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## Globalization and Higher Education: the Polish Perspective

**Abstract.** The impact of the process of globalization on higher education institutions and policies is profound, but also diverse, depending on the specific location on the global arena (Marginson & Van der Wende, 2007; Ball, 2012). This paper focuses on relations between globalization and higher education from the perspective of Poland. It analyses various concepts of globalization and economic and socio-cultural aspects of globalization that seem to considerably affect higher education institutions. Then, the major effects of globalization on higher education in Poland are discussed, and some implications for Polish higher education institutions are presented in order to help them better cope with rapid global changes and meet international standards.

**Keywords:** globalization, higher education, the effects of globalization, higher education in Poland

### Introduction

The impact of the process of globalization on higher education institutions and policies is profound, but also diverse, depending on the specific location on the global arena (Marginson & van der Wende, 2007; Ball, 2012). This paper focuses on relations between globalization and higher education from the perspective of Poland. Polish higher education has changed dramatically since 1989 as a result of transition from the communist regime to democratic governance (Antonowicz, 2012; Kwiek, 2014). As Kwiek (2014) indicates a wide range of reforms have been implemented

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by new governments leading to regaining institutional autonomy and academic freedom, shared governance, emergent public-private duality, new competitive research funding and fee regimes. Clearly, as a result of intensive reforms, Polish universities were given more autonomy and more funding. However, as some authors point out (Kwiek 2014, 2016; Antonowicz, 2015), changes in the Polish higher education sector are not only linked to intensive governmental reforms, but they are also strongly influenced by global pressures. Globalization has a multi-faceted impact on the functions of higher education institutions. These include preparing highly skilled professionals in different fields, including the teaching profession. Meeting the changing educational aspirations of societies and the needs of a knowledge-based economy requires a new quality in teacher education. Indeed, as Stewart points out “the overall quality of a school system rests on the quality of its teachers, and the quality of teachers depends on the systems in place to support them” (2012, p. 87). Therefore, the standards for teachers’ qualifications as well as content and forms of teacher education programs are widely discussed in many countries across the world (Whitty & Furlong, 2017).

The article begins by reviewing various concepts of globalization and economic and socio-cultural aspects of globalization that seem to considerably affect higher education institutions. Then, the major effects of globalization on higher education in Poland are discussed, and some implications are presented for Polish higher education institutions in order to better cope with rapid global changes and meet international standards.

### **What is Globalization?**

Globalization has become one of the key and most frequently used concepts in the humanities and social sciences since the 1990s (Beck, 2000; Scholte, 2005). Although this term is widely used in political and academic debates and in daily life, there is no consensus about its meaning (James & Steger, 2014). This term covers a lot of issues related to economic, political, social, legal, or cultural areas. Some authors have even stressed that the term ‘globalization’ had been used in such various senses and meanings that “it sometimes seems possible to pronounce virtually anything on the subject” (Scholte, 1997, as cited in Beerkens, 2003). Beerkens (2003) illustrated this situation with the metaphor of “globalization container”, which includes the maze of different perspectives, approaches and definitions of this process. For example, in popular discourse, globalization is mainly referred to the fact that people, cultures, communities, and economies around the world are becoming increasingly interconnected. In academic discourse, there is also a wide range of conceptualizations of this term (Sklair, 1999; Beerkens, 2003). For example, according to Giddens (1990, p. 64), globalization is “the intensification of worldwide

social relations which link distant localities in such way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa". Other authors such as Carnoy, Castells and Cohen (1993) or Cox (1994) pointed out that globalization refers, in general, to investment, production, management, markets, labour, information, and technology organized across national borders. Globalization is also conceptualized as a "widening, deepening, and speeding up of interconnectedness in all aspects of contemporary life, from the cultural, to the criminal, the financial to the spiritual." (Held, et al., 1999, p. 2). Although many authors have defined globalization somewhat differently, there is a consensus that globalization has profound effects on social, cultural and political areas and the established institutions or ideas such as nation, state, democracy, power, law, culture, language, and – what is important from the perspective of this article – higher education (Robotycki, 2008). As Morrow and Torres (2000, as cited in Antonowicz, 2012, p. 91) noted, "perhaps no place has been more subject to these processes of internationalization and globalization than university."

The process of globalization is characterized by the increasing importance of capital represented by changing social values, global values, or individual wealth. In this meaning, capital is not only financial, but it also includes intellectual capital, fundamental for the knowledge society, whose utilization is facilitated by global information technology (Jarvis, 2007). The resource base of great world sectors is changing from ownership to control, from material riches to economic and intellectual capital. The world economy and social powers are taking the place of nation and local community, which changes economic positions of individual countries and their economies, as well as the essence of social interactions and structures. In addition, the requirements related to education and educational system are also changing (McNair, 2001). Multilateral connections beyond the borders of national states and communities are advancing in today's world, resulting in considerable development of international and non-governmental organizations or global solidarity movements (e.g. Beck, 2000). Globalization is also associated with cultural and ideological uniformity: Americanization of the world (e.g. Deem, 2001). In the political sphere, globalization is mostly connected with popularizing neo-liberal social and educational policies in different countries (e.g. Potulicka, 2010). The ideas of neo-liberalism refer to values such as freedom, effectiveness, efficiency, free competition, entrepreneurship and individualism, as well as their political applications in market ideology (Ball, 1998). As Levin (2001, as cited in Lee, 2004, p. 5) points out, "with emphasis upon international competitiveness, economic globalization is viewed as moving postsecondary institutions into a business-like orientation, with its attendant behaviors of efficiency and productivity". The roles and tasks of university are described and analysed using the following terms: entrepreneurial university, academic capitalism, and McDonaldization of higher education (Potulicka, 2010). Students are referred to in terms of clients, entering

the university means access, and the curriculum is governed by the market, which determines the course of education and options for students to choose. In the following section, we refer to the aspects of globalization which according to some authors (Kwiek, 2014; Varghese, 2013) seem to have had the most significant impact on higher education: the growing importance of knowledge in economy and development of modern technologies, and the transformations in employment and the labour market.

### **The Impact of Economic and Socio-Cultural Aspects of the Globalization Process on Higher Education**

#### *The Growing Importance of Knowledge Economy and Technological Development*

The depletion of natural resources and energy, which are the basic factors of economic growth for the world economy, was increasingly pointed out in the second half of the twentieth century. Thus, it was necessary to look for other, non-material factors ensuring the growth of national income. The energy and fuel crisis observable in the world economy in the 1970s accelerated and intensified that search. This resulted in the fundamental increase in the importance of knowledge, including economic knowledge. This source of economic growth is renewable and unlimited. Slowly, transformations in the industrial society occurred, causing changes in the ways of production and the structure of labour and employment. Knowledge became a strategic resource and change-motivating factor, just like natural resources and energy had been before. The knowledge-based economy replaced the industrial economy, in the same way the industrial economy had replaced the agricultural economy in the past. Nowadays, higher economic value is generated by the trade of knowledge than manufactured goods (McNair, 2001). Knowledge is a kind of currency, determining the affluence of nations (Duderstadt, 1999).

A very important factor causing the growing importance of knowledge in economy was technological changes in the twentieth century. Information and communication technologies, which greatly increased the speed and range of communication and allowed the unprecedented creation of information, have had very significant social, economic and educational effects. In industrial economy, there was also a shortage of information, and the access to information ensured power and strength. Currently, information is generated constantly and is widely available. The most important effect of the technological change was the reduced number of jobs that require low qualifications and the growing number of highly qualified ones. The core of it was to eliminate routine and repeatable tasks, which made work more productive. Another significant change was in what makes a product valuable. In industrial economy, the highest expenditure was on materials and labour. In

knowledge-based economy, computers are a typical product. However, it should be noted that physical resources and direct labour required for the construction of a computer are unimportant in comparison to long hours of labour devoted to the design of the computer, software and protection (McNair, 2001).

In the economics of industry, the intellectual effort of a small minority of managers was used, with the majority regarded as mere “hands” with no brain. Economic knowledge has no tasks for the “hands”, so those excluded from knowledge mean a waste and threat for the company. The implication for the economy and individuals is that everybody needs better education, providing the poorest educated ones with economic knowledge and enhancing that knowledge all the time (McNair, 2001).

### *Transformations in Employment and the Labour Market*

Since the 1990s, problems with employment have been growing along with quick economic transformations. Considerable attention was paid to the proposed solutions to the problems, which was reflected in documents and reports prepared by the World Bank, OECD, UNESCO etc. They specified the following tasks for countries: stable macroeconomic policy, investing in the basic social services and infrastructure, or protecting the weakest ones and the environment. Moreover, as a result of development of educational market, the number of highly educated individuals was growing, but also more and more people were looking for a job. These problems intensified due to the world financial crisis of 2007. Although the current problems of employment are complex, depending on the speed and range of economic and social transformations resulting in changes in the structure of employment, the current labour market context involves changes in the organization of economic projects, an increase in part-time and seasonal employment, greater mobility of employees, the disappearance of “lifelong employment”, strong pressure to improve the quality of employees’ qualification, a gap between the supply of and demand for skills and competencies, the reduction of jobs that involve routine actions and low qualifications and the increase of jobs that require high qualifications, the greater need of reskilling and changing the profession several times in a lifetime and continuing education, as well as the greater importance of self-employment (OECD, 2012). Employers, young people looking for jobs and those who have already experienced the instability of the labour market currently face such complex conditions. Of fundamental importance for all of them are the skills, qualifications and competencies that are needed in the current employment context; actually, they are becoming the global currency of the twenty-first century (OECD, 2012). This is also expected from higher education system and universities (see e.g. Hansen, 2008). In 2005, a study was carried out concerning e.g., the usefulness and usability of university curricula for the professional career (Allen & van der Velden, 2007, as cited in Støren & Aamodt, 2010). This study encompassed 36,000 working graduates

in 13 European countries. The study findings showed that more than half (51%) of Norwegian graduates rated their university curricula very highly, whereas only 30% of Austrian, French and Swiss respondents and 20–25% graduates of higher education institutions from the Netherlands, Belgium, Great Britain, Italy, Spain and Germany assessed them that way. 10–12% graduates from Italy, Great Britain, Spain and France gave them very low ratings. Besides, among the respondents who rated their university curricula very highly, the highest number of Norwegian graduates (over 32%) regarded them as useful for further learning at the workplace, compared to only about 20% of graduates from the other countries. Similar results were obtained in the case of assessing the usefulness of curricula for carrying out current tasks at work and for finding a job and future career (Allen & van der Velden, 2007, as cited in Støren & Aamodt, 2010).

Presently, most universities and higher education institutions engage in activities aimed to improve the graduates' ability to enter the labour market through the development of "core competencies/skills", "transferable competencies/skills", or "graduates' qualities" (Brew, 2010). Such activities are necessary, because unfortunately there is still a gap between the needs of employers and continuing education and what universities offer (Kocór, Strzebońska & Keler, 2012). Hence, the criteria of effective education at universities must evolve in order to always reflect the contexts in which education and learning take place (Devlina & Samarawickrema, 2010).

### **The Effects of Globalization on Higher Education from the Polish Perspective**

As I mentioned, globalization significantly influences the higher education sector. Hence, in this section I report some effects of globalization on higher education system in Poland. Particularly, I pay special attention to the following effects: (a) the development of education market and mass education, (b) financing higher education, (c) the quality of teaching in higher education, (d) implementing the Bologna Process, especially in the context of comparability of qualifications of graduates from different universities and countries, (e) changes in the mission of university and (f) the teaching process. The presentation of these effects is organized in the following way: first, we provide some consideration links to the international context; then, I turn to considering what happens in Polish higher education reality.

#### *(a) The Development of Education Market and Mass Education*

In the 1960s, in response to the needs and growing educational ambitions of the society, a non-academic and non-state sector of education and the related educational market emerged in many countries. However, the limitation of state resources for

education began at the same time. Despite that, in the 1990s, the number of students in developed countries increased on average over 40%. For example, in Sweden and New Zealand the growth in the number of students exceeded 41%, in Ireland it was over 51%, and in England even over 81% (Schuetze & Slowey, 2000, p. 3). The increase in the student body also occurred in the following years: in Australia from approximately 700 thousand in the year 2000 up to over 1.1 million in 2009 (Shah, et al., 2011).

Furthermore, the authorities of many countries intend to increase the proportion of young people in higher education, including foreign students. The Australian government has decided to increase before the year 2020 the number of students up to 40% of the population aged 25–34 (first-cycle qualifications or higher) (Shah, et al., 2011). In Great Britain it is expected that before the year 2020 the number of students will grow to 50% of the population aged 18–30, and the pace of growth in poorer groups will increase (Shah, et al., 2011). The authorities of Ireland have even more ambitious plans, as they attempt to achieve before the year 2020 a 72% proportion of students among the 17–19 population, plus higher enrolment of people from poorer social groups (HEA, 2010).

In Poland the legal regulations introduced after 1989 allowed the formation of a non-state sector of education, including higher schools, which provided greater access to education at this level but involved fees. Non-public higher schools were established in many regions of Poland, and associations, organizations or individuals were the legal entities. This way, the educational market began to develop. The population of students grew and became more diverse. Over the last two decades, the number of students grew a lot in Poland, and the 1995–2000 period was referred to as the educational boom. The net enrolment ratio, the proportion of students aged 19–24 in 1990 was 9.8%, in 1995 it reached 17.2%, in 2000, 30.6%, in 2005 it grew to 38%, in 2010, 40.8%, in 2011, 40.6%, in 2015, 37.8%, in 2017, 36.2%, and in 2018, 35.5% (GUS, 1990; GUS, 2019). Thus, recently the proportion of students has been slightly decreasing, and in 2018 there were 19 general universities, 41 specialist universities, 34 state higher schools and 267 non-public higher schools (MDHE, 2018). On the other hand, the increase in the number of students was not accompanied by proportional increase in the number of academic teachers (GUS, 2010; GUS, 2015). As we can see from the presented data, in the first decades of this century, in Poland higher education – which used to be the domain of a small part of population, the elite – transformed into a mass system, which entailed a problem with financing.

### *(b) Financing Higher Education*

In recent decades, public funds for higher education have been limited, while the number of students and costs of education and research have been growing. This tendency does not only occur in countries with relatively low domestic product but



also in the wealthiest ones. Market mechanisms have been introduced into higher education in multiple countries, because governments have been looking for a way to increase the number of students without increasing public expenditure or increasing it only a little. In the USA between 1998 and 2008 the average cost of education (fees plus sustenance) grew by 211% in private universities and by 230% in public ones; fees in private universities grew by 245% and in public ones, by 315%, which was the result of, not only inflation, but also limiting the public financing of education and transferring the costs to students and their parents (Johnstone, 2009). In 2010 and 2016, public expenditure on higher education in some European countries expressed as a percentage of GDP was as follows: in France, 1.1 and 1.3, in Spain 1.2 and 1.2, in Germany, 1.0 and 1.2, in Great Britain, 0.7 and 1.7, in Italy, 0.8 and 0.9, which means that the expenditure did not grow much in that period, and in some cases even decreased (GUS, 2019). In Australia the government limited public financing of higher schools from 77% of their income in 1989 to as little as 44% in 2009 (Shah, et al., 2011). Therefore, in many European countries, Australia, the USA and other developing countries the costs of education were transferred to students and their families, among others through allowing the contracting of loans (e.g., Opheim, 2005; Harding, 2011). In response to decreasing state financing, many universities and other higher schools are looking for income from other sources.

Regarding the Polish situation, in 2002, public expenditure on higher education expressed as a percentage of GDP was 0.85 and in the following years it grew very little (up to 0.93 in 2007) (GUS, 2002, 2007). Since 2007, however, the expenditure on higher education has been decreasing, and in 2015, it was only 0.72, in 2016 – 0.70, in 2017 – 0.68, but in 2018 – 0.76 (GUS, 2019). Hence, many schools and universities have to look for extra income from other sources.

### *(c) The Quality of Teaching in Higher Education*

Limitations in public financing of higher education, accompanied by the necessity to meet changing social and individual educational needs, were the source of tensions and problems in academic didactics and legitimate discussions about the achieved quality of education. The development of the education market, the mass character of education, problems in the labour market and the resultant implications are significant factors that currently determine the quality of education in higher schools all over the world (e.g., European Commission, 2013; Rachoń, 2013). It should be noted that mass education and financial problems of universities directly affect the work of an academic teacher. As some authors suggest (e.g., Jauhiainen, et al., 2009; Melosik, 2009; Sawczuk, 2009; Brew, 2010), they lead to overloading academic teachers with didactic responsibilities, the need to conduct lectures and classes with numerous groups, lowering the standards required in the educational process, or conflict between the values preferred in higher education and educational practice. In addition, the achieved quality of education is partly dependent on



students' attitude to the studies and on external determinants: secondary schools fail to prepare students for university, and the lenient selection or lack of selection at the recruitment stage may lead to lower intellectual level of candidates for students (e.g., Potulicka, 2010; Keane, 2011), limited students' activity and autonomy, insufficient internal motivation to study, instrumental attitude to the studies, looking for diplomas instead of knowledge, using unethical ways of getting credits or writing diploma works (e.g., Jauhiainen, et al., 2009; Marciniak, 2013), and potential problems with finding employment in the difficult labour market.

To summarise, teaching in higher education is associated with a number of tensions, dilemmas and problems. Some of them may be less important in the context of the decreasing number of students in the recent years, but it only happen if university authorities form smaller groups for lectures and classes instead of looking for savings in the field of academic teaching. It should be noted that the reduction of the number of students in classes in order to raise the quality of teaching is the main aim of currently implemented reform in Polish higher education sector (MSHE, 2016).

#### *(d) The Bologna Process and Comparability of Graduates' Qualifications*

The globalizing world, possible mobility and information revolution have internationalized the educational and labour markets, but at the same time, problems with the quality of qualifications acquired by graduates of different universities and countries have intensified. Therefore, in 1999, the Bologna Process began in order to make education systems of European countries more alike. It involved comparable diplomas, the credit-based system of comparing students' performance (ECTS), the three-cycle system of study, and supporting the mobility of students and teachers visiting other universities. In 2008, the *Recommendation of the European Parliament and of the Council on the Establishment of the European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning* was implemented. As a result, National Qualifications Framework for higher education and lifelong learning were introduced in all the states of the European Union and in many countries outside of the EU in order to ensure that their levels are similar to the European one.

In Poland, the National Qualifications Framework was introduced in the academic year 2012/2013, describing qualifications connected with each degree and the respective diploma/certificate in the language of education outcomes, defined in terms of knowledge, skills and social competencies, which should ensure the comparability of qualifications of graduates from different universities and countries and improve the relevance of the educational offer to the social needs and the labour market, requirements for education areas, and recommendations concerning the design of study curricula and classes based on education outcomes (Chmielecka, 2011). National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education was an integral part of Polish Qualifications Framework (PQF) and was consistently developed following

the same methodology (Chłoń-Domińczak, et al., 2016). The basic element of the new qualifications system is Polish Qualifications Framework, consisting of eight levels just like European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Each level is described using the education outcomes confirmed by the qualification at that level. PQF includes education outcomes obtained in formal education but also elsewhere. It also enables the comparability of qualifications of graduates from different universities and countries, and better adjusts the educational offer of universities to the social needs and the labour market (Chłoń-Domińczak et al., 2016).

*(e) Changes in the Mission of University*

For hundreds of years, different concepts of the university clashed, which resulted in the formation of the model of the liberal university, of various varieties, for which in the nineteenth century the ideas of the university were particularly significant according to the concepts of W. Humboldt, J.H. Newman, and others in the twentieth century. The mission of the university according to W. Humboldt's concept was defined by its constitutive features: unity of scientific research and education, professors combining the role of teacher with the function of a researcher, freedom of science – research and lectures, practicing pure and selfless science (Wołoszyn, 1964). This concept is broadened by the views of J.H. Newman from the mid-nineteenth century, who perceived the university's tasks, among others: in teaching universal, philosophical and humanistic knowledge, in developing intellectual culture and reflection, in freedom of research, and in proclaiming truth (Newman, 1990).

The effects of globalization and neo-liberal policy at the turn of the century led to changes in the mission and functions of university, especially in Europe and North America (Scott 2006). From a socio-cultural institution whose main function was to form persons and citizens cultivating the “mind and soul” it is being transformed into an institution that provides instrumental knowledge and gives an opportunity to acquire professional skills. The main mission of contemporary university is to educate well-informed, efficient and qualified employees needed by the competitive market of the world economy. The concept of university education is changing. In the past, its main component was the English and American concept of “liberal education/culture”, German *Bildung und Wissenschaft*, French *culture* or Greek *paideia*. Nowadays, its key components are increasingly “instrumental rationality” (Kazamias, 2001, p. 11), and the modern university is more and more market-driven (e.g., Duderstadt, 1999). Instead of a community, it is becoming an enterprise (Malewski, 2008).

The neo-liberal model of university as an enterprise seems to prevail in current academic reality in Poland (Potulicka, 2010). Higher schools are perceived as profitable enterprises that should generate income (Bates & Godoń, 2017). Hence, the hybrid model of university education based on market rationality seems to be

dominant (Malewski, 2008). Education, research and diplomas are a commodity for which there is demand; the university is a factory manufacturing diplomas, and students are the consumers (e.g., Denek, 2011; Tomlinson, 2016; Bates & Godoń, 2017). Therefore, there is growing concern about the lasting values of university, maintaining its identity, the quality of carrying out its traditional mission and function: doing research and providing general education. On the other hand, it is also demanded that universities should display greater responsibility and sensitivity to the current needs and social expectations (e.g., Krajewska, 2004, 2012). As a result, universities in many countries, including Poland, have begun to adjust their educational activity to various needs and expectations of students, employers and other people or institutions interested in the results of their work; they concentrate on applied sciences instead of basic research and on practical education. A report prepared by the International Association of University Presidents (2000) showed that the mission of the university should reflect global trends as well as the needs and expectations of different groups of local stakeholders.

That is why recently in Poland universities have displayed greater activity in terms of meeting social needs, making research results and knowledge acquired at universities available for the external world, local, national and international collaboration, highlighting innovation, ensuring the whole society the opportunity of lifelong learning, promoting graduates equipped with versatile knowledge, skills and competencies relevant to the labour market and requirements of knowledge-based economy, and engaging in activities oriented at raising the quality of education.

#### *(f) Changes in the Teaching Process in Higher Education Institutions*

At the turn of the century, the presented changes in different spheres of life of the society led to transformations in educational philosophy, theory and practice, in the system of education reflecting new social needs and expectations related to higher education. The introduction of National Qualifications Framework in Poland created the need to modify educational programmes whose important element was to determine the objectives of education for each subject, and thus, certain states to be achieved. As a result of the changes, teachers define education outcomes, i.e., what students should know, understand and/or demonstrate after the completion of the educational process. Education outcomes should be expressed as active verbs relevant to the knowledge, skills and social competencies, and they should be achievable, measurable, and verifiable (Kraśniewski, 2011). The determination and ways of verification of education outcomes still engender discussions in academia, especially that the current number of students still is not ideal to use such opportunities.

Changes in the university curricula are another consequence of globalization. There is clear emphasis on the need of integrating theory and practice, knowledge connected with practical activity. As the concept of learning through action was

being developed, learning through practice also attracted more and more attention. There were clear tendencies to apply module education, in which students are more and more often provided with curricula of subjects or cycles of classes to choose from as they wish. At the same time, the need to better match graduates' competencies with the needs of the labour market requires universities to collaborate more than before in preparing the educational offer with external stakeholders. It is suggested I should raise the opportunities for individualized education, depart from thinking in "one model for all" categories, and if possible, adjust a university's offerings to the needs of an individual recipient (student), not adjust the student to the unified model of a specific form of education (Kraśniewski, 2009).

For many years of the previous century, the behaviourist theory was commonly approved in the theory of learning; the process of education was teacher-oriented. In recent decades, however, other theories of learning have begun to develop: concepts of humanistic psychology, cognitive psychology, including cognitive and socio-cultural constructivism; the process of teaching and learning was increasingly concentrated on the learning individual, motivating their activity, autonomy, responsibility, with the support and collaboration of the teacher through the relationships of cooperation or dialogue (e.g. Ledzińska & Czerniawska, 2011; Krajewska, 2016). Furthermore, the development of modern information and communication technologies and services offered as part of them allowed greater flexibility and innovativeness in education and learning through overcoming barriers connected with the distance and choice of time of study, ensuring new possibilities for individuals and groups, and facilitating interaction with other students and teachers, such as discussion groups, voice mail, video conferences etc. (e.g. Juszczak, 2010).

### **Concluding Remarks**

In this paper, I attempted to present the main effects of globalization on higher education from the Polish perspective. Although it may not be possible to give a comprehensive picture of globalization regarding its impacts on higher education in Poland, the globalization effects discussed in this article should draw our attention to some important implications for higher education institutions.

As I tried to emphasize, the process of globalization and various social, political and cultural changes related to it have initiated many positive changes, not only in the organization and structure of Polish higher education but also in the thinking about the role of higher education in the society. In recent years, numerous changes have been initiated in teacher education programs, in order to better respond to the needs of a changing society. A greater emphasis is paid to preparing future teachers to be researchers and critical thinkers (Kowalczyk-Wałędziak, et al., 2019; Papastephanou, et al., 2019), implementers of educational innovations and working

with immigrant children (Ellis, et al., 2019). It must be stressed, yet, that although changes in the higher education system create a new quality of education, the speed of introducing them into academic practice may not be satisfying and there are some problems with implementing some of the changes.

Hence, to be effective in the global world, Polish higher education institutions still need to make increasing effort to be better prepared for global changes. In particular, according to Kwiek (2014), in the situation generated by the emergence of the global market, global economy, and the withdrawal of the state (also called the decomposition of the welfare state), constant deliberation is needed about new relations between the state and the university in the global age.

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