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**Abstract**

At the start of the Twenty-First Century, European universities must play a number of roles in terms of social and economic development. In particular, they must increasingly serve as engines for local and regional development, thus filling a niche that only seems logical for them. At the same time, universities will form elites, particularly local elites; however, those universities that are world-class institutions will and should educate global elites. In performing the latter role, European universities in the Twenty-First Century will reassume a role, seized by American universities in the Twentieth

Century, which they had successfully played in the Nineteenth Century. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)