but as "can openers and not dials". For some purposes, self-evaluation is the appropriate starting point and can be used as the basis of external review as well as of self-development.

### **Evaluation of teaching**

Evaluation of teaching should include:

- scrutiny of the curricula adopted for each subject area. The scrutiny should respect freedom of interpretation, and wholly concern the quality of structure and materials employed, and the methods used for teaching and learning it;
- scrutiny of assessment procedures;
- some limited visitations of peers to classes;
- student assessment of teaching;
- external client assessment (e.g. by key employers).

A separate issue is the external moderation of all assessments leading to the award of degrees. This is desirable in all systems, but essential in the Greek circumstances of lack of trust described above.

### **Evaluation of research**

Evaluation of research is less difficult than that of teaching because, in principle, its results are open to outside scrutiny. We urge the need to ensure that evaluation is directed to the promotion of good work related to the needs of Greece for a strong scientific base which will advance theory and improve practice rather than to punish poor or non-performance and to reward existing excellences. It is too easy for evaluation to have a purgative rather than a developmental role although obviously it can assist in the identification, for appropriate remedy, of persistently poor or non-performance.

Evaluation should be undertaken by peer groups of established academic reputations, and should be based on assessment of published work. Assessments should also take account of future potential so that newly emerging groups or individuals are noted.

Evaluation of research should be taken into account when resources are allocated but the temptation to simply reward the best should be avoided. The objective of research funding should be to put money where it can do most good and that might include the nourishment of promising but emerging centres or individuals or even in the rescue of poor research in areas where development is desirable.

An expert evaluation centre for higher education should be established, free of the Ministry, and charged with the duty of giving advice on evaluative methods and with monitoring the efficacy and equity of evaluation arrangements throughout the system. Other countries have employed external experts to make surveys of both teaching and research quality.

It seems desirable that evaluation reports of both teaching and research should be published. This will help restore credibility to a system which at present seems to have lost the confidence of many of the clients who are constrained to use it.

## CONCLUSIONS AND PROPOSALS

We came away from our discussions in many universities and TEIs and with those conversant with Greek higher education with a sense of disappointment that a country so committed to higher education was so burdened with a system that could not begin to deliver what the country needed. So many of its pathologies seem to be embedded in the political culture of the country. We felt, however, that the volume of discontent was sufficiently strong for it to be worth while to attempt radical changes that should eventually win universal political and professional support.

We therefore make far-reaching recommendations which, at the risk of appearing repetitive, we think it would be useful to summarise as follows:

- The provision for higher education should be based on an appraisal of the present and future needs of the economy and of the extent to which they are being met by existing provision. Planning should be directed to meeting the needs of the whole economy and be aimed at reducing the high proportion of graduates eventually employed in public sector.
- Universities and TEIs should be expected to create an institutional plan that goes forward to reasonable time horizons, that judges the type of courses that should be provided in order to meet students' needs and the needs of the economy and society, that estimates the kind of staff, physical plant and equipment that is needed, and negotiates on that basis with the govern-



ment. The controls on expenditure should rely on agreements reached on objectives and on ensuring that spending is related to them.

- Universities lack the ability to know or to control their annual intakes of students and to allocate funding or to recruit teaching staff in relation to specific institutional needs. Greek universities need the power to make such decisions in the context of a clearly defined national framework. The number of admissions each year should be determined in consultation between Ministry and universities rather than unilaterally by the Ministry, and should be related to the agreed capacities of institutions.
- The problem of “inactive students” should be addressed in view of the knock-on effects their continued registration have on the numbers of new students admitted each year on institutional budgeting, and on the underlying commitment to higher education as a serious pursuit. Steps should be taken to establish reliable figures of students attending higher education.
- Higher education staff should include a majority of teachers with a full-time commitment to their students and to research and other scholarly activities. Professors’ average teaching duties could be increased to more than the present 3-5 hours a week. A full-time commitment in return for adequate pay should become the norm. This would require them to be paid adequate salaries. A charter stating the duties, obligations and conditions of work for both teachers and students should be directed towards the creation of full professionalism which is definably concerned with advancing the welfare of students and their education rather than responding to political or patronal pressures.
- The raising of institutional income additional to those allowed from national funds should be encouraged. This might come from local taxation in those areas where there is an unsatisfied demand for more places. Institutions should be encouraged to raise more money from private sources. Additional income might come from: the marketing of fee-paying courses for various target groups – the levying of tuition fees from “native” students, and possibly for certain forms of post-graduate studies, consultancy fees for industry, etc. – in general, encouraging universities to develop more entrepreneurial spirit than they show at present.
- The authorisation of certain forms of properly accredited private institutions would expand provision at a time when demand is unsatisfied, enable more students to study in Greece rather than abroad, and provide some much needed competition for the public system.
- Reforms are essential in the content and style of university curriculum. Teaching methods should be directed towards developing innovation and independent thought. Higher education should not only provide students

and teachers with a better educational experience but also enhance economic diversity and performance. Specifically, the following matters are in need of wholesale reform:

- the revision of entrance examination curricula and procedures so as to remove the dead weights of memorisation and often outdated syllabuses in favour of examinations which test individual judgement and critical ability;
  - redressing the balance between general and applied/vocational education in favour of the latter;
  - discouraging the dependence on set text books by replacing free set text books by the adequate funding of libraries;
  - a thorough review of the systems of feedback to and assessment of students which is at present largely unrigorous and encourages memorisation. Assessment procedures should be subject to external moderation to decrease pressures from students and other interested groups regarding the content and style of teaching and modes and standards of assessment and to enhance the quality of teaching;
  - some power to relieve the universities of unwilling or incompetent students is necessary, perhaps by assessment of total progress at the end of the second year;
  - students should be given greater freedom to pursue the subjects of their own choice within degree courses and the practice of filling courses with students who have not opted for them should cease. It is essential that students become committed to their studies and not regard them simply as a meal ticket.
- The declared autonomy of universities needs to be made a reality. The present central controls over finance should be replaced by the delegation of lump sum budgets based upon negotiation about student intakes and other commitments, and handed over in good time in each financial period for effective institutional planning to be possible. Institutions should be able to appoint their own staff, without reference to the Ministry within an agreed staffing budget. At the same time they should be subject to effective audit systems and transparent appointments and contracting procedures of the kind which universities in other countries have found it possible to work within, without restriction on their freedom.
- External groups, particularly employers, should be brought into institutional governance at least in an advisory capacity.
- As institutions acquire autonomy they will need to install more effective management and planning systems. These are likely to lead to an increase in

authority of rectorates at the expense of senates, and the restructuring will require careful analysis and negotiation.

- A review of existing doctoral and other advanced training should be coupled with an examination of existing research activities in universities and TEIs. This should be a preliminary to consideration of a plan for graduate education which should take account of the future staffing needs of higher education and industry and business.
- Individual TEI courses should be able to lead to first level degrees if they display the requisite quality on rigorous accreditation of their courses. Salaries should be related to individual qualifications and teaching and research levels, and not be automatically raised to those of university teachers.
- Greek higher education needs a committed and expert teaching force. Resources should be devoted to staff development at both the institutional and individual teaching level. There should be a central staff development capacity which could act as an advisory resource to the institutions.
- It will greatly enhance the quality and standing of Greek higher education if a thorough system of evaluation of both teaching and research is established. This should aim at both self-improvement through self-evaluation and demonstrated public accountability through objective peer assessment. If installed together with more rigorous student assessment the lack of trust which at present pervades the system could be dispelled. An expert evaluation centre for higher education should be established, free of the Ministry, and charged with the duty of giving advice on evaluative methods and with monitoring the efficacy and equity of evaluation arrangements throughout the system.