

18.1.2025

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**Title**

The Knowledge Society and Diversification of Higher Education: From the Social Contract to the Mission of Universities/ Attila Pausits

**Publication year**

2015

**Source/Footnote**

In: The European Higher education area : between critical reflections and future policies / Adrian Curaj ; Liviu Matei ; Remus Pricopie ; Jamil Salmi ; Peter Scott (Editors). - Cham [u.a.] : Springer International Publishing, 2015. - S. 267 - 284, Volltext:

**Inventory number**

46818

**Keywords**

Informationsgesellschaft / Wissensgesellschaft ; Ausland : Europa : Hochschulwesen allgemein ; Hochschule : Idee und Aufgabe

**Abstract**

A further opening of universities towards social stakeholder groups is a part of the modernization agenda in the European Higher Education Area. This ambition is often overwritten with the concept of 'Third Mission'. The third mission bundles all activities outside the academic environment and promotes interaction with other target groups. Typical areas of the third mission are continuing education, technology transfer and innovation, and the social engagement of the university as an institution. Future positioning of higher education institutions will take place more over their third mission strategies and activities. This article considers the third mission as a widening of teaching and research, introduces possible activities and calls for a systematic and strategic examination of the subject as well as for an integration into rankings. Furthermore, the article aims to stimulate critical

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reflection on the third mission indicators, so that the third mission becomes a more relevant part of the social contract. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)

**Signature**

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