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**Abstract**

The thesis of this article is that the main factors contributing to the need to rethink higher education institutions today are linked to the advent of the global age. Although the countries of Central and Eastern Europe are not yet feeling the full force of the ensuing pressures, higher education here is likely to be affected very soon by globalization-related processes. Higher education all over the world, including Central and Eastern Europe, is no longer the unique part of the public sector that it used to be, either in explicit political declarations, in public perceptions, or in practical terms. Higher education is doubly affected by the local post-1989 transformations and by more profound and more long-lasting global transformations. To neglect either of the two levels of analysis is to misunderstand a decade of failed attempts to reform higher education systems in this part of the world. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)