

**Modelos de fusión de instituciones de educación superior
en Europa: estudio comparativo de la fase post-fusión**

Tesis doctoral

Doctorando: Carlos Ripoll Soler

Directores:

Dra. María de Miguel Molina – Dr. Guy Eugene Haug

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UNIVERSITAT
POLITÈCNICA
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1. Resumen

En este epígrafe se presentan los resúmenes en español, inglés y valenciano.

1.1 Resumen en español

Esta tesis estudia los modelos de fusión de instituciones de educación superior, con un especial énfasis en lo que hemos denominado la etapa post-fusión. El contexto actual plantea diferentes temas como la internacionalización, la globalización, los rankings o la escasez de recursos que hace que en muchas ocasiones emerja la idea de una fusión universitaria. Este tipo de fusiones debe poder abordarse con solidez, tanto si se plantea desde las propias instituciones de educación superior como si son los gobiernos los que proponen este tipo de acciones para reestructurar el sistema de educación superior de un país.

Aunque existen algunos estudios sobre fusiones universitarias, hemos observado que la mayoría se centran en describir casos concretos, pero no llega a establecerse una teoría que pueda, de manera general, conceptualizar los modelos de fusión, aportar una guía para su puesta en práctica y ayudar en los procesos de toma de decisión que pueden tener lugar antes, durante y después de una fusión. Esto nos ha llevado a la realización de un análisis de contenido para determinar en primer lugar cuáles son las tipologías de fusiones y qué factores pueden determinar su éxito o fracaso. Un segundo análisis de contenido, nos ha permitido desarrollar diferentes estrategias de fusiones en educación superior. Finalmente, el estudio de cinco casos de fusiones universitarias en el contexto europeo de instituciones denominadas de “clase mundial”, nos ha permitido abordar con solidez el análisis de la fase post-fusión.

El objetivo principal se plasma en el estudio comparativo de las fusiones de educación superior a través de tres preguntas de investigación. La primera pregunta (RQ1), trata de determinar cuáles son los factores de éxito de una fusión. La segunda pregunta (RQ2), aborda la cuestión de si se puede o no plantear un modelo generalizado de fusión. La tercera pregunta (RQ3), se cuestiona cómo debe abordarse la etapa post-fusión. Con ello clarificaremos la situación de las fusiones en educación superior, temática que consideramos requiere un tratamiento diferenciado frente a las fusiones y adquisiciones en el sector privado.

Para responder a la primera pregunta (RQ1), hemos tenido que definir de una manera más clara el concepto de “fusión exitosa”. Nos hemos basado en la definición que da la literatura sobre fusión. Además, hemos determinado una serie de temáticas que surgen en una fusión en base a la revisión de la literatura y de los casos que se han trabajado en esta tesis. La lista de temáticas junto con el trabajo realizado, nos ha llevado a poder definir una serie de factores críticos de éxito para que una fusión llegue a buen término.

La segunda pregunta (RQ2) se basa en la especificidad de los modelos de fusión existentes en la literatura. Es por esto que se plantea si se puede generalizar un modelo. Para ello se han estudiado las fases que proponen los tres principales modelos y se han contrastado con la información que hemos obtenido durante las entrevistas en profundidad. Como principal aportación, hemos descubierto que existen una serie de condiciones de contorno que acaban definiendo un contexto en el que la fusión emerge como una solución a la situación planteada. A partir de ahí, se define una fase conceptual, una pre-fusión, una fusión como tal y una post-fusión que acabará derivando en un régimen estacionario. En cada una de las fases se han definido los principales hitos que permiten diferenciar el paso de una etapa a la otra. Además, se ha relacionado con el trabajo realizado respecto a factores críticos de éxito, retos y estrategias post-fusión (RQ3).

Pensamos que con esta tesis aportamos una serie de avances relevantes en el estudio de las fusiones en instituciones de educación superior, que pueden ser de gran utilidad tanto para la academia y el debate científico, como para instituciones y decisores políticos que tengan que analizar y/o abordar un proceso de fusión.

1.2 Resumen en inglés

This thesis studies the models of mergers between higher education institutions, with a special focus on what we have called the post-merger stage. The current context in higher education raises various issues such as internationalization, globalization, rankings or the scarcity of resources, which contribute to the emergence of the idea of merging universities. Such mergers need to be analysed with rigour, whether they are initiated by higher education institutions themselves or by governments eager to restructure their country's higher education system.

Although there are already some studies on university mergers, most of the authors focus on describing specific cases. There is no clear theory that could be widely used to conceptualize merger models, provide a guide for their implementation and help in the decision-making processes before, during and after the merger. This has led us to carry out a content analysis in order to determine first what are the type of mergers and what factors can determine their success or failure. In a second step the content analysis has allowed us to identify various strategies for mergers in higher education. Third, five case studies of university mergers involving European universities of the so-called "world-class" category has allowed us to focus on the analysis of the post-merger phase.

The main thrust of the thesis is a comparative study of higher education mergers around three main research questions. The first question (RQ1) tries to determine what are the success factors of a merger. The second question (RQ2) is whether or not a generalized model of merger can be drawn up. The third question (RQ3) focusses on the post-merger stage. With these questions, we want to contribute to clarifying the issue of mergers in higher education, which in our opinion requires needs to be a dealt with in a different way than mergers and acquisitions in the private sector.

To answer the first question (RQ1), we had to define more clearly the concept of what is a "successful merger". We started with the definitions given in the literature about mergers in higher education. In addition, we have identified a series of issues that arise in such mergers. These issues are based on the literature reviewed and on the case studies carried out for this thesis. The list of issues and our field work has allowed us to draw up a series of critical success factors for mergers.

The second question (RQ2) is about the specific factors of the merger models presented in the literature. From this we wish to determine whether it is possible to generalize a main model for mergers in higher education. For this purpose, we studied each of the merger stages proposed in the three main models and contrasted them with the information gathered in the in-depth interviews for our case studies. The main contribution of this analysis has been the identification of a number of surrounding conditions that define a context in which a merger emerges as an adequate response to the situation. On this basis, we could define four stages (conceptual, pre-merger, merger and post-merger stage) that will eventually lead to a more stable situation. For each of these stages we have identified the milestones that mark the move from one stage to the next. In addition, we have linked the sequence of stages to our analysis of crucial success factors, challenges and post-merger strategies (RQ3).

We are confident that with this thesis we show a number of relevant advances in the study of mergers in higher education; This may be of very useful data for the debate about academic and scientific developments, as well as for institutions and policy makers who have to analyze and/or address a merger process.

1.3 Resumen en valenciano

Esta tesi estudia els models de fusió d'institucions d'educació superior, amb un especial èmfasi en el que hem anomenat l'etapa post-fusió. El context actual planteja diferents temes com la internacionalització, la globalització, els rànquings o l'escassetat de recursos que fa que en moltes ocasions emergeixi la idea d'una fusió universitària. Aquest tipus de fusions ha de poder abordar amb solidesa, tant si es planteja des de les pròpies institucions d'educació superior com si són els governs els que proposen aquest tipus d'accions per reestructurar el sistema d'educació superior d'un país.

Encara que existeixen alguns estudis sobre fusions universitàries, hem observat que la majoria se centren en descriure casos concrets però no arriba a establir-se una teoria que pugui, de manera general, conceptualitzar els models de fusió, aportar una guia per a la seva posada en pràctica i ajudar als processos de presa de decisió que poden tindre lloc abans, durant i després d'una fusió. Això ens ha portat a la realització d'una anàlisi de contingut per a determinar en primer lloc quines són les tipologies de fusions i quins factors poden determinar el seu èxit o fracàs. Un segon anàlisi de contingut, ens ha permès desenvolupar diferents estratègies de fusions en educació superior. Finalment, l'estudi de cinc casos de fusions universitàries en el context europeu d'institucions denominades de "classe mundial", ens ha permès abordar amb solidesa l'anàlisi de la fase post-fusió.

L'objectiu principal es plasma en l'estudi comparatiu de les fusions d'educació superior a través de tres preguntes d'investigació. La primera pregunta (RQ1), tracta de determinar quins són els factors d'èxit d'una fusió. La segona pregunta (RQ2), aborda la qüestió de si es pot o no plantejar un model generalitzat de fusió. La tercera pregunta (RQ3), es qüestiona com s'ha d'abordar l'etapa post-fusió. Amb això clarificarem la situació de les fusions en educació superior, temàtica que considerem requereix un tractament diferenciat enfront de les fusions i adquisicions en el sector privat.

Per respondre a la primera pregunta (RQ1), hem hagut de definir d'una manera més clara el concepte de "fusió exitosa". Ens hem basat en la definició que dona la literatura sobre fusió. A més, hem determinat una sèrie de temàtiques que sorgeixen en una fusió en base a la revisió de la literatura i dels casos que s'han treballat en la tesi. El llistat de temàtiques juntament amb el treball realitzat, ens ha emportat a poder definir una sèrie de factors crítics d'èxit perquè una fusió arribi a bon terme.

La segona pregunta (RQ2) es basa en l'especificitat dels models de fusió existents a la literatura. És per això que es planteja si es pot generalitzar un model. Per a això s'han estudiat les fases que proposen els tres principals models i s'han contrastat amb la informació que hem obtingut durant les entrevistes en profunditat. Com a principal aportació, hem descobert que n'hi ha una sèrie de condicions de contorn que acaben definint un context en què la fusió emergeix com una solució a la situació plantejada. A partir d'aquí, es defineix una fase conceptual, una pre-fusió, una fusió com a tal i una post-fusió que acabarà derivant en un règim estacionari. En cadascuna de les fases s'han definit els principals moments que permeten diferenciar el pas d'una etapa a

l'altra. A més, s'ha relacionat amb la feina feta pel que fa a factors crítics d'èxit, reptes i estratègies post-fusió (RQ3).

Pensem que amb aquesta tesi aportem un seguit d'avenços rellevants en l'estudi de les fusions en institucions d'educació superior, que poden ser de gran utilitat tant per l'acadèmia i el debat científic, com per a institucions i decisors polítics que hagin de analitzar i / o abordar un procés de fusió.

2. Agradecimientos

Es una cuestión innegable que tras el más trivial de los éxitos hay un importante esfuerzo colectivo. Con esto no pretendo despreciar el trabajo individual y la dedicación personal que conlleva alcanzar algo. Solo quiero reconocer lo evidente, y es que son muchas las personas que van guiándonos en nuestras vidas y que acaban formando parte de la historia de uno mismo.

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3. Introducción

Esta tesis se presenta como un compendio de artículos en el que cada uno de ellos analiza el tema de las fusiones universitarias con el objetivo de responder a las diferentes preguntas de investigación planteadas. Los artículos se presentan en el mismo orden en el que se han ido desarrollando, mostrando cómo se ha ido refinando el tema de investigación hasta abordar el estudio comparativo de la fase post-fusión que se plantea en el título de la tesis.

Este epígrafe se divide en dos partes. La primera de ellas, denominada “antecedentes”, expone diferentes modelos que afectan a la configuración de las instituciones de educación superior, así como una serie de cuestiones de contexto que derivan en que la colaboración interinstitucional sea clave para adaptarse a un entorno cada vez más complejo. Como más adelante se detalla, esta complejidad se caracteriza por un cuestionamiento generalizado del modelo universitario que le exige un replanteamiento de las misiones universitarias y una mayor relación con el entorno socioeconómico. El entorno además se muestra extremadamente competitivo, globalizado y con cada vez menos recursos destinados a la educación superior. La segunda parte expone los objetivos de este trabajo en base a las preguntas de investigación planteadas, así como la estructura de la tesis. Además, se explica la metodología seguida.

3.1 Antecedentes

La Carta Magna de las Universidades (Magna Charta Universitatum, 1988) especifica que la labor investigadora es algo indisoluble del concepto de universidad. La universidad desarrolla sus actividades en el sector de la educación superior, también conocida como educación terciaria. Este sector engloba un conjunto heterogéneo de instituciones que, a grandes rasgos, pueden dividirse en dos tipos: aquellas enfocadas en docencia e investigación (universidades) y las que se centran principalmente en la docencia. Esto ha llevado al desarrollo de sistemas duales en muchos países en los que conviven un pequeño grupo de universidades, cuyo rasgo diferenciador es la investigación, por eso son las que se conocen como “universidades intensivas en investigación” y son las que habitualmente se miden en los rankings. Al mismo tiempo hay una gran mayoría de instituciones que se dedican principalmente a la docencia. La mayor parte de los sistemas universitarios están basados en instituciones del segundo tipo (Lo, 2009).

Se ha hecho patente el peso que el conocimiento tiene en la economía y en la generación de un crecimiento sostenible. Cuatro son los elementos clave que se combinan en lo que vendría a llamarse “economía del conocimiento”: la producción de conocimiento a partir de la investigación científica, la transmisión de dicho conocimiento mediante la formación, su difusión a través de las tecnologías de la información y las comunicaciones, y su uso para la innovación tecnológica (Comisión Europea, 2003).

En esta economía del conocimiento las instituciones de educación superior, especialmente las de perfil más investigador, juegan un papel clave (Goedegebuure, 2012). El Banco Mundial (*World Bank*, 2002 citado por Goedegebuure, 2012) destaca que el papel de la educación superior y de las universidades es “fundamental en la formación de los profesionales, científicos e investigadores necesarios para la economía, así como en la generación del conocimiento necesario para mantener los sistemas nacionales de innovación”. Algunas universidades han plasmado esta situación como parte de su propio discurso estratégico, tal y como puede verse en el siguiente extracto (Aalto University, 2010):

“*Aalto University* es un proyecto de carácter nacional que tiene como objetivo dar soporte a Finlandia como país. Podemos contribuir a la mejora de la competitividad finlandesa incrementando nuestra investigación, modernizando la docencia y explorando nuevos modelos de cooperación multidisciplinar”.

En esta misma línea de nuevas exigencias se insiste en que “las universidades deben convertirse en actores clave de la economía, capaces de responder de manera rápida a las necesidades del mercado y de desarrollar las alianzas necesarias para generar conocimiento científico y tecnológico” (Comisión Europea, 2009). Se ha considerado a las universidades como una herramienta con gran potencial para tratar lo que se conoce como la “paradoja europea”, según la cual en Europa se producen importantes avances científicos, pero con poco impacto en el entorno socioeconómico (Maasen y Stensaker, 2011).

Además, las universidades se enfrentan a importantes retos, como el incremento de la demanda de educación superior, la internacionalización de la educación y la investigación, la necesidad de mejorar los flujos entre las universidades y el entorno socioeconómico, la proliferación de lugares en los que se genera conocimiento y las nuevas expectativas que todo esto genera (Comisión Europea, 2003).

La globalización ha afectado a la educación superior, siendo su máximo exponente la integración de las instituciones a escala mundial (Lo, 2009). Este fenómeno ha provocado importantes cambios en la educación superior (Vaira, 2004). Entre otras cosas, se exige a las universidades convertirse en referentes internacionales, muchas veces en detrimento del rol que actualmente desarrollan en su entorno más próximo. Esta situación se ha acrecentado con el gran impacto que han tenido los *rankings* internacionales, así como la atención que tanto los gobiernos como las universidades han prestado a ellos (Goedegebuure, 2012). En este sentido cabe destacar la declaración del Gobierno de Finlandia respecto a la fusión que llevó a la creación de *Aalto University*: “La posición de las universidades finlandesas a nivel internacional no es la adecuada para afrontar los retos que la globalización impone” (Aula y Tienari, 2011).

Sin embargo, este afán de internacionalización ha hecho que algunas instituciones se atribuyan la característica de “referente internacional” sin que realmente existan evidencias sólidas que puedan soportar dicha afirmación (Wangenge-Ouma, 2010), influyendo negativamente en el prestigio que debería llevar asociado dicho término. Querer disponer de instituciones de máximo nivel y que sean un referente internacional es un objetivo legítimo, aunque algunos autores como Aarrevaara, Dobson y Elander son críticos con este tema, llegando a demostrar incluso la dificultad que puede tener un país pequeño en situar alguna de sus instituciones entre las 100 mejores del mundo (Aarrevaara et al., 2009).

Así pues, se puede afirmar que la educación superior ha entrado en una era de competición global entre naciones y entre las propias entidades, con comparaciones constantes entre países e instituciones que, por lo general, obvian importantes aspectos de contexto como la desigual dedicación de recursos a la educación superior en cada país (Lo, 2009).

Se ha llegado incluso a reconocer a las universidades su papel como “base de la competitividad europea” (Comisión Europea, 2006). Sin embargo, pese a estos objetivos tan ambiciosos, desarrollan sus actividades en un entorno caracterizado por una constante reducción de recursos públicos destinados a este fin (Sehoole, 2005), generando una clara contradicción entre políticas y medios. La escasez de recursos es un importante *hándicap* precisamente en un sector como el de la educación superior caracterizado por una gran sensibilidad a la disponibilidad de recursos (Sehoole, 2005). Esta escasez de recursos se hace más patente en un contexto internacional en el que se dan cita un gran número de competidores que luchan por los mismos recursos (Wangenge-Ouma, 2010).

Todo este devenir de nuevos retos y exigencias está definiendo la manera de gobernar este tipo de instituciones en los próximos años y compromete ya las alianzas estratégicas que pueden llegar a establecerse (Sehoole, 2005). Al mismo tiempo, se ha generado una enorme presión

sobre las instituciones de educación superior, viéndose abocadas a afrontar una realidad que exige una mayor adaptación, desde unas estructuras inmovilistas (Gornitzka, 1999) y con un marco regulador que suele ser excesivamente rígido en muchos países, lo que precisamente no facilita dicha adaptación (Mok, 2005a).

Como respuesta a este contexto se hace necesario diseñar nuevas estrategias que permitan captar más recursos como el incremento de tasas, la comercialización de productos de I+D o la implementación de sistemas duales de tasas (Wangenge-Ouma, 2009). Respecto a la comercialización de los resultados de la investigación, se requiere una mayor profesionalización de las actividades de transferencia de conocimiento, haciendo que el gasto en I+D que se realiza con fondos públicos se haya convertido en una inversión que debe poderse explotar de manera eficaz en la industria (Comisión Europea, 2009).

Al mismo tiempo, existe una fuerte influencia de las ideas del *New Public Management*, caracterizado por la creación de una relación ciudadano-cliente, la mayor relación entre público y privado, las mejoras en la gestión, las medidas de rendimiento y la rendición de cuentas con el objetivo de lograr una mayor eficiencia en el gasto público (Tolofari, 2005). En esa línea, se persigue una profesionalización de la gestión de las universidades que conlleve una mayor eficiencia y el aprovechamiento al máximo de las economías de escala de tal manera que se consiga un ahorro del dinero público invertido en educación superior (Mok, 2005a).

En paralelo a una mejor gestión y una mayor eficiencia en el uso de recursos, se desvela un papel fundamental para unas estrategias de colaboración inter-institucionales mucho más activas que las llevadas hasta ahora, que en un entorno globalizado ha provocado la proliferación de redes y asociaciones de universidades (Kitagawa, 2010). Estas estrategias se plantean en dos vertientes, contemplando tanto la colaboración con el entorno socioeconómico, como la colaboración con otras instituciones del ámbito de la educación superior.

La primera de ellas, relacionada con la colaboración con el entorno socioeconómico, se ha planteado durante mucho tiempo, pero ha sido en los últimos años cuando mayor impulso ha recibido desde la Unión Europea. En este sentido, ha destacado el diseño de sistemas de gestión estratégica multifaceta, como es el "Triángulo del Conocimiento", que nacen de la necesidad de una mayor integración de las políticas de educación, investigación e innovación (Comisión Europea, 2005). Al mismo tiempo, se ha consolidado la importancia del modelo de la "Triple Hélice", que propugna el solapamiento de los ámbitos de actuación de la Administración Pública, las Empresas y las Instituciones de Educación Superior (Etzkowitz et al., 2000). Ambos temas se trataron en profundidad durante la presidencia sueca de la Unión Europea (2009), derivando incluso en la publicación de convocatorias específicas sobre estos temas como la denominada "*Knowledge Alliances*" (Comisión Europea, 2010).

El congreso "*The Knowledge Triangle shaping the future of Europe*" del año 2009 puso de relieve, de nuevo, los diferentes retos y exigencias a los que se enfrenta la educación superior en el siglo XXI y proponía soluciones que reforzasen el peso de las universidades y los centros de investigación, como puede verse en las declaraciones del Comisario Europeo de Ciencia e Investigación de aquel momento (Potocnik, 2009):

"Si queremos que el conocimiento fluya debemos reforzar las universidades e institutos de investigación y conectarlos mejor con un entorno productivo cada vez más competitivo".

El representante del Gobierno Español en esta conferencia, se manifestó en esta misma línea destacando el papel clave que tienen las universidades en este contexto, así como la necesidad

de modernizar el sistema universitario español en lo que se vino a llamar “Estrategia Universidad 2015” (Rubiralta, 2009).

Las colaboraciones entre instituciones de educación superior son muy frecuentes y al mismo tiempo muy variadas. Algunas se dan más bien a título individual entre miembros de las instituciones, como la participación en publicaciones científicas con investigadores o la participación en proyectos de investigación. Otras se desarrollan a nivel institucional, como son las fusiones de distinto grado que se han presentado en los últimos 40 años (Harman, 2003). Los gobiernos suelen ver estas últimas como un mecanismo para mejorar la eficiencia de las instituciones, incrementar su competitividad y posicionarlas mejor a nivel internacional, así como una manera de reducir la excesiva fragmentación que este sector presenta en muchos países (Mok, 2005a). Sin embargo, como podrá verse en este trabajo, este tipo de afirmaciones están lejos de la realidad (Goedegebuurte, 2010).

En el ámbito de las políticas, se han diseñado diferentes agendas de modernización en cada país miembro con orientaciones dadas desde la Unión Europea, entre las que destacan: desarrollar una formación orientada hacia el empleo, favorecer el emprendimiento, impulsar la transferencia de tecnología, fomentar la movilidad entre los académicos y el mundo de la empresa, impulsar el papel de las universidades como agentes clave en el aprendizaje a lo largo de la vida y mejorar la gobernanza universitaria, con una mayor participación de las empresas en los órganos de decisión (Comisión Europea, 2009).

En resumen, en un contexto caracterizado por la globalización, la internacionalización y la reducción de recursos, han surgido unas nuevas políticas que persiguen modernizar las instituciones de educación superior. Esto exige a las universidades diseñar nuevas estrategias que les permitan adaptarse a esta situación, al mismo tiempo que les obliga a adelantarse a potenciales cambios, adoptando una actitud más activa frente al entorno.

3.1.1 Modelos que afectan a la modernización de las universidades

Las diferentes políticas que se exponen más adelante, se basan en transformar la universidad hacia un nuevo paradigma llamado “universidad emprendedora”, en el que la institución tiene un papel activo como generadora de desarrollo económico (Etzkowitz et al. 2000). Este modelo plantea la innovación y la investigación (Maassen y Stensaker, 2006) como ejes que conforman dos misiones paralelas a la de la docencia: investigación y relación con el entorno. Este cambio de modelo requiere una estrategia que integre de una manera más adecuada estas tres misiones (Etzkowitz et al., 2006), aumentando el impacto de las instituciones y del sistema de educación superior en la sociedad. Sin ser objeto de esta tesis realizar un estudio en profundidad de los diferentes modelos que abordan esta problemática, hemos considerado interesante hacer una breve revisión de dos de ellos que son la base de muchas de las políticas de modernización de las universidades: el triángulo del conocimiento y el modelo de la triple hélice.

Gestión estratégica multifaceta: el triángulo del conocimiento

Las diferentes reformas que se presentan más adelante, necesitan de un modelo conceptual que permita organizar de una manera lógica los ámbitos de actuación, yendo más allá de las actividades formativas y mejorando la integración de éstas con la investigación y la innovación. En este sentido, se propone abordar las diferentes misiones universitarias desde una perspectiva conjunta que permita desarrollar una gestión estratégica integrada o multifaceta (León, 2010).

Esta línea de trabajo se basa en evidencias empíricas que facilitan orientar la integración de la innovación, la investigación y la educación de una manera complementaria, facilitando la capacidad de adaptación de las universidades a nuevos retos (Maasen y Stensaker, 2010) como los que se presentan a continuación:

- La internacionalización de la educación y la investigación.
- La necesidad de desarrollar más vínculos entre las universidades y el entorno socioeconómico.
- El progresivo aumento de la competencia con otros actores generadores de conocimiento.
- Una nueva organización de las disciplinas y áreas de conocimiento que fomente la multidisciplinariedad.

Bajo estas premisas surge la idea del denominado “Triángulo del Conocimiento”, base de muchas de las políticas de modernización impulsadas desde la Unión Europea que ponen a la universidad como instrumento al servicio de dicho modelo (Akrich et al. 2007, citado por León 2010).

El Triángulo del Conocimiento aborda la educación, la innovación y la investigación de forma conjunta en las denominadas “políticas basadas en el conocimiento”. Cada elemento se desarrolla y complementa mutuamente con el fin de lograr una mayor competitividad que permita avanzar a la sociedad en su conjunto hacia un uso más intensivo del conocimiento.

En la implementación de políticas basadas en conocimiento, el Instituto de Prospectiva Tecnológica de la Unión Europea (Hervas y Mulatero, 2009) recuerda que debe de abordarse de manera conjunta la investigación, la educación y la innovación. El grado de interrelación entre los tres elementos es tal que la falta de desarrollo de uno de ellos afecta negativamente al resto.

En la Figura 1 se muestra esta interdependencia entre Educación (E), Investigación (R) e Innovación (I). La figura cuenta también con algunos ejemplos propios de las universidades, que juegan un papel doble, tanto como proveedora de personas con las competencias necesarias para trabajos intensivos en conocimiento, al mismo tiempo que genera empresas de base tecnológica mediante procesos de incubación (Etzkowitz et al., 2000).

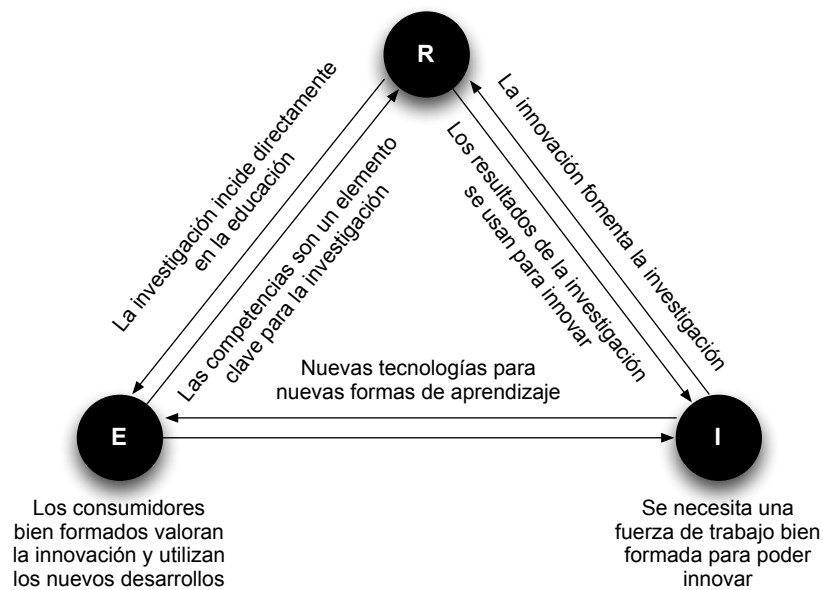


Figura 1. Interacciones entre los tres elementos del triángulo del conocimiento (Hervas y Mulatero, 2009)

La *Conference of European Schools for Advanced Engineering Education* (CESAER) insta a las universidades a adaptar sus estrategias de gestión de la investigación, la educación y la innovación para convertir el triángulo del conocimiento en una realidad (CESAER, 2011). En esta misma línea, el Consejo Europeo declara que “si queremos que la Unión Europea sea capaz de afrontar con éxito los retos de una economía global, los tres componentes del triángulo del conocimiento deben desarrollarse e interactuar correctamente entre ellos” (Consejo Europeo, 2009 citado por CESAER, 2011) y establece 7 prioridades para lograrlo:

1. Desarrollar de una manera coherente las políticas de educación, investigación e innovación.
2. Acelerar la reforma en las metodologías docentes.
3. Fomentar las alianzas de las universidades con organizaciones del entorno socioeconómico y otros grupos de interés.
4. Promover culturas innovadoras en las instituciones de educación superior.
5. Crear los incentivos necesarios que promuevan la creación de conocimiento transferible.
6. Nuevas aproximaciones al aseguramiento de la calidad.
7. Profundizar en el desarrollo del Instituto Europeo de Innovación y Tecnología (EIT) como modelo a seguir en el futuro.

La implementación del triángulo del conocimiento en las universidades es una tendencia en muchos países, como Finlandia y su creada *Aalto University* (Markkula, 2011), Estonia (Kirch, 2010) o España a través de la iniciativa Campus de Excelencia Internacional (Rubiralta, 2009).

El modelo de la triple hélice en la educación superior

La crisis ha provocado una importante pérdida de puestos de trabajo, poniendo la cuestión del empleo en primera línea del debate político y la necesidad de apostar por un modelo de crecimiento basado en la innovación, que sea capaz de regenerar los puestos de trabajo perdidos. Este modelo debe integrar la innovación en los productos y servicios que entregan las empresas, así como en los diferentes procesos que se dan lugar en la sociedad (Comisión Europea, 2010).

Diversos autores afirman que las universidades pueden jugar un rol muy importante en el crecimiento porque disponen de los elementos necesarios para crear entornos innovadores en los que se definen nuevos mecanismos de colaboración entre la industria y las instituciones de educación superior (Lawton y Smith, 2007; Gunasekara, 2006, citado por Kitagawa, 2010). Por otro lado, la escasez de recursos ha creado la necesidad de generar ingresos adicionales mediante la colaboración con el entorno socioeconómico y la correspondiente comercialización de productos basados en el conocimiento (Mok, 2005a), intensificando la relación directa entre las universidades y el sector productivo (Sutz, 1997 citado por Mok, 2005a).

El modelo del triángulo del conocimiento, expuesto anteriormente, ya destaca el papel fundamental que tiene la innovación en la definición de la estrategia de las universidades. El cambio de paradigma hacia una universidad emprendedora (Clark, 1998), en la que la institución tiene un papel activo en la generación de riqueza, requiere de una mayor interrelación entre los reguladores, los consumidores de conocimiento y los productores del mismo (Etzkowitz et al., 2000).

En este contexto surge el modelo de la triple hélice, que sugiere un nuevo sistema de relación entre las universidades, los agentes socioeconómicos y la administración pública, sustituyendo a esquemas más antiguos que apuestan por relaciones bilaterales universidad-empresa o universidad-administración (Etzkowitz et al., 2000). Esto le otorga a la universidad un rol mucho más activo en la innovación empresarial, en la economía y en la generación de riqueza, cambiando su rol tradicional como estructura de soporte a la innovación hacia una figura más activa que incluye también, por ejemplo, en la creación de empresas (Etzkowitz, 2003). A día de hoy, es frecuente encontrar casos donde existe una clara coordinación entre las políticas gubernamentales que favorecen una nueva misión en las universidades con una participación más activa de las mismas en el sector productivo (Mok, 2005a), sin embargo, algunos autores (Markkula, 2011) abogan por la definición de elementos concretos que faciliten su puesta en práctica.

La clave de este modelo está en el solape que se da entre las actuaciones de la administración, la universidad y las empresas debido a que los procesos de innovación no suceden en compartimentos estancos o instituciones concretas, sino que se solapan entre cada uno de los diferentes actores que se dan cita. El modelo define la innovación en espiral como el solape entre tres esferas definidas por la administración, la universidad y las empresas (Etzkowitz, 2002), tal y como se muestra en la Figura 2. A continuación, se destaca las características que estas tres esferas tienen, o deberían tener en una situación como la actual (Etzkowitz et al., 2000):

- Universidad emprendedora:
 - Generadora de desarrollo económico.
 - Nueva estructura organizativa:
 - Mezcla de departamentos disciplinares.
 - Creación de centros interdisciplinares.
 - Nuevas disciplinas.
 - Aumento del espacio social de la Universidad.
- Agentes socio-económico:
 - Nueva estructura organizativa.
 - Proyectos de cooperación.
 - Centros de emprendimiento relacionados con la alta tecnología.
 - Instalaciones próximas a los campus universitarios.
- Administración pública:
 - Facilitar una mayor conexión entre los científicos y el entorno productivo.

- Promover un mayor uso de la infraestructura científico-tecnológica de las empresas.

Las universidades, por ejemplo, crean empresas en base a los resultados de investigación, comúnmente conocidas como *spin-offs*, las empresas disponen de sus centros de formación, sus departamentos de I+D o, en el caso de algunos países, de sus propias universidades corporativas. Los gobiernos también toman el rol de la educación creando sus propias escuelas o empresas que dependen directamente de la Administración.

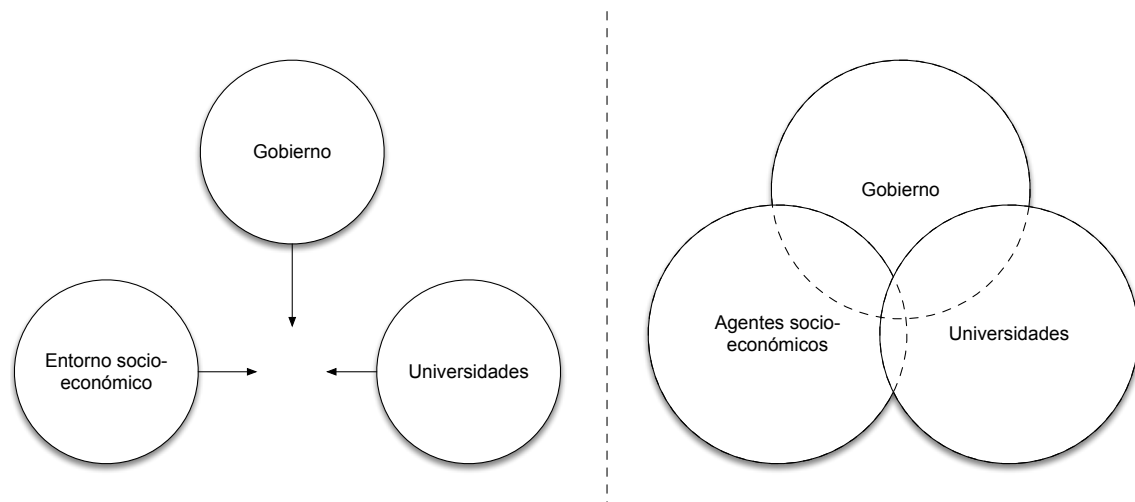


Figura 2. Transición de entornos independientes al solapamiento de las diferentes esferas (Adaptado de Etzkowitz, 2002)

En base a este modelo han ido apareciendo diferentes variantes que añaden esferas adicionales a las planteadas por Etzkowitz, como el de la cuádruple hélice que incluye una esfera adicional que representa a la sociedad civil (Carayannis and Campbell, 2009) argumentando que la triple hélice no es una condición suficiente para el crecimiento a largo plazo (Polezza and Colapinto, 2012). Otros autores han incorporado una quinta hélice apuntando la necesidad de añadir al modelo de innovación la transición socio-ecológica necesaria para poder abordar con éxito los retos sociales del siglo XXI (Carayannis, Barth and Cambell, 2012).

3.1.2 Políticas para la modernización de las universidades

Conviene aclarar en primer lugar que la acepción que se ha utilizado de “política” proviene de su vertiente inglesa (*policy*), apartándose de la componente ideológica que normalmente se asigna a este término en español. Se utiliza la definición que propone Gornitzka (1999) para “política”, según la cual es una declaración hecha desde una estructura de poder que engloba una serie de **objetivos estratégicos junto con los instrumentos** necesarios para alcanzarlos.

El componente **político** en la educación superior, especialmente en su vertiente pública, tiene un **papel fundamental** llegando a definir en numerosas ocasiones cuáles son las directrices que debe seguir la institución (Harman, 2003), a pesar de la autonomía de la que, en teoría, gozan las universidades en muchos países. El sistema en su conjunto condiciona considerablemente las posibilidades de actuación de las instituciones de educación superior (Vaira, 2004), llegando

a definirse algunos factores globales que afectan a las estrategias que pueden adoptar las universidades, inmersas en procesos de cambio impulsados desde agentes externos (Ver Figura 3).

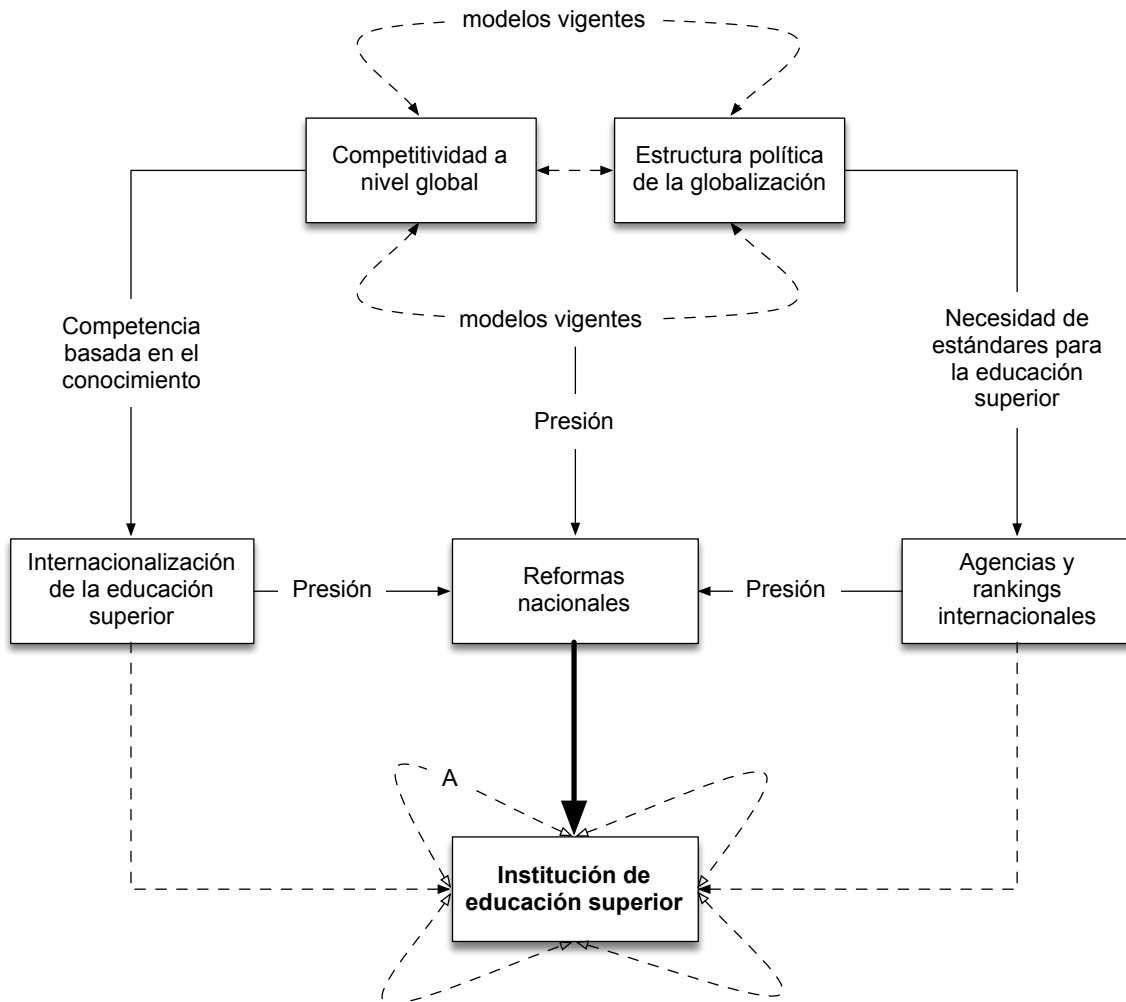


Figura 3. Influencia de las políticas globalizadas en la educación superior. Adaptado de Vaira, 2004

Además, es interesante recordar la influencia que tienen otros actores del entorno en la universidad (Gornitzka, 1999). Seehoole (2005), en contraposición de Gornitzka (1999), describe a las universidades como organizaciones dependientes de un entorno que reaccionan de manera racional a los estímulos que reciben del mismo, alterando la naturaleza de su organización a través de fusiones o de otras formas de reestructuración.

Las universidades se encuentran actualmente en una fase de transición en la que se cuestiona de manera continua diversos aspectos, como la legitimidad de su misión, su organización, los recursos asignados e incluso las maneras de pensar propias del entorno universitario (Olsen, 2007 citado por Maasen y Stensaker, 2011). Esta situación ha promovido un creciente debate, tanto a nivel interno en las propias universidades como a nivel político, sobre las instituciones, su misión y los resultados que la sociedad debería esperar de ellas. De este debate se han

derivado numerosas políticas que se han concretado en agendas de modernización de la educación superior.

Esta situación se ha visto aderezada con las declaraciones lanzadas desde algunos estamentos que instan a promover cambios desde el exterior, basándose en la idea de que las universidades son instituciones compuestas por estructuras claramente inmovilistas y reacias al cambio (Gornitzka, 1999). A pesar de esto, es posible afirmar que las instituciones de educación superior se encuentran en un proceso de cambio radical como demuestra la desinstitucionalización de sus políticas más tradicionales y la asunción de nuevos valores y tareas que hasta ahora no formaban parte de su misión (Vaira, 2004). Por ejemplo, la universidad actual ha añadido una tercera misión a las dos habituales (docencia e investigación), relacionada con el desarrollo económico y la transferencia y uso del conocimiento que genera (Readings, 1996).

Los procesos de reestructuración y modernización de los sistemas de educación superior que han surgido deben verse como mecanismos que persiguen la mejora de la docencia e investigación de las universidades, así como de una mayor eficiencia en la gestión de las mismas (Mok, 2005a). Los cambios que se sugieren dependen también en parte de la influencia que ha tenido en las instituciones académicas la aparición de una innovación basada en el conocimiento (Etzkowitz et al., 2000), en el que la universidad tiene un papel importante.

Esta fase de transición camina hacia el modelo que ha prevalecido en la mayoría de las reformas promulgadas, el de la “Universidad Emprendedora” (Clark, 1998), en el que la estructura y función académica se actualiza y alinea con el desarrollo económico (Etzkowitz et al., 2000). Este modelo, según algunos autores, es el que mejor se adapta a una situación marcada por la globalización (Vaira, 2004) y surge como una respuesta al aumento de importancia de la generación de conocimiento en los sistemas nacionales y regionales de innovación (Etzkowitz et al., 2000). En la Figura 4 se muestra un diagrama con los elementos clave del entorno que conforman el modelo de una “Universidad Emprendedora”.

Para llevar a cabo la transición hacia el modelo de universidad emprendedora, existen políticas que pretenden acelerar el proceso. Algunas de ellas han estado de manera habitual en el debate universitario en los últimos 40 años, pero ha sido a partir de 1990 cuando se han acelerado de manera considerable (Stensaker et al., 2006 citado por Maasen y Stensaker, 2011).

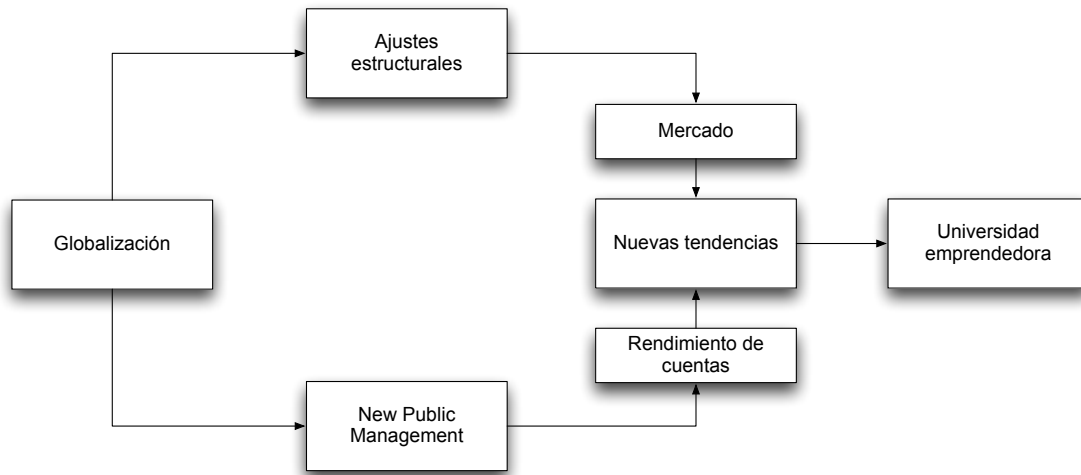


Figura 4. Hacia la universidad emprendedora. Adaptado de Mok, 2005b

Para poder abordar con éxito este proceso de modernización, en el que se dan cita un conjunto importante de actores, es importante destacar que no se puede tratar de manera aislada, ya que las instituciones de educación superior forman parte de un sistema cada vez más interrelacionado en el que Universidad, agentes socioeconómicos y Administración Pública, presentan importantes solapes (Etzkowitz, 2003).

En esta línea se hace a continuación un breve repaso de las políticas de modernización más recientes que se han desarrollado a nivel de la Unión Europea.

Políticas de modernización en la Unión Europea

A pesar de que las políticas de educación son competencia de los Estados, hay una creciente europeización de aquellas relacionadas con la educación superior (Maasen y Stensaker, 2011), por eso en esta tesis se ha decidido realizar una breve revisión de las principales políticas de modernización del sistema de educación superior propuestas desde la Unión Europea en los últimos años. Como se verá en el siguiente apartado, son éstas la base para el desarrollo de algunas de las que posteriormente se desarrollan en los Estados miembros.

Europa posee un sistema de educación superior muy consolidado y de gran tamaño, con más de 4.000 instituciones y alrededor de 17 millones de estudiantes. En el sector de la educación superior trabajan directamente 1,5 millones de personas, de las cuales 435.000 son investigadores (Deem et al., 2008).

Tras la definición de la Estrategia de Lisboa (European Council, 2000), se explicitó la importancia del sistema universitario para el desarrollo y correcto funcionamiento de la sociedad del conocimiento, destacando la necesidad de disponer de un sistema universitario saludable que promueva la excelencia y optimice el proceso de generación de conocimiento (Comisión Europea, 2003). Tras un análisis en profundidad se detecta que el sistema universitario presenta cuatro importantes cuellos de botella que deben resolverse (Comisión Europea, 2005) si se quiere mejorar la competitividad internacional del mismo.

En primer lugar, existe una excesiva uniformidad del sistema, con numerosas instituciones de educación superior que ofrecen programas similares con una calidad parecida y un enfoque monodisciplinar que promueve unas técnicas de aprendizaje tradicionales dirigidas a los colectivos de estudiantes habituales.

Segundo, son instituciones que presentan un aislamiento, tanto con otras instituciones de educación superior como con el entorno productivo. El primero de ellos podría decirse que es fruto de la excesiva fragmentación del sistema europeo en naciones y regiones, con diferentes lenguas y subsistemas que genera numerosas incompatibilidades entre ellos. En el segundo caso, existe una escasa actividad de transferencia de conocimiento y poca movilidad entre las empresas y la universidad. Son sistemas excesivamente centrados en su vertiente nacional que provocan universidades muy dependientes del Estado, con pocas fuentes de financiación adicionales e insuficientes posibilidades de competir en un entorno internacional. Algunos países han intentado promover un cambio aplicando políticas presupuestarias restrictivas, reduciendo los presupuestos públicos destinados a la investigación. Un buen ejemplo es el del Reino Unido, que tras un fuerte recorte en el gasto destinado a investigación las ha obligado a concentrarse en las áreas que pueden atraer fondos adicionales del sector privado. Esto ha generado un nuevo esquema, pasando de un modelo basado en la subvención a otro en la que la universidad depende de la comercialización de sus resultados de investigación para mantener dicha actividad (Etzkowitz et al., 2000). Esto obliga a dejar de lado otras áreas con menos capacidad de generación de ingresos o reducir la financiación destinada a la investigación básica.

Existe un exceso de regulación, con normas poco flexibles para el acceso a la universidad, esquemas de reconocimiento de títulos que hacen difícil la movilidad de estudiantes y profesores, o legislaciones para la contratación del personal que hacen prácticamente inviable generar políticas de atracción de talento. Esta sobrerregulación también influye en una mayor dificultad para implementar nuevas metodologías de aprendizaje o en la capacidad de adaptar la formación a las demandas del entorno socioeconómico.

Además, se da una escasa financiación del sistema público de investigación en general y de las universidades en particular. Esta situación se hace patente cuando se compara el porcentaje del Producto Interior Bruto (PIB) invertido en investigación en la Unión Europea con el de otras zonas desarrolladas del mundo. Mientras que en la Unión Europea es del 1,9% (Eurostat, 2011), el de países como Estados Unidos, Japón o Corea del Sur llega hasta el 3%. Esta situación repercute negativamente en la preparación de los estudiantes para el mercado laboral, la disponibilidad de empleo cualificado para profesores e investigadores y en las políticas de atracción y retención de talento.

Como recopilación, la Figura 5 muestra un diagrama causa-efecto sobre los problemas de adaptación del sistema de educación superior europeo.

MODELOS DE FUSIÓN DE INSTITUCIONES DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR EN EUROPA

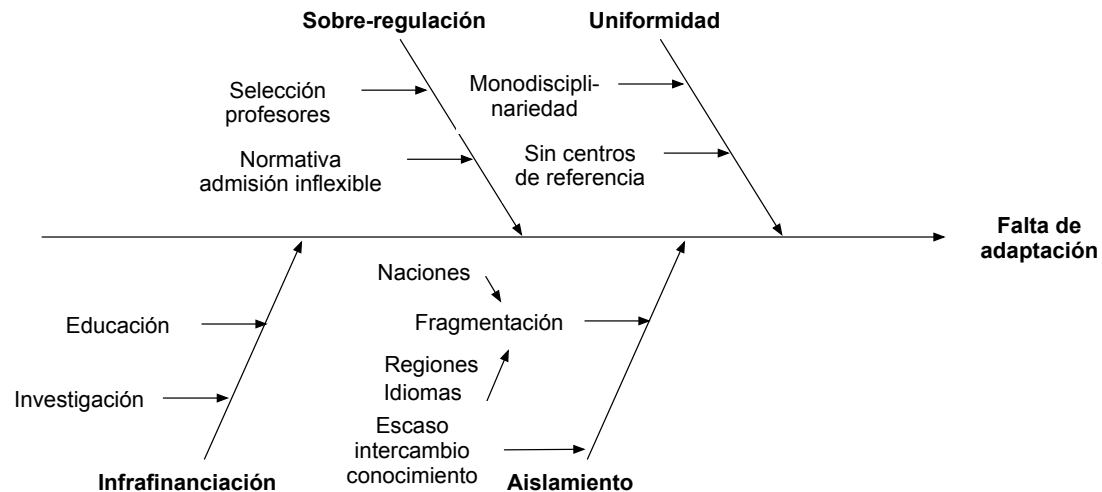


Figura 5. Diagrama causa-efecto sobre las rigideces del sistema de educación superior (Elaboración propia).

En este marco algunos autores (Maasen y Stensaker, 2010) añaden a la lista anterior, el excesivo intervencionismo por parte de los gobiernos en las instituciones de educación superior, generando una sobrerregulación del sistema. En este sentido, proponen aumentar la autonomía universitaria al mismo tiempo que mejorar el sistema de rendición de cuentas. Además, se debe incrementar la inversión privada en las universidades, promoviendo alianzas con el entorno socioeconómico y unos mayores flujos de estudiantes y personal entre el entorno socioeconómico y las instituciones de educación superior.

La Agenda de Modernización para las Universidades (Comisión Europea, 2006), hace un llamamiento tanto a los Estados como a las propias instituciones. En cuanto a los Estados, afirma que “las universidades europeas no están actualmente en posición de desarrollar todo su potencial en aspectos clave” y les insta a crear las condiciones necesarias para que se modernicen y jueguen un papel más importante en la sociedad del conocimiento. Respecto a las instituciones de educación superior, se les propone que se actualicen tomando decisiones estratégicas y realizando las reformas oportunas que “permitan mejorar su base de financiación, sus ámbitos de excelencia y así consolidar su posición competitiva”. Estas propuestas se concretan en nueve áreas de actuación descritas en la Agenda de Modernización de las Universidades (Comisión Europea, 2006: 5-12):

- Eliminar las barreras que rodean a las universidades europeas.
- Garantizar que las universidades sean realmente autónomas y responsables.
- Ofrecer incentivos para establecer asociaciones estructuradas con la comunidad empresarial.
- Ofrecer la combinación adecuada de capacidades y competencias para el mercado de trabajo.
- Reducir la brecha de financiación y mejorar la eficacia de la financiación en la educación y la investigación.
- Aumentar la interdisciplinariedad y la transdisciplinariedad.
- Activar el conocimiento mediante la interacción con la sociedad.
- Recompensar la excelencia al más alto nivel.
- Hacer el espacio europeo de la educación superior y el espacio europeo de la investigación más visibles y atractivos para el resto del mundo.

Estos temas son la base para la resolución de diciembre de 2007 del Consejo Europeo, en la que se aprueba lo siguiente (Consejo Europeo, 2007):

MODELOS DE FUSIÓN DE INSTITUCIONES DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR EN EUROPA

1. La necesidad de seguir avanzando en la modernización de las universidades europeas, abordando la interconexión de sus papeles en materia de enseñanza, investigación e innovación, como elemento clave del impulso de Europa hacia la creación de una sociedad y una economía basadas en el conocimiento y la mejora de su competitividad.
2. La importancia de aumentar las posibilidades de aprendizaje permanente ampliando el acceso a la enseñanza superior a los estudiantes no tradicionales y adultos y desarrollando la dimensión de la enseñanza permanente en las universidades.
3. La necesidad de crear mejores oportunidades para que las mujeres acometan carreras científicas.
4. El principio de que todos los estudiantes con motivación y talento puedan acogerse a las oportunidades de movilidad, independientemente de sus orígenes sociales o situación económica, y la necesidad no sólo de incrementar la movilidad de los estudiantes, sino también la de los investigadores, docentes y personal universitario de otras categorías.
5. La necesidad de que las universidades gocen de autonomía suficiente, mejor administración y mayor responsabilidad en sus estructuras para hacer frente a las nuevas exigencias de la sociedad y para que puedan incrementar y diversificar sus fuentes de financiación tanto públicas como privadas, a fin de reducir la diferencia de financiación con los principales competidores de la Unión Europea.
6. La importancia del aseguramiento de la calidad, que constituye un importante motor de cambio en la enseñanza superior.
7. El papel que desempeñan las universidades, a través de la enseñanza, la investigación y la innovación, en la transferencia de conocimientos a la economía y a la sociedad, que constituye una importante aportación a la competitividad de Europa, y la necesidad de una cooperación más estrecha entre el mundo académico y el mundo empresarial.

En base a esto, el Consejo Europeo invitaba a los estados miembros a (Consejo Europeo 2007):

1. Fomentar la excelencia en la enseñanza superior y en la investigación mediante el desarrollo de centros y redes de categoría mundial capaces de competir en el nivel internacional y de contribuir a atraer a Europa los mejores talentos, y a que brinden a estas instituciones la autonomía necesaria para el pleno desarrollo de su potencial.
2. Fomentar la internacionalización de los centros de enseñanza superior alentando el aseguramiento de la calidad mediante la evaluación independiente y la evaluación por homólogos de las universidades, la mejora de la movilidad, el fomento de titulaciones conjuntas y dobles, y la simplificación del reconocimiento de las titulaciones y los períodos de estudio.
3. Adoptar las medidas necesarias para la modernización de los centros de enseñanza superior, concediéndoles una mayor autonomía y exigiéndoles mayor responsabilidad, con objeto de permitirles mejorar sus prácticas de gestión, aumentar su capacidad de innovación y afianzar su capacidad de modernizar los programas de estudios para que éstos se ajusten de manera más eficaz a las necesidades del mercado laboral y de los estudiantes; e incrementar el acceso a la enseñanza superior, respondiendo así a las necesidades de la competitividad económica y técnica y a objetivos sociales de carácter general.
4. Propiciar la contribución de los centros de enseñanza superior a la innovación, el crecimiento y el empleo, así como a la vida social y cultural, alentándolos a establecer y reforzar las asociaciones entre universidades y otros agentes, tales como el sector privado, los centros de investigación, las administraciones regionales y locales y la sociedad civil.
5. Establecer incentivos para fomentar que los centros de enseñanza superior se abran a los estudiantes no tradicionales y a los estudiantes adultos y sigan desarrollando su

papel en la enseñanza permanente aumentando, cuando corresponda, la diversidad del sistema de la educación superior.

6. Desarrollar mejores entornos de aprendizaje e investigación para los estudiantes y los investigadores jóvenes, reforzando la enseñanza basada en proyectos y la participación temprana de los estudiantes en la investigación, en particular en los ámbitos de la ciencia y la tecnología.

Más recientemente la *Conference for European Schools for Advanced Engineering Education and Research* recomienda (CESAER, 2011), en línea con la estrategia de la Unión Europea EU2020:

- Formar ingenieros e investigadores excelentes capaces de entender las necesidades del entorno socioeconómico.
- Investigar en colaboración estrecha con la empresa y otros organismos públicos de investigación capaces de tener un impacto real en la innovación.
- Implementar el modelo del “Triángulo del Conocimiento” donde la educación, investigación e innovación se retroalimentan.
- Promover campos de investigación relacionados con los principales retos de la sociedad.
- Formular objetivos estratégicos capaces de estimular la creación de investigación excelente a nivel europeo.
- Adaptar las estrategias y los roles propios de las universidades a un mundo en permanente cambio que permitan afrontar con éxito los retos actuales desde estructuras que no sean necesariamente las tradicionales.

Los diferentes países implementan políticas para modernizar sus sistemas de educación superior ya que las competencias de educación son de los Estados Miembros. Son ellos los encargados de implementar las políticas necesarias. Un caso que nos parece especialmente relevante es el de la Estrategia Universidad 2015 y el del Programa Campus de Excelencia Internacional. Ambas acciones están encaminadas a modernizar el sistema de educación superior de España en línea con las políticas de modernización a nivel de la Unión Europea.

El Ministerio de Educación pone en marcha en 2009 lo que se conoce como Estrategia Universidad 2015 (Ministerio de Educación, 2009b). Esta iniciativa continúa una línea de trabajo iniciada por el Ministerio de Ciencia e Innovación en el año 2008 con la idea de “modernizar las universidades españolas mediante la coordinación de los sistemas universitarios autonómicos que contribuya a modernizar el sistema universitario español”. Las bases de esta estrategia son:

- La Agenda de Modernización de las Universidades promovida por la Comisión Europea (Comisión Europea, 2006).
- El modelo del triángulo de conocimiento.
- El modelo de la triple hélice.
- *New Public Management*: Promoviendo el rendimiento de cuentas de las Universidades y la eficacia y eficiencia en su gestión.
- Globalización: Intentando preparar a las Universidades españolas para competir en un marco internacional.

Como parte de la Estrategia Universidad 2015, el Ministerio de Educación propone, además, desarrollar el programa “Campus de Excelencia Internacional” dirigido a la constitución de entornos de excelencia (Ministerio de Educación, 2009a). Se plantean las siguientes líneas de actuación:

- Incorporación del concepto de agregación estratégica.

- Determinación de especializaciones resultado de las fortalezas y de la promoción de la excelencia.
- Integración en las políticas de desarrollo regional y promoción de alianzas estratégicas.
- Políticas de incorporación de profesorado internacional, movilidad y oferta docente internacional.
- Acentuar las inversiones y acciones de apoyo a la dimensión social.
- Contra la falta de reconocimiento en los rankings internacionales, desarrollar políticas de agregación, especialización y de incentivación de la excelencia docente e investigadora.

De cara a esta Tesis, interesan especialmente los conceptos de campus y de agregación estratégica. Respecto al primero de ellos, define campus de la siguiente manera:

“... como actualización del significado de ámbito o zona donde la universidad ejercía su función. Entorno donde las instituciones que efectúan actividades en el ámbito del Triángulo del Conocimiento tienen su actividad fundamental. Concepto que se complementa con la agregación de instituciones con unos objetivos planteados en el horizonte 2015, un acuerdo estratégico y una gobernanza adecuada a la diversidad de la agregación.”

El modelo de agregación estratégica promueve entre sus socios una única misión y visión junto con una serie de recursos que deben de utilizarse de manera conjunta para la consecución de los objetivos estratégicos establecidos. En esta línea, y tomando como base el modelo de la Triple Hélice de Henry Etzkowitz (2002), se define la agregación estratégica de la siguiente manera:

“El concepto de agregación estratégica consiste en poner en común los objetivos de diferentes instituciones o actores públicos y privados que participan en algunas de las tres funciones ligadas al Triángulo del Conocimiento. La agregación se promueve alrededor de la posición académica de las universidades, valorando el concepto moderno de campus, aumentando el valor de las masas críticas ligadas a ciertas especializaciones. Se promueve así una única estrategia, con un horizonte temporal, que será desarrollada mediante unos actores “promotores del CEI”, una universidad “coordinadora”, y un conjunto de instituciones y actores, principalmente privados, que participan en los proyectos como “asociados” mediante el correspondiente convenio o acuerdo. La agregación de los sectores productivos en las agregaciones de CEI favorecerán las actividades de inserción laboral, de transferencia de conocimiento y de la mejora del desarrollo social y económico de la región.”

Este concepto de agregación estratégica pretende el establecimiento de colaboraciones estables y sistemáticas fundamentalmente entre universidades a las que se les puede añadir otro tipo de entidades, como Organismos Públicos de Investigación o Empresas Privadas. No se trata de una fusión, pero establece un mecanismo de colaboración a nivel institucional.

3.1.3 Los modelos de una fusión y sus fases según la literatura

A nivel general se identifican tres fases en el proceso de una fusión (Hall et al., 2004): la pre-fusión, la transición y la integración. En todas estas fases los órganos de gobierno de las instituciones deben acometer alguna de las siguientes tareas (Welsh, 1994 citado por Hall et al., 2004):

- Comprobar si la fusión es factible.
- Negociar la propuesta de fusión.
- Aprobar la propuesta de fusión.
- Implementar el acuerdo de fusión.

La fase previa a la fusión, conocida como **Pre-fusión**, corresponde al período durante el cual se producen las negociaciones institucionales e inter-institucionales previas a la fusión. Normalmente concluye con una fecha concreta a partir de la cual se inicia el siguiente paso.

La fase de **transición** es el período de tiempo durante el cual se crean una serie de órganos de gobierno transitorios hasta que estén suficientemente maduros como para poder instituir formalmente un nuevo sistema de gobernanza.

La fase más larga es la **integración**, que puede llegar a demorarse hasta 10 años. Durante este tiempo la nueva institución implementa su misión, visión, cultura, identidad y alinea políticas con procesos y procedimientos. Berriman y Jacobs proponen realizar un plan de gestión de la integración para los primeros 100 días, al igual que se hace en el sector privado (Berriman y Jacobs, 2010).

En la Tabla 1 se presentan, a modo de resumen, las tres fases tratadas.

Tabla 1. Fases y aspectos clave de un proceso de fusión. Fuente elaboración propia

Nr.	Fase	Aspectos clave
1	Pre-fusión	Negociaciones – Política de comunicación – Estrés entre empleados – Proyección de una nueva reputación – Procesos de evaluación
2	Transición	Órganos de gobierno transitorios
3	Integración	Hasta 10 años de duración – Implementación de la estrategia – Plan de gestión e integración a corto plazo

Goedegebuurde (Ver Tabla 2), a diferencia de Hall, propone cuatro fases: contacto inicial, integración inicial de recursos, integración total de recursos y la aceptación de la nueva institución. A cada una de estas fases le asigna una serie de factores a tener en cuenta (Goedegebuurde, 1992 citado por Hall et al., 2004).

Tabla 2. Etapas del proceso de fusión. Fuente: Goedegebuurde, 1992 citado por Hall et al., 2004.

Nr.	Fase	Factores
1	Contacto inicial	Ambiental – Comunidad - Económicos
2	Integración inicial de recursos	Sociológicos - Negociaciones intra e interinstitucionales
3	Integración total de recursos	Factores operacionales: gestión, psicológico e individual
4	Aceptación de la nueva institución	Institucional – Evaluación

Eastman y Lang sugieren tres fases (Estman y Lang, 2001 citado por Hall et al., 2004): negociación, transición e implementación. A cada una de estas fases se les puede asociar un conjunto de pasos a seguir (Ver Figura 6). A la fase de implementación se le da una importancia especial y se especifican con más detalle los aspectos clave (Ver Figura 7). La fase de negociación de la fusión requiere considerar todas las sensibilidades y disponer de las

competencias necesarias para alcanzar compromisos asumibles por todas las partes. Es un proceso que requiere tiempo y, a partir del cual, se pueden obtener interesantes conclusiones que determinarán las posibilidades de éxito del proceso.

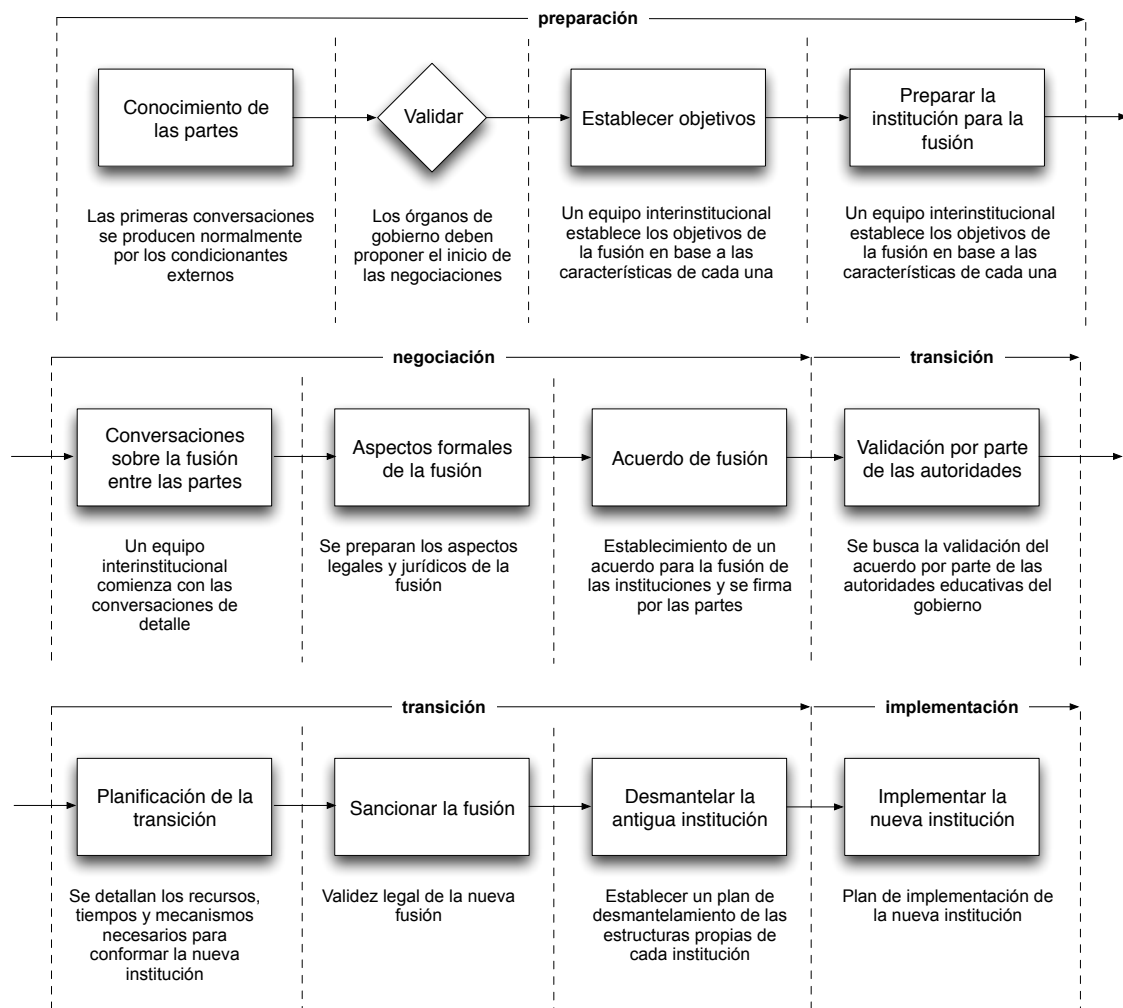


Figura 6. Fases y etapas de una fusión. Elaboración propia a partir de Eastman y Lang, 2001 citado por Hall et al., 2004.

La **implementación** de la fusión funciona mejor y genera menos resistencias si las instituciones que han decidido fusionarse actúan con diligencia y de manera rápida (Harman y Harman, 2003). Con esto se logra disminuir uno de los factores críticos que puede dinamitar un proceso de fusión: el número de rumores y suspicacias que se generan entre el personal de las instituciones.

En el diseño de los nuevos procesos y procedimientos hay que ser especialmente cuidadosos, ya que el intento de abordar los múltiples retos que se derivan de una fusión puede conducir a la creación de un número excesivo de normas, procesos y procedimientos que incrementan la burocracia, provocando la desafección de las personas (Hall et al., 2004). Eastman y Lang proponen 12 pasos a considerar en esta fase (Eastman y Lang 2001, citados por Hall et al., 2004) y que se representan en la Figura 7.

MODELOS DE FUSIÓN DE INSTITUCIONES DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR EN EUROPA

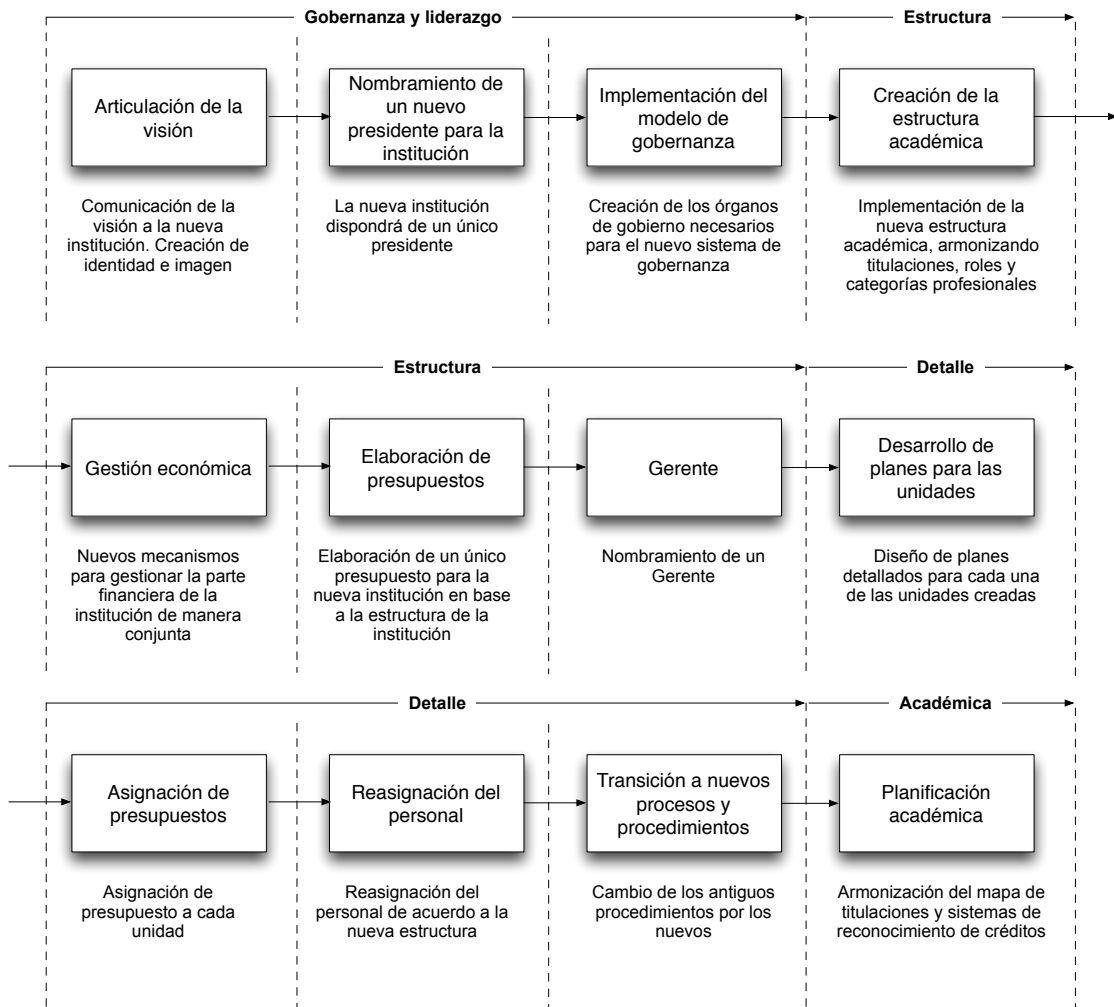


Figura 7. Implementación de la fusión. Elaboración propia a partir de Eastman y Lang, 2001 citado por Hall et al., 2004.

3.2 Estructura, metodología y objetivos de la tesis doctoral

Esta tesis doctoral consta de un total de 9 epígrafes. Los epígrafes 1 y 2 presentan la tesis. Los epígrafes 3 y 7 sirven de introducción y conclusiones de los tres epígrafes intermedios (4, 5 y 6). El objetivo del epígrafe introductorio es integrar el trabajo realizado durante estos años y presentarlo desde una perspectiva holística que permita al lector entender mejor la problemática, integrar los objetivos de investigación, profundizar en cada uno de los capítulos intermedios y, finalmente, guiarlo hasta las conclusiones de esta tesis.

Los epígrafes intermedios (epígrafes 4, 5 y 6) se corresponden con las publicaciones realizadas con el objeto de alcanzar los objetivos establecidos en esta tesis y que se presentan más adelante en este apartado. Es importante destacar que los artículos se han colocado en orden cronológico, de acuerdo a cómo ha ido evolucionado la investigación, partiendo de una revisión de la literatura, siguiendo con una comparativa de los factores críticos de éxito en una fusión para finalmente realizar un estudio de la fase post-fusión. Aunque cada artículo se ha realizado de manera independiente y constituye una unidad íntegra de conocimiento en sí mismo, existe un claro hilo conductor entre ellos proporcionando respuestas a las preguntas de investigación planteadas en esta tesis doctoral.

Las publicaciones se muestran en un formato unificado y simplificado, tomando como modelo el post print (epígrafes 4 y 5) y el “preprint” del autor (epígrafe 6). Algunos de los documentos se han adaptado con el objeto de ajustarlos al formato de la tesis. La adaptación ayuda a hacer el texto más legible y facilita localizar el hilo conductor de la tesis. Las referencias bibliográficas de todos los artículos se presentan de manera conjunta en el epígrafe 8 denominado “Bibliografía”. El epígrafe 9 incluye la transcripción de las entrevistas realizadas para la elaboración del epígrafe 6. Finalmente se incluyen dos epígrafes adicionales con el índice de tablas y el índice de figuras.

La metodología seguida en el desarrollo de la tesis es la aproximación en espiral, según la cual (Berg, 2014) “se comienza con una idea, se recopila la información teórica, se reconsidera y refina la idea inicial, se plantea un diseño, se reexamina la parte teórica e incluso la idea inicial”. La representación gráfica de este proceso sería como el que aparece en la Figura 8.

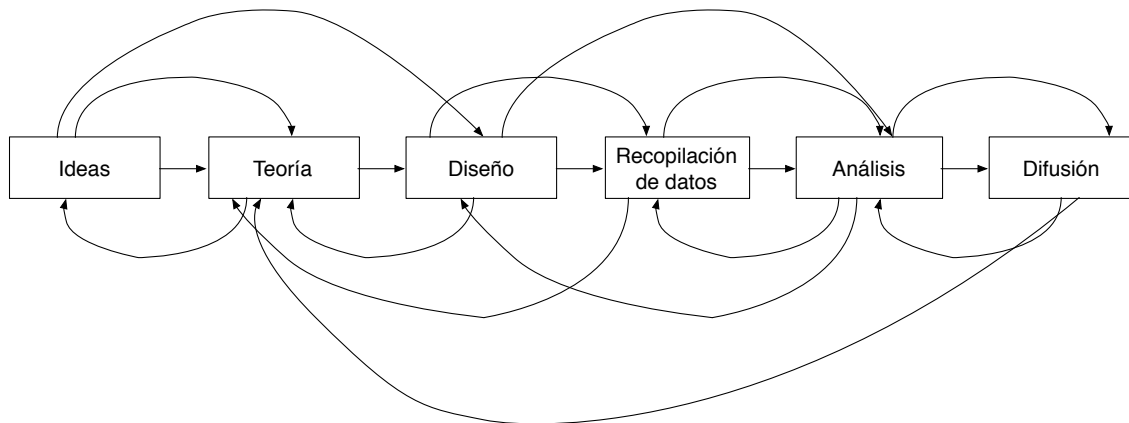


Figura 8. La aproximación en espiral. Fuente: Berg, 2014

Entrando más en el detalle de cada uno de los epígrafes intermedios, el epígrafe 4 sirve para contextualizar la investigación realizada mediante una revisión de la literatura sobre las fusiones, sus tipologías y los factores de éxito o fracaso. El análisis de contenido concluye la ausencia de un marco conceptual más sólido sobre el desarrollo de fusiones en educación superior. Eso implica la necesidad de realizar un análisis de contenido de la literatura previamente seleccionada en diversas bases de datos científicas. Este primer análisis permite determinar que, aunque los procesos de fusión responden a determinadas circunstancias tanto internas como externas, no siempre resuelve los problemas previos de las instituciones que la conforman. El tamaño de la institución o el desarrollo de una nueva cultura organizativa son temas clave que han surgido y que se tratan posteriormente en las entrevistas realizadas. La metodología aplicada en este epígrafe ha sido la realización de una revisión sistemática de la bibliografía existente sobre colaboraciones en el ámbito de la educación superior, con especial hincapié en las fusiones entre instituciones de este sector. Se ha seguido una estrategia de búsqueda de contenido basada en palabras clave (Creswell, 2003; Neuendorf, 2002) y se ha elaborado un mapa mental con los temas más destacados y de mayor impacto para el análisis. El software utilizado para la creación del mapa mental ha sido Xmind (Xmind Limited).

Una vez recopilada la información, se ha organizado para encontrar las duplicidades y comprobar si la estructura subyacente de la búsqueda bibliográfica cubría los diferentes temas previstos (Marín, 2008). Se ha elaborado una base de datos propia basada en Bento (Filemaker) para facilitar la búsqueda posterior de la información.

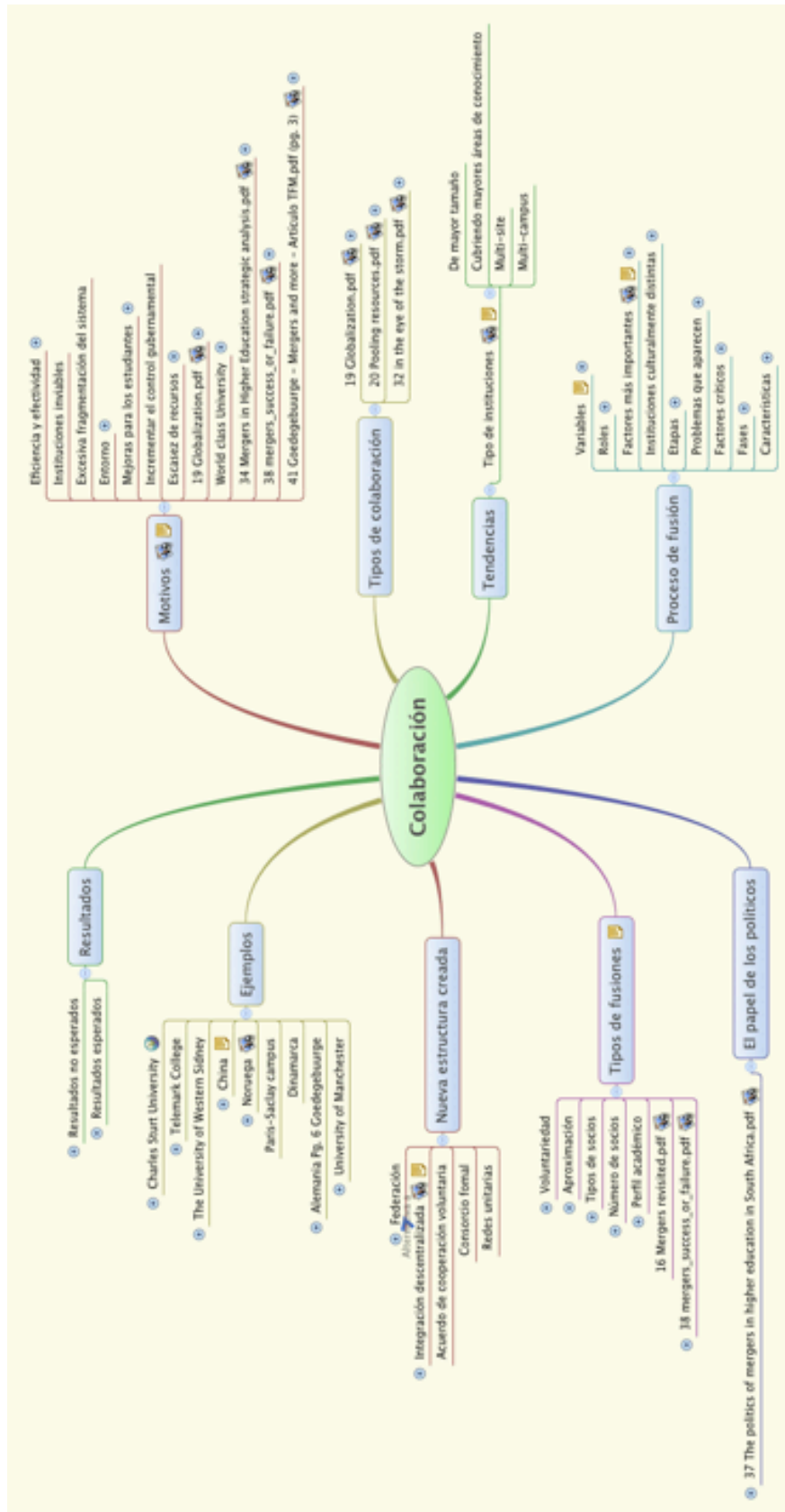


Figura 9. Extracto del mapa mental. Elaboración propia.

Los objetivos de este análisis de literatura han sido:

- Categorizar los modelos de colaboración existentes.
- Profundizar en las características de las fusiones universitarias.
- Determinar los factores de éxito y fracaso de las fusiones universitarias.

Seguidamente, el epígrafe 5 profundiza en los elementos detectados anteriormente y se realiza un análisis de contenido de la colaboración interinstitucional entre instituciones de educación superior. Esto permite abordar el problema detectado en el anterior epígrafe sobre la ausencia de un modelo sólido acerca de las fusiones entre instituciones de educación superior. La principal conclusión del artículo es que, cuando se elige un modelo de colaboración interinstitucional concreto, especialmente fusiones, es importante hacer un estudio detallado de los resultados esperados. Normalmente las economías de escala que se argumentan como razón para la fusión no se materializan y los resultados de docencia e investigación no suelen mejorar. Más aún, queda en evidencia que existe un tamaño óptimo para alcanzar la eficiencia. Con esto se entiende que se sientan las bases para el establecimiento de un modelo más claro de fusiones. La metodología seguida es similar a la del epígrafe 4, realizando un análisis de contenido de la literatura relacionada con la colaboración interinstitucional en educación superior. La estrategia de búsqueda se ha basado en palabras clave (Creswell, 2003; Neuendorf, 2002). Las bases de datos utilizadas han sido Scopus Elsevier, ISI Web of Science and Web of Knowledge. Después de recopilar toda la información, hemos ordenado los resultados para buscar duplicados e identificar la estructura subyacente respecto a los diferentes temas (Medina-López et al., 2010). Los resultados se han incorporado a la base de datos utilizada para el epígrafe 4.

El epígrafe 6 se construye sobre la base de los epígrafes 4 y 5. En él se analizan los procesos de fusión de cinco instituciones de educación superior en el contexto europeo y consideradas de "clase mundial". El análisis se realiza respecto a un conjunto de dimensiones, entre las que se encuentran los resultados tras haber completado la fusión (post-fusión). Estos resultados se han comparado con la posición que ocupa cada una de las instituciones en el Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU). Asimismo, entra de lleno en los resultados de la fusión, comparando los procesos de fusión de universidades reconocidas como de "clase mundial" en el contexto de la Unión Europea. Se identifican los retos a los que se presentan estos casos, intentando establecer tipologías claras de fusiones. Como conclusión se obtiene que existen varios aspectos locales, nacionales e internacionales que hay que analizar en la fase post-fusión antes de que se pueda demostrar que una fusión ha sido exitosa. El trabajo se basa en la realización de un total de siete entrevistas a directivos de universidades involucrados en los procesos de fusión. Se utilizó un cuestionario semiestructurado que se desarrolló en base a los resultados obtenidos en los artículos anteriores. El diseño de la investigación en el que se ha basado el epígrafe 6, toma como unidad de análisis "fusiones exitosas entre instituciones de educación superior en Europa" con al menos una universidad involucrada en el proceso. Con ello se pretende conocer mejor porqué han tenido éxito y cómo afrontan los retos futuros.

Además, usamos por un lado una aproximación inductiva para determinar cuál de los tres modelos institucionales emergen tras el proceso en función del tipo de instituciones que participan en la fusión. Y, por otro lado, hemos seguido un método descriptivo y deductivo, basado en los resultados de la revisión bibliográfica realizada en los epígrafes 4 y 5. Con ello hemos podido realizar una comparación de los diferentes casos de estudio sobre fusiones en Europa que se han seleccionado para esta tesis. Los casos de estudio permiten realizar comparaciones pues, de acuerdo a Berg and Lune (2012: 325), "el caso de estudio es una aproximación capaz de examinar tanto fenómenos simples como complejos, con unidades de análisis que varían desde elementos individuales a grandes corporaciones; incluye el uso de una gran variedad de líneas de acción para la recopilación de datos en segmentos autocontenidos

que permiten la aplicación de la teoría. De hecho, “la aproximación del caso de estudio desde la perspectiva de la resolución de problemas, puede revelar la lógica que hay detrás de los procesos de toma de decisión” (Berg and Lune, 2012: 328). Para extraer todos los datos necesarios, hemos aplicado un modelo de triangulación (Berg and Lune, 2012), utilizando múltiples fuentes, a saber: informes oficiales de las universidades, ARWU, revisión bibliográfica de casos específicos y entrevistas en profundidad con directivos de las instituciones fusionadas. Los casos de estudio se basan en la realización de un total de siete entrevistas a directivos de cada una de las instituciones objeto de estudio. Todos los directivos seleccionados han estado relacionados con el propio proceso de fusión. Se ha seguido la metodología de la entrevista en profundidad semiestructurada. Este tipo de entrevistas es suficientemente flexible ya que permite al investigador (Berg and Lune, 2014: 25) “tratar una serie de preguntas estructuradas que facilitan la comparación entre los diferentes sujetos entrevistados y, al mismo tiempo, permite profundizar en determinadas áreas que sugiere de manera espontánea el entrevistado”. Así pues, se acaba obteniendo una información mucho más contextualizada que si se siguiese un guion inflexible de preguntas.

El objetivo de esta tesis es estudiar de manera comparativa las fusiones de instituciones de educación superior, concretamente la etapa post-fusión. Este objetivo se despliega a través de las siguientes preguntas de investigación:

- RQ1: ¿Cuáles son los factores de éxito o fracaso de una fusión?
- RQ2: ¿Se puede generalizar un modelo de fusión?
- RQ3: ¿De qué manera se aborda la etapa post-fusión?

Esta tesis se desarrolla en un área concreta del campo de la gestión de la educación superior en la que no existe una base conceptual fuerte sobre la que apoyar las hipótesis. A diferencia del sector privado, donde el tema de fusiones y adquisiciones está ampliamente desarrollado, no sucede lo mismo en el caso de las instituciones de educación superior. Plantear modelos de fusión, procesos de fusión o ventajas e inconvenientes, es un campo poco analizado y donde no existe una literatura clara que permita ayudar en la toma de decisiones antes, durante y después del proceso de fusión. Esta ha sido una de las principales motivaciones para desarrollar este trabajo: clarificar la situación de las fusiones en la educación superior, temática que requiere un tratamiento diferenciado respecto al de las fusiones y adquisiciones en el sector privado.

Así pues, con esta tesis se aporta el conocimiento necesario para establecer una diferenciación clara entre los diferentes modelos de fusión de educación superior y determinar cuáles son los aspectos clave de lo que sucede después de la fusión, así como las implicaciones que tiene a nivel internacional de la institución a través de los rankings.

4. Las fusiones universitarias: análisis de contenido de sus tipologías y los factores que pueden determinar su éxito o fracaso. Una revisión de la literatura

Ripoll Soler, C. & de Miguel Molina, M. (2013). Las fusiones universitarias: análisis de contenido de sus tipologías y los factores que pueden determinar su éxito o fracaso. Una revisión de la literatura. *Revista de Educación*, (1) Extraordinario: 313-337.

Revista ubicada en el cuartil 3 del JCR.

4.1 Resumen

En la actualidad, las instituciones de educación superior están inmersas en políticas públicas que justifiquen su legitimidad y eficiencia. Entre las nuevas propuestas, se pone de manifiesto la necesidad de reducir el número de universidades en distintos países, proceso seguido principalmente en aquellos países con sistemas duales de educación superior. Estas afirmaciones, sin embargo, pueden estar lejos de lo que la realidad ha demostrado tras una fusión entre universidades. Se echa en falta un marco conceptual más sólido sobre el desarrollo de fusiones en educación superior. Por ello, hemos considerado necesario analizar los modelos de colaboración existentes en la actualidad a partir de la literatura, haciendo especial hincapié en las fusiones universitarias en el contexto internacional y europeo para identificar qué factores contribuyen a su éxito o su fracaso. Para este estudio hemos realizado un análisis de contenido de la literatura previamente seleccionada en diversas bases de datos científicas. El resultado ha sido la categorización de diferentes formas de colaboración y, más concretamente, de las tipologías de fusiones entre instituciones de educación superior, así como los factores que en los casos documentados han determinado su éxito o fracaso. Se observa que la fusión universitaria es un proceso complejo que no siempre consigue los resultados positivos que se esperan de ella, y que debe ser planificada teniendo en cuenta el entorno y las características de las instituciones que se pretenda fusionar. Como conclusión, podemos observar que la fusión no siempre resuelve los problemas previos –de tipo tanto económico como estratégico– de las instituciones que la conforman. Algunos factores clave para su éxito o fracaso son el tamaño de la institución resultante o el desarrollo de una nueva cultura organizativa.

4.2 Abstract

Nowadays institutions of higher education stand in the limelight of public policy and must justify their legitimacy and efficiency. One topic often headlined in new proposals is the need to reduce the number of universities in different countries, mainly in countries with dual systems of higher education. Such statements, however, take little account of the real results of actual university mergers. A more solid conceptual framework is needed. This literature review thoroughly examines models of cooperation between institutions of higher education, with particular emphasis on European and international university mergers, to identify which factors contribute to merger success or failure. Literature previously selected from various scientific databases was subjected to content analysis, yielding a categorization of different forms of cooperation and, more specifically, a categorization of merger types and the factors that have made for success or failure in documented cases. University mergers are revealed as complex processes that do not always live up to the expectations placed in them. Merger planning should take into account the environment and characteristics of the target institutions. Mergers are not always the solution to schools' economic and strategic problems. The size of the resulting institution and the development of a new organizational culture are key factors in success or failure.

4.3 Introducción

Se ha considerado que las universidades son una herramienta con gran potencial para tratar la 'paradoja europea', según la cual en Europa se producen importantes avances científicos, pero con poco impacto en el entorno socioeconómico (Maasen y Stensaker, 2011). La globalización ha afectado a la educación superior; el máximo exponente de este impacto es la integración de las instituciones a escala mundial (Lo, 2009). Este fenómeno ha provocado importantes cambios en la educación superior (Vaira, 2004).

Entre otras cosas, se exige a las universidades que se conviertan en referentes internacionales (Aula y Tienari, 2011), muchas veces en detrimento de las funciones que cumplen en su entorno más próximo. Esta situación se ha acrecentado con el gran impacto que han tenido los rankings internacionales, así como la atención que tanto los gobiernos como las universidades les prestan (Goedegebuure, 2012). Querer disponer de instituciones de máximo nivel y que estas sean un referente internacional es un objetivo legítimo, aunque algunos autores como Aarvevaara et ál. (2009) son críticos con este tema y llegan a demostrar la dificultad que puede tener un país pequeño para situar alguna de sus instituciones entre las 100 mejores del mundo.

Se puede afirmar que la educación superior ha entrado en una era de competición global entre naciones y entre las propias entidades. Constantemente, se producen comparaciones entre países e instituciones que, por lo general, dejan de lado aspectos importantes del contexto, como la desigual dedicación de recursos a la educación superior en cada país (Lo, 2009; Sehoole, 2005), lo cual genera una clara contradicción entre políticas y medios. Esta escasez se hace más patente en un contexto internacional en el que se dan cita un gran número de competidores que luchan por los mismos recursos (Wangenge-Ouma, 2010). Como respuesta a esta circunstancia, se hace necesario diseñar nuevas estrategias que permitan captar más recursos.

Las instituciones de educación superior se ven abocadas a afrontar una realidad que exige una mayor adaptación desde unas estructuras inmovilistas (Gornitzka, 1999) y con un marco regulador excesivamente rígido que no facilita precisamente dicha adaptación (Mok, 2005a). Al mismo tiempo, existe una fuerte influencia de las ideas del new public management, caracterizado por la orientación al mercado, la mayor relación entre público y privado, las mejoras en la gestión, las medidas de rendimiento y la rendición de cuentas (Tolofari, 2005). Se persigue una profesionalización de la gestión de las universidades que conlleve una mayor eficiencia y el aprovechamiento al máximo de las economías de escala que permita un ahorro del dinero público invertido en educación superior (Mok, 2005a).

En paralelo, se desvela un papel fundamental para unas estrategias de colaboración interinstitucionales mucho más activas que las aplicadas hasta ahora, que en un entorno globalizado han provocado la proliferación de redes y asociaciones de universidades (Kitagawa, 2010). Las colaboraciones entre instituciones de educación superior son muy frecuentes y variadas. Algunas se dan a título individual entre miembros de las instituciones y otras se desarrollan a nivel institucional, como las fusiones de distinto grado que se han dado en los últimos cuarenta años (Harman y Harman, 2003). Los gobiernos suelen ver estas últimas como un mecanismo para mejorar la eficiencia, incrementar la competitividad y mejorar su situación internacional. También las consideran una manera de reducir la excesiva fragmentación que este sector presenta en muchos países (Mok, 2005a). Sin embargo, este tipo de afirmaciones están lejos de la realidad (Goedegebuure, 2012).

El Ministerio de Educación español puso en marcha en 2009 la Estrategia Universidad 2015 (Ministerio de Educación, 2009b) mediante el programa Campus de Excelencia Internacional dirigido a la constitución de entornos de excelencia (Ministerio de Educación, 2010a y 2010b).

Se promovía así el concepto de 'agregación estratégica' para el establecimiento de colaboraciones estables y sistemáticas fundamentalmente entre universidades, aunque también se pueden añadir otro tipo de entidades como organismos públicos de investigación o empresas privadas. Asimismo, el Ministerio de Educación (2011) en su informe de la Comisión de Expertos de la Estrategia Universidad 2015, recomienda valorar la posibilidad de realizar algunas fusiones voluntarias entre universidades o centros de investigación.

4.4 Antecedentes: modelos y políticas que afectan a la modernización de las universidades

Las universidades desempeñan un papel doble: abastecen de personas con las competencias necesarias para trabajos intensivos en conocimiento y generan empresas de base tecnológica mediante procesos de incubación (Etzkowitz et al., 2000). La implementación del triángulo del conocimiento en las universidades (León, 2010) es una tendencia en muchos países, como Finlandia y su Aalto University (Markkula, 2011), Estonia (Kirch, 2010) o España (Ministerio de Educación, 2009a). El cambio de paradigma hacia una universidad emprendedora (Clark, 1998), en la que la institución tiene un papel activo en la generación de riqueza, requiere de una mayor relación entre los reguladores, los consumidores de conocimiento y sus productores (Etzkowitz et al., 2000).

Asimismo, el modelo de la triple hélice sugiere un sistema de relación entre las universidades, los agentes socioeconómicos y la Administración pública que sustituye a esquemas más antiguos en los que se apostaba por relaciones bilaterales, y genera una innovación en espiral como el solapamiento de las tres esferas (Etzkowitz, 2002).

Por otro lado, el componente político en la educación superior, especialmente en su vertiente pública, tiene un papel fundamental y llega a definir en numerosas ocasiones cuáles son las directrices que debe seguir la institución (Harman y Harman, 2003) a pesar de la autonomía de la que teóricamente gozan las universidades en muchos países. El sistema en su conjunto condiciona considerablemente las posibilidades de actuación de las instituciones de educación superior (Vaira, 2004). De hecho, se pueden indicar algunos factores globales que afectan a las estrategias que pueden adoptar las universidades. Además, es interesante recordar la influencia que tienen otros actores del entorno en la universidad (Gornitzka, 1999).

Las universidades se encuentran actualmente en una fase de transición en la que se cuestiona de manera continua la legitimidad de su misión, su organización, los recursos asignados e incluso las maneras de pensar propias del entorno universitario (Maasen y Stensaker, 2011). Esta situación ha promovido un creciente debate –tanto en el propio ámbito universitario como en el plano político– sobre las instituciones y los resultados que la sociedad debería esperar de ellas. Principalmente en la Unión Europea (Deem et ál., 2008), se detectan tres importantes cuellos de botella (Comisión Europea, 2006): la excesiva uniformidad, el aislamiento de las instituciones y la escasa financiación (Eurostat, 2011). A este marco, algunos autores (Maasen y Stensaker, 2010) añaden el excesivo intervencionismo por parte de los gobiernos en las instituciones de educación superior. La Agenda de Modernización para las Universidades (Comisión Europea, 2006) les insta a crear las condiciones necesarias para que se modernicen y desempeñen un papel más importante en la sociedad del conocimiento.

4.5 Metodología

Se ha realizado una revisión sistemática de la bibliografía existente sobre colaboraciones en el ámbito de la educación superior, con especial hincapié en las fusiones entre instituciones de este sector. Se ha seguido una estrategia de búsqueda de contenido basada en palabras clave (Creswell, 2003; Neuendorf, 2002) y se ha elaborado un mapa mental con los temas más

destacados y de mayor impacto para el análisis. El software utilizado para la creación del mapa mental ha sido Xmind (Xmind Limited).

Una vez recopilada la información, se ha organizado para encontrar las duplicidades y comprobar si la estructura subyacente de la búsqueda bibliográfica cubría los diferentes temas previstos (Marín, 2008). Se ha elaborado una base de datos propia basada en Bento (Filemaker) para facilitar la búsqueda posterior de la información.

Los objetivos de este análisis de literatura han sido:

- Categorizar los modelos de colaboración existentes.
- Profundizar en las características de las fusiones universitarias.
- Determinar los factores de éxito y fracaso de las fusiones universitarias.

4.6 Mecanismos de colaboración entre instituciones de educación superior

Las políticas europeas y nacionales, de manera indirecta, acaban dejando la colaboración como única opción para competir a escala internacional con otras instituciones (Kitagawa, 2010; Harman y Harman, 2003). El modelo de universidad actual se aproxima más hacia instituciones de mayor tamaño, con una envergadura suficiente para que sus actividades generen el impacto deseado en la sociedad.

Cuando se habla de ‘mecanismos de colaboración’, existe un amplio espectro de posibilidades que van desde la participación puntual en publicaciones científicas o proyectos de investigación hasta fusiones de dos o más instituciones. La Figura 10 partiendo de la clasificación propuesta por Harman y Harman (2003), muestra los diferentes tipos de colaboraciones. El grado de integración de la estructura resultante permite definir tres niveles: cooperación, coordinación y fusión. El nivel de integración aumenta o disminuye en función de la autonomía que las instituciones que originan la alianza conservan tras el proceso (Lang, 2002). Esta mayor o menor pérdida de autonomía se tiene que ver compensada con los beneficios de la alianza. Además, es necesario un control para garantizar el éxito. También se ha considerado si la iniciativa proviene de personas individuales o de los órganos de gobierno de la propia institución. Se han incorporado pequeños ejemplos para ilustrar cada situación.

Aunque se han mostrado las alianzas desde las que representan un menor nivel de integración hasta las que muestran un nivel mayor, esto no quiere decir que el objetivo de todo proceso de alianza sea llegar a una integración máxima que culmine en una fusión. No obstante, algunos autores sugieren que, si realmente se quieren obtener resultados concretos y de mayor impacto, es necesario caminar hacia formas que impliquen altos grados de integración (Berriman y Jacobs, 2010).

Algunos autores, como Berriman y Jacobs (2010), no consideran la federación como una fusión propiamente dicha, sino como un paso intermedio entre los consorcios y las unidades conjuntas. La federación tiene una serie de características específicas que no son propias de la fusión, si bien es cierto que muchas federaciones han acabado siendo fusiones de facto, como puede ocurrir con la University of Oxford o la University of Cambridge (Lang, 2002). En una federación las instituciones conservan un alto grado de autonomía, como la gestión de sus propios recursos, órganos de gobierno diferenciados, criterios de admisión de estudiantes diferentes o la propia certificación de los estudios. A pesar de esta gran autonomía, se crean una serie de estructuras interinstitucionales que permiten, por ejemplo, que los estudiantes elijan asignaturas de cualquiera de las instituciones participantes con un reconocimiento automático de los créditos

cursados. Esto hace que sea difícil incluir a las federaciones como un tipo de fusión, aunque claramente son formas de colaboración interinstitucional muy relevantes (Lang, 2002).

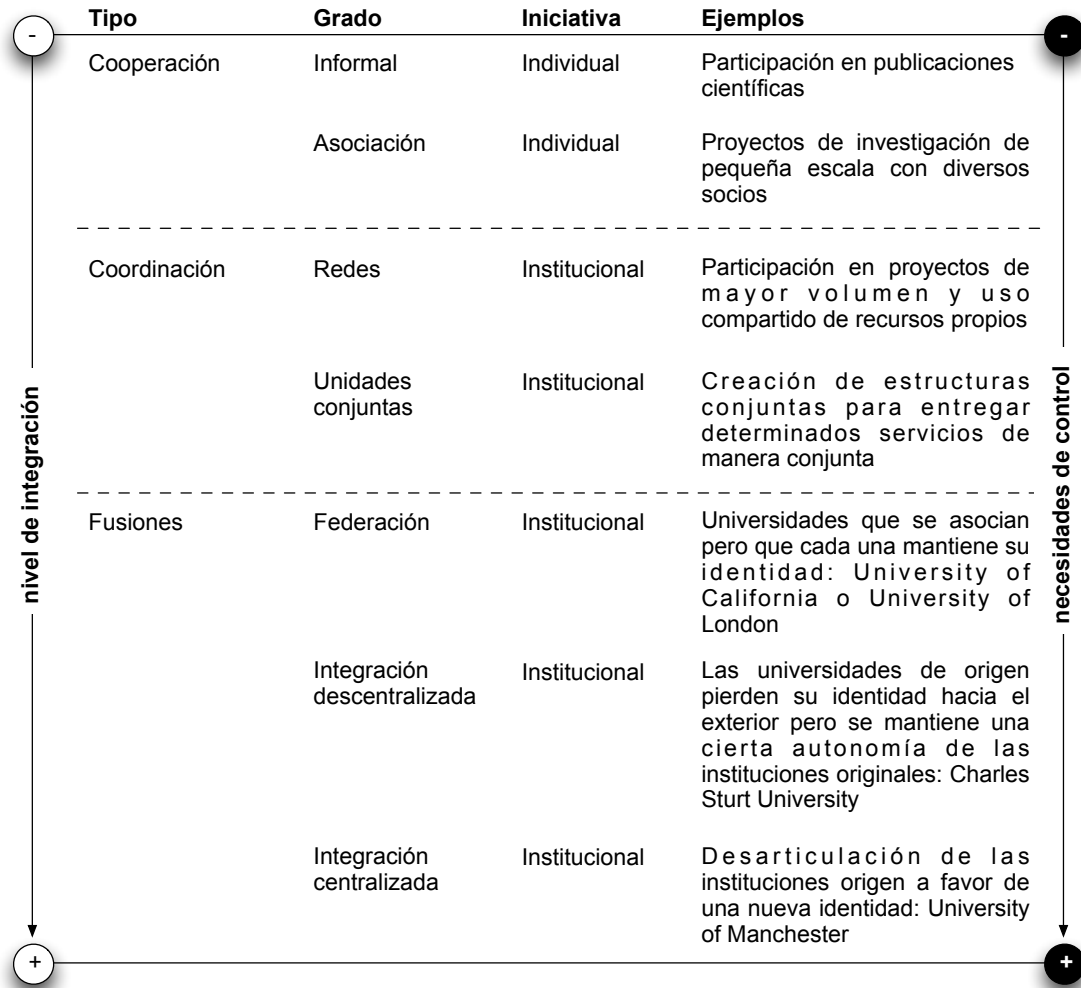


Figura 10. Tipos de colaboraciones universitarias en función del nivel de integración. Elaboración propia a partir de Harman y Harman (2003)

Otros autores sí que incluyen las federaciones como una forma de fusión y realizan una cierta equiparación entre fusiones y federaciones. Así, por ejemplo, lo hace Massingham (2001), que compara las universidades federadas creadas en Australia a finales de 1980 con una fusión. Harman y Harman (2003) las incluyen como un tipo de fusión y las definen de la siguiente manera:

En las estructuras federales las instituciones mantienen algunas de sus funciones mientras que otras se delegan en una supraestructura. Sin embargo, en las fusiones unitarias la identidad de los miembros desaparece tras la fusión a favor de una nueva institución con sus propias estructuras de gobernanza, sus órganos de gestión y un único presidente.

En esta categoría existen ejemplos como la University of California o la University of London, muy consolidadas, junto con otras más recientes, como la alianza entre la University of Jyväskylä, la University of Tampere y la Tampere University of Technology. Gracias a dicha alianza, las tres

universidades mantienen programas conjuntos y atienden a una población de 45.000 estudiantes bajo el nombre de Central Finland University (Aarveaara et ál., 2009). En algunos países, la experiencia con las federaciones no ha alcanzado el nivel de integración esperado, como es el caso de Australia (Massingham, 2001). Bien es cierto que en este país se da la excepción de la Charles Sturt University, la cual, a pesar de haberse iniciado como una federación, derivó hacia un modelo unitario basado en una integración descentralizada (Hatton, 2002).

Tanto la integración descentralizada como la centralizada forman parte de lo que viene a llamarse 'modelos unitarios'. En ellos, una nueva institución sustituye totalmente a los socios fundadores (Harman y Harman, 2003). Esta es la forma que mejor se adapta a la definición de fusión de Goedegebuure (2012), para quien la fusión supone la integración de dos o más instituciones de educación superior en una nueva entidad en la que el control reside en un único órgano de gobierno con un solo consejo de dirección. Además, de acuerdo con esta definición, todos los activos, obligaciones y responsabilidades se han transferido a la nueva entidad.

4.7 Análisis de las fusiones universitarias: casos y tipologías

Las fusiones suponen un punto de inflexión importante que, en muchos casos, implica la desaparición de la entidad previamente existente a favor de una nueva institución. Sin embargo, existen pocos casos de auténticas fusiones, ya que, normalmente, se trata más de adquisiciones –en las que una institución toma el control sobre otra– que de fusiones que formen conglomerados (Harman y Meek, 2002).

Las fusiones universitarias normalmente se enmarcan dentro de procesos de reformas del sistema de educación superior, promovidos por los gobiernos, en los que se plantean objetivos respecto al sistema en su conjunto (Harman y Harman, 2003). Pero existen numerosas alternativas menos costosas y con resultados más inmediatos que las fusiones. Un excesivo uso de la fusión, especialmente en el caso de modelos federados, puede acabar generando minisistemas de educación superior, entre los cuales se incrementarán incompatibilidades y cuya complejidad aumentará (Lang, 2002).

En muchas regiones existe un sistema de educación superior con pequeñas o medianas instituciones dedicadas especialmente a una docencia orientada al mundo profesional y con una marcada vinculación con la región en que desarrollan sus actividades (Aarveaara et ál., 2009). Estas instituciones conviven con universidades clásicas con capacidad investigadora. Son los denominados 'sistemas duales', que se crearon en muchos países con la idea de suplir las carencias de las universidades y ofrecer una formación para puestos de trabajo concretos. Posteriormente, se incorporaron al sistema de educación superior, pero sin el rango de universidad debido a su orientación exclusiva a la docencia. Esta situación añadía una mayor complejidad al sistema y convertía a estas instituciones en candidatas a formar parte de procesos de reestructuración cuyo resultado final es la creación de nuevas universidades (Kyvik y Skodvin, 2003). Este es el caso de los colleges en Australia (Massingham, 2001) o Sudáfrica (Hall et ál., 2004), los polytechnics en el Reino Unido (Fazackerley y Chant, 2009) o las universities of applied sciences en Finlandia (Aula y Tienari, 2011).

Australia ha sufrido numerosos procesos de reestructuración (Harman y Harman, 2003). El último se caracterizó por la conversión de los denominados colleges of advanced education (CAE) en universidades mediante procesos de fusión forzados y de carácter unisectorial. Algunos también fueron absorbidos por universidades de mayor tamaño para que estas pudieran diversificar su oferta (Skodvin, 1999). El resultado fue la desaparición total del sistema dual a favor de uno nuevo compuesto por las antiguas universidades, las universidades de tecnología y las nuevas universidades resultantes de las fusiones con los CAE. Esto ha provocado un incremento de la

competencia y una mejora del rendimiento de cuentas (Goedegebuure, 2012). Las instituciones resultantes han basado normalmente su colaboración inicial en un modelo federado fundamentado en la creación de una red entre las instituciones objeto de la fusión (Massingham, 2001). El gobierno australiano además ha promovido otra serie de actividades en paralelo para favorecer la colaboración, especialmente en el ámbito de la investigación, como la National Collaborative Research Infrastructure Strategy o las Collaborative Research Networks. Aunque existen algunas críticas (Massingham, 2001), esta política ha tenido efectos positivos y Australia ha situado su sistema de educación superior entre los diez mejores del mundo de acuerdo con la clasificación del Academic World Ranking of Universities de la Shanghai Jiao Tong University (Goedegebuure, 2012). Sin embargo, también existen casos documentados de fusiones fallidas, donde dos instituciones –tras haber sufrido un proceso de fusión– deciden volver a establecerse como instituciones separadas. Este fue el caso de la University of New England. Como principales motivos de este ‘divorcio’ figuran el excesivo poder que cada campus mantuvo en la estructura federada y el propio carácter reversible inherente a las federaciones (Harman, 2002).

En Estados Unidos las fusiones se han utilizado especialmente como mecanismos para crear instituciones económicamente viables y así evitar el cierre de las más débiles (Harman y Harman, 2003). También es frecuente la fusión de instituciones no universitarias para conformar entidades de mayor tamaño y de carácter universitario: se crean así instituciones multicampus de carácter estatal. Fazackerley y Chant (2009) critican que se utilice la fusión en el caso de que una de las instituciones no sea viable desde el punto de vista económico. Esta práctica suele acarrear problemas mayores y puede acabar haciendo que el propio proceso de fusión falle. En esa línea se menciona el caso de la University College Cardiff de Reino Unido.

Noruega también es un país con un importante proceso de reestructuración dirigido desde el gobierno, en un devenir de fusiones forzadas de instituciones menores que pasaron a denominarse state colleges y a formar parte del sistema de educación superior: 96 instituciones se convirtieron en 26 state colleges (Kyvik, 2002). La reforma dio lugar a un sistema dual en el que las antiguas universidades competían con un nuevo tipo de institución con funciones cada vez más parecidas (Kyvik, 2002). Algunos de los resultados de esta reforma fueron la mayor visibilidad del sistema de educación superior noruego a nivel internacional, aunque los objetivos relacionados con la consecución de economías de escala no se alcanzaron.

En Sudáfrica, la cifra original de 120 colleges se consiguió rebajar a 25 (Seehoole, 2005) mediante sucesivos procesos de fusión. Se ofreció a las instituciones menores que o bien se incorporaran a universidades ya existentes mediante procesos de adquisición (multisectorial), o bien que crearan nuevas universidades fusionándose con otros colleges (unisectorial). Esta última fue la opción más elegida, pues permitía mantener un cierto grado de autonomía.

Finlandia ha destinado parte de su reforma universitaria a reducir el número de instituciones de educación superior, mejorar el autogobierno, la dotación de recursos y la creación de nuevos sistemas de gobernanza que aumenten la eficacia y eficiencia del sistema (Aarveaara et ál., 2009). El objetivo es que para 2020 el país tenga un sistema con 15 universidades y 18 *polytechnics*.

Por tanto, las fusiones se pueden clasificar de acuerdo con las siguientes dimensiones (Harman y Meek, 2002; Harman y Harman, 2003):

- Carácter de la fusión: forzada o voluntaria.
- Poder de los socios: fusión o adquisición.
- Sector: unisectorial o multisectorial.
- Número de socios: dos socios o más.

- Perfil académico: perfiles similares (horizontal) o perfiles diferentes (vertical).
- Orientación a producto: diversificado o conglomerado.

Skodvin (1999) añade a esta lista la manera en que surge la idea de la fusión y distingue entre una aproximación top-down, en la que la alta dirección marca el camino; y una aproximación bottom-up, en la que el proceso surge como una demanda de los miembros de la organización. La ubicación geográfica también es otro asunto susceptible de considerarse, ya que algunos países como Hungría han utilizado este parámetro para diseñar sus procesos de fusión (Harman y Harman, 2003).

4.8 Fusiones forzadas y fusiones voluntarias

Una primera clasificación se puede hacer en función de quién inicia un proceso de fusión. Goedegeburgee (2012) diferencia las fusiones accidentales de aquellas que están promovidas desde los gobiernos. En esta misma línea, Skodvin (1999) diferencia entre las forzadas y las voluntarias: las primeras vienen inducidas generalmente por los gobiernos y las segundas las originan los propios interesados. En este último caso, el argumento principal para la fusión es la diversificación de los perfiles académicos. En la Tabla 3 se realiza una breve recopilación de los procesos de fusión que se han dado cita en distintos países y se clasifican en función de este criterio.

Tabla 3. Fusiones por países. Fuente: Elaboración propia a partir de Skodvin (1999), Sehoole (2005) y Mao et al. (2009).

País	Período	Forzada	Voluntaria
Alemania	1970-1990	•	•
Australia	1987-1990	•	
Bélgica	1994	•	
Canadá	1990	•	•
China	1990-2006	•	
Estados Unidos	1960-1997	•	•
Finlandia	1991-1995; 2009	•	
Holanda	1983-1987	•	•
Hungría	2000	•	
Noruega	1994	•	
Reino Unido	1980-1990	•	•
Suecia	1977; 1993	•	•
Sudáfrica	1996-2004	•	

Como se desprende de la Tabla 3, la mayoría de los casos son forzados. «Las universidades son incapaces de renovarse sin la adecuada presión del Estado» (Aula y Tienari, 2011). En los pocos casos voluntarios que existen, también podría decirse que, en el fondo, las fusiones han sido 'forzadas por las circunstancias'. Por ejemplo, hay cambios normativos que obligan a llegar a un número mínimo de alumnos para conseguir financiación; por otra parte, la necesidad de evitar la bancarota en instituciones inviables económicamente puede ser un motivo para una fusión (Skodvin, 1999; Hall et ál., 2004).

Las fusiones voluntarias normalmente se producen para crear una institución con mejores recursos y posicionamiento para competir a escala internacional. A estas, algunos autores las denominan 'fusiones motivadas por el crecimiento mutuo' (Hall et ál., 2004). En este tipo de fusiones es frecuente que las entidades que buscan socios evalúen a sus candidatos potenciales (Rowley, 1997). En cualquier caso, las fusiones que tienen un cierto grado de voluntariedad obtienen mejores resultados que las forzadas (Skodvin, 1999).

4.9 Consolidación frente adquisición

La consolidación, realizada entre instituciones de tamaño e importancia similares, requiere un mayor esfuerzo y tiempo para organizarse. Esto se debe, entre otras cosas, a los largos procesos de negociación. Temas como el nuevo nombre, la elección del presidente de la institución o la racionalización de la oferta formativa de ambas instituciones se convierten en importantes puntos de discusión. Las adquisiciones suceden normalmente entre instituciones asimétricas en las que una tiene un tamaño considerablemente superior a la otra. El proceso se simplifica considerablemente cuando la de mayor tamaño impone las condiciones e incorpora a la de menor tamaño entre sus propios departamentos (Harman y Harman, 2003).

Independientemente de que se trate de consolidaciones o adquisiciones, en todo proceso de fusión siempre una de las partes adopta, o intenta adoptar, un papel dominante frente a la otra, que acaba asumiendo la actitud de seguidora (Skodvin, 1999). En la realidad, normalmente se dan situaciones intermedias. Algunas adquisiciones son presentadas, por motivos políticos, como fusiones (Harman y Harman, 2003). En esta categoría podría estar la fusión entre la University of Turku, con 15.500 estudiantes; y la Turku School of Economics and Business Administration, con 2.250 (Aarrevaara et ál., 2009).

4.10 Unisectorial frente a multisectorial

Las fusiones unisectoriales, con instituciones pertenecientes al mismo sector, han sido las más habituales en la mayoría de países que querían eliminar un sistema dual, como por ejemplo Australia (Massingham, 2001) o Sudáfrica (Seehole, 2005). Finlandia, por su parte, tiene previsto establecer alianzas (no necesariamente fusiones) entre polytechnics y universidades en determinadas ciudades (Aarrevaara et ál., 2009). Noruega inició un proceso de reestructuración dentro de las instituciones de educación superior no universitarias mediante fusiones, pero mantenía el sistema dual (Kyvik, 2002). Fazackerley y Chant (2009) afirman que son casos poco habituales y los pocos que existen suelen ser más bien adquisiciones. Pretender consolidar dos universidades de similar tamaño plantea situaciones muy complicadas, debido a las dinámicas de poder en las que se encuentra inmersa cada entidad (Hall et ál., 2004). Un caso interesante es la fusión de la London Guildhall University y la University of North London para constituir la London Metropolitan University (Harman y Harman, 2003).

Cuando se producen fusiones entre instituciones de diferentes sectores –o multisectoriales–, normalmente se generan conflictos derivados del diferente peso que cada institución concede a la investigación y a la docencia. Las instituciones que más problemas afrontan son las orientadas a la docencia, pues tienen que cumplir con un nuevo papel que no formaba parte de su misión

(Kyvik y Skodvin, 2003). Esto tiene importantes repercusiones en la relación entre los profesores (Harman, 2002).

4.11 Dos socios frente a varios socios

Se distingue entre aquellas de carácter bilateral, en las que únicamente intervienen dos partes, frente al resto, que incluye a más de dos socios o multisocios (Harman y Harman, 2003). La fusión multisocios suelen utilizarla instituciones de pequeño tamaño para evitar ser absorbidas por instituciones mayores. El grado de dificultad de una fusión parece estar directamente relacionado con el número de socios llamados a fusionarse.

4.12 Perfiles académicos

El perfil académico y, más concretamente, los programas que ofrece cada institución forman la base para distinguir entre fusiones verticales y horizontales. Las verticales son aquellas en las que los socios desarrollan su actividad docente e investigadora dentro de las mismas disciplinas. Las horizontales, por el contrario, se nutren de socios cuya oferta formativa e investigadora no coincide. Las verticales son más frecuentes que las horizontales, aunque requieren una mayor racionalización de la oferta formativa si se quieren alcanzar economías de escala. Este tipo de fusiones han sido la norma en Reino Unido, Australia y Sudáfrica. Las de carácter horizontal tienen una mayor probabilidad de éxito, ya que es posible articular una visión y una misión comunes, dado el carácter complementario de las instituciones (Harman y Harman, 2003).

4.13 Diversificada frente a conglomerado

Goedegebuure (1992, citado por Hall et ál., 2004) diferencia, en función de los programas académicos y de los productos que ofrecen las instituciones, una fusión diversificada entre instituciones que operan en diferentes áreas de conocimiento –pero que se orientan a un mismo tipo de producto– de un conglomerado que agrupa instituciones con diferentes áreas de conocimiento pero que ofrecen productos diferentes.

4.14 Estrategia ‘top-down’ frente a estrategia ‘bottom-up’

Se entiende que es más recomendable la segunda, ya que reduce la probabilidad de conflictos (Skodvin, 1999). Como ejemplo pueden citarse las research pooling initiatives en Escocia, que presentan ambas estrategias: al mismo tiempo que departamentos de diversas universidades estaban considerando la posibilidad de poner algunos recursos en común, el gobierno regional diseñaba políticas de financiación adicional para ese tipo de asociaciones (Kitagawa, 2010). También es posible encontrar este tipo de estrategias en los procesos de reestructuración seguidos en Noruega y Holanda (Skodvin, 1999).

4.15 El proceso de fusión

Las fusiones son procesos complejos, difíciles de planificar y de ejecutar de manera satisfactoria (Berriman y Jacobs, 2010). Sus potenciales mejoras empiezan a percibirse a 10 años vista (Skodvin, 1999; Mao et ál., 2009).

Está demostrado que la fase de pre-fusión es especialmente estresante para los empleados, debido a la falta de información y al elevado número de rumores que se generan (Aula y Tienari, 2011). Aalto University destacó por un proceso de pre-fusión (2005-2009) que claramente rompió con el pasado y atrajo la atención de numerosas personalidades, lo cual contribuyó a crear la reputación necesaria de la nueva institución (Aula y Tienari, 2011). Sin embargo, tuvieron numerosas complicaciones durante este período, como disputas entre asociaciones estudiantiles

o la beligerancia de alguna de las instituciones de origen (Aarrevaara et ál., 2009). Berriman y Jacobs (2010) recomiendan un plan de comunicación muy activo que sea capaz de reducir este tipo de riesgos.

Con todo, la fase más larga es la integración. La nueva institución implementa su misión, visión, cultura, identidad y alinea políticas con procesos y procedimientos. Berriman y Jacobs (2010) proponen realizar un plan de gestión de la integración para los primeros cien días, al igual que en el sector privado. Especialmente en los primeros años, tiene una especial relevancia la personalidad de los líderes de las instituciones. En el diseño de los nuevos procesos y procedimientos hay que ser especialmente cuidadosos, ya que el intento de abordar los múltiples retos que se derivan de una fusión puede conducir a crear un número excesivo de normas, procesos y procedimientos que incrementan la burocracia y provocan la desafección de las personas (Hall et ál., 2004).

4.16 Resultados: factores de éxito o fracaso en las fusiones universitarias

4.16.1 La cultura como factor crítico

Mao et ál. (2009) destacan que «la simple suma de dos instituciones no conlleva resultados mejores si además no se trabaja el aspecto cultural de la fusión y el liderazgo». Un proceso de fusión supone un cambio radical en las culturas de los socios (Skodvin, 1999), lo cual genera la aparición de fenómenos sociales de elevada complejidad (Aula y Tienari, 2011). Fazackerley y Chant (2009) proponen una visión estratégica unificada y una revisión de los aspectos culturales de las instituciones que se fusionan. Harman (2002) añade que la nueva entidad creada debe generar lealtades, buena moral y un sentimiento de comunidad. Un proceso de fusión mal controlado puede derivar en una rivalidad continua entre los antiguos miembros que conduzca a un ambiente destructivo (Hatton, 2002).

Uno de los principales retos de un proceso de fusión será la creación de una nueva cultura académica compartida por todos (Salmi, 2009). Las fusiones están normalmente relacionadas con situaciones de estrés, miedos por parte de las comunidades implicadas y una planificación inadecuada que multiplica los efectos de estas circunstancias. Las consecuencias de todo ello en el desarrollo académico de la nueva institución pueden durar al menos diez años (Skodvin, 1999).

4.16.2 Resultados esperados de las fusiones

Al realizar una fusión se plantean una serie de beneficios, basados en un exceso de optimismo, que después deben alcanzarse durante la fase de implementación. El resultado de fusionar instituciones en entidades de mayor tamaño debería conllevar como principales resultados mejoras en la gestión, una mayor eficiencia económica y un aumento del perfil académico de la institución (Mok, 2005a). Sin embargo, estas afirmaciones están lejos de ser una realidad (Goedegebuure, 2012). En la Tabla 4 se resumen los resultados esperados frente a los reales, a partir del estudio de la literatura.

Tabla 4. Resultados esperados frente a resultados reales en un proceso de fusión (Elaboración propia)

Cat.	Resultados esperados	Resultados reales
Gobernanza, gestión y	Mejora de las infraestructuras de tecnologías de la información	Aumento de la complejidad de los procesos administrativos
	Mejora de la calidad de los servicios administrativos en general	Reducción de la eficacia y eficiencia de la nueva institución

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	Incremento de la capacidad administrativa Crear unidades administrativas de mayor tamaño Administración más profesional	Aparición de numerosos problemas administrativos Incremento de las tareas administrativas
Económicos	Generar economías de escala Ahorro en la gestión de la institución en su conjunto: recursos humanos y materiales Eliminación de duplicidades Reducción del tamaño del nuevo conglomerado	Se mantienen las duplicidades Incremento del personal necesario para la administración de la nueva institución Mayor necesidad de recursos para coordinar y controlar las actividades Costes elevados del proceso de fusión Se mantiene el tamaño del nuevo conglomerado Economías de escala a medio-largo plazo
Docencia e investigación	Fortalecer el perfil académico Eliminar programas duplicados Incrementar la integración académica y la colaboración Diversificar el perfil académico de las instituciones Ampliar las capacidades docentes Racionalizar la oferta docente	Nuevos departamentos disciplinares más sólidos y de mayor tamaño Mejor colaboración entre académicos de diferentes programas Homogeneización de la cultura docente Más oferta para el estudiante Mantenimiento de los indicadores de producción científica Mayor visibilidad internacional

Berriman y Jacobs (2010) destacan que el simple hecho de fusionar dos instituciones no aporta de por sí ningún ahorro; es más, la unión de dos instituciones con sus características, debilidades y fortalezas, acaba creando una entidad de mayor tamaño con las mismas características, debilidades y fortalezas que las constituyentes y, además, con mayores costes asociados.

Otro motivo importante que se aduce es la 'eliminación de duplicidades' como mecanismo de ahorro en costes. Sin embargo, Skodvin (1999) destaca que las duplicidades se mantienen tras la fusión e incluso se incrementa el personal necesario para la administración de la nueva entidad. Se generarán algunas economías de escala y ahorros, pero se incrementarán los costes de gestión debido al incremento de la complejidad de un sistema de mayor tamaño, que requiere más recursos para la coordinación y el control de sus actividades (Kyvik, 2002).

Frente a un aumento indiscriminado de tamaño como base para reducir costes, Lang (2002) plantea el concepto de 'tamaño óptimo de una institución' para cumplir con sus diferentes misiones de manera eficiente. Sobrepasado este tamaño, es difícil encontrar economías de escala. Los modelos federados, que manejan grandes tamaños, difícilmente generan ahorros considerables.

Además, el propio proceso de fusión tiene unos costes elevados (Harman y Harman, 2003) e implica asumir gastos relacionados con la planificación, la reorganización de las estructuras académicas y administrativas, la integración de las bibliotecas y los sistemas de información. Además, exige armonizar la nueva estructura de personal generada tras el proceso. Rowley (1997) afirma, tras estudiar los procesos de fusión acaecidos en Reino Unido, que, a diferencia

de lo que ocurre en el sector privado, la fusión de entidades públicas no hace que se reduzca el tamaño del nuevo conglomerado.

Por ello, se considera que los objetivos de la colaboración interuniversitaria en general deben de ir más allá de las afirmaciones puramente economicistas y centrarse en planteamientos estratégicos que permitan que las universidades alcancen mejores posiciones y cumplan sus diferentes misiones. Las economías de escala acaban apareciendo, pero no en el corto plazo, más bien en el medio-largo plazo (Skodvin, 1999). La generación de economías de escala, si bien puede ser un objetivo de los gobiernos, no se presenta con una base suficientemente sólida para justificar un proceso de fusión (Rowley, 1997).

Por otro lado, en cuanto a los efectos en la docencia y la investigación, en las fusiones de tipo vertical –con perfiles académicos muy similares– se proyecta un aumento de la multidisciplinariedad; es decir, se aprovecha la fusión para fomentar la colaboración entre las diferentes áreas de conocimiento (Kyvik, 2002). Si se trata de fusiones horizontales, la complementariedad de las instituciones permite una diversificación del perfil académico (Skodvin, 1999) con el consiguiente beneficio para los alumnos. Cuando se realizan fusiones unisectoriales –en las que se agrupan pequeñas instituciones que imparten materias muy especializadas–, se busca crear una nueva institución de carácter más generalista y capaz de cubrir áreas de conocimiento mayores (Mok, 2005a). Otro tema docente que debe abordarse durante el proceso de fusión es la racionalización de la oferta formativa eliminando programas duplicados (Skodvin, 1999).

En la vertiente investigadora, se citan mejoras como una mayor coordinación de los servicios de documentación científica (Skodvin, 1999) o un uso más eficiente de los recursos científicos –así sucedió en el caso de Escocia (Kitagawa, 2010)–. Sin embargo, aunque en general se puede decir que a largo plazo hay una mejora de los resultados docentes e investigadores (Skodvin, 1999), los resultados concretos de los procesos de fusión evidencian un panorama bastante incierto (Mao et ál., 2009). De hecho, también se aprecian numerosos casos en los que los resultados simplemente no han mejorado (Kyvik y Skodvin, 2003). Se demuestra un aumento de la producción científica a nivel cuantitativo, aunque no tanto a nivel cualitativo (Massingham, 2001; Seehoole, 2005). Esto se debe a que en la mayoría de los casos se fusionan instituciones docentes sin perfil investigador (Fazackerley y Chant, 2009) con el consiguiente incremento en cantidad de las actividades de investigación del sistema en su conjunto. Mao et ál. (2009), sin embargo, miden la influencia de las fusiones unisectoriales entre universidades con perfil investigador en China y señalan que los indicadores apenas se modificaron.

Las fusiones sí permiten obtener una mayor visibilidad internacional por el mero hecho de buscar algún tipo de alianza (Kitagawa, 2010). Pero sobre la posibilidad de alcanzar la masa crítica suficiente para competir de manera eficaz a escala internacional, Kyvik (1995) concluye que no hay una relación directa entre el tamaño del departamento y su productividad científica. Ahora bien, es cierto que departamentos de mayor tamaño pueden crear mejores condiciones para realizar una investigación de calidad. Puede concluirse que no existen evidencias científicas de que las instituciones de mayor tamaño sean mejores para la docencia y la investigación (Kyvik, 2002), con lo que la creación de masa crítica no debería ser uno de los aspectos que originen una fusión.

4.17 Conclusiones y limitaciones

En cada país, las instituciones de educación superior son muy heterogéneas. Por lo general, se encuentran sistemas duales en los que conviven universidades investigadoras con otro tipo de instituciones más orientadas a la docencia o a la formación para el empleo. En España –y en

otros países—, existe una gran homogeneidad, con un sector de educación superior compuesto mayoritariamente por universidades. Prácticamente todos los casos documentados se refieren a fusiones entre instituciones de educación superior. Muy pocos, empero, aluden a fusiones entre universidades, pues son muy poco frecuentes.

La fusión se ha utilizado en numerosas ocasiones para reestructurar el sistema de educación superior, especialmente en sistemas duales excesivamente fragmentados. Se ha observado que el tipo de fusión que mejor funciona es aquella que se da entre instituciones con áreas de conocimiento complementarias (fusión horizontal), entre un máximo de dos instituciones —una de las cuales es considerablemente mayor que la otra— y que se realiza de manera voluntaria.

La fusión es un mecanismo más de colaboración que resuelve problemas concretos en entornos muy específicos. Por tanto, es un error intentar aplicarla como solución general a los problemas de la educación superior. Importar modelos de otros países sin considerar los factores de contexto puede llevar a situaciones muy complejas y con resultados inesperados. Si se quiere mejorar el rendimiento del sistema, existen otros mecanismos de colaboración mejores para lograr resultados concretos a corto-medio plazo y cuya relación coste-beneficio es superior.

La complejidad del propio proceso de fusión hace que no puedan observarse beneficios tangibles en el corto-medio plazo, sino que es preciso esperar un mínimo de diez años hasta obtener algún resultado concreto que justifique el esfuerzo. Además, normalmente se requieren plazos de hasta cinco años para concretar el proceso de prelación con una negociación previa o la creación de estructuras interinstitucionales que vayan aproximando los aspectos clave de las instituciones.

Los choques culturales son ineludibles y existen muchos problemas al respecto. Es fundamental disponer de un liderazgo situacional y flexible que reduzca las situaciones de conflicto al mínimo. La selección del personal para este proceso debe ser muy cuidadosa y se debe evitar incorporar a personas con una hostilidad subyacente hacia la otra institución y que no piensen en el bien común de las dos instituciones. De hecho, las instituciones con más historia previa de colaboración son las que parecen tener un mayor grado de hostilidad.

El supuesto ahorro en costes que conlleva una fusión entre instituciones de educación superior, a pesar de todo lo que aparente y en contra de las posibles comparaciones con fusiones en el sector privado, no ocurre en el corto ni en el medio plazo. Requiere una fuerte inversión para poder cubrir los costes del propio proceso.

Se cree que es necesario crear instituciones grandes para poder disponer de la masa crítica suficiente como para generar buenos resultados docentes e investigadores. Sin embargo, se ha demostrado que, superado un mínimo, un mayor tamaño no contribuye a obtener mejores resultados. Se debe considerar el tamaño óptimo de una institución, que es aquel que se beneficia tanto de economías de escala como de excelentes resultados en docencia e investigación. Observando el Academic Ranking of World Universities se puede afirmar que ninguna de las cien primeras instituciones tiene más de 30.000 alumnos.

5. Are mergers a win-win strategic model? A content analysis of inter-institutional collaboration between higher education institutions

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5.1 Abstract

The main goal of this paper, based on a content analysis of the literature about models of inter-institutional collaboration between higher education institutions, is to establish the characteristics that set them apart, contextualise each of these models in terms of the features of the setting in which they are implemented, and finally, ascertain their advantages, drawbacks and potential benefits for the institutions that use them. This has involved employing appropriate keywords to identify the most relevant studies that have examined models of inter-institutional collaboration. The paper concludes that detailed study is required when choosing a particular model of inter-institutional collaboration, especially mergers, as the desired economies of scale do not always materialise, research and teaching results does not improve and it is furthermore unclear what the optimal size for achieving efficiency is. Thus we provide a basis for future research in this field and also for higher education managers.

Keywords: higher education, models of inter-institutional collaboration, mergers, international rankings.

5.2 Introduction

Some global factors affect the strategies that can be adopted by universities undergoing processes of change driven by external agents. Knowledge has become an increasingly important part of innovation (Etzkowitz et al., 2000), one of the key factors in the economy and a source for generating a sustainable growth. It has been defined a new category called “knowledge based economy” where knowledge itself is the most important resource (Nonaka et al., 2008). The knowledge based economy is founded under 4 pillars: knowledge creation derived from scientific research, knowledge transfer throughout teaching, knowledge dissemination by means of ICT and its use as a source of technology innovation (European Commission, 2003). Higher education institutions, especially the more research based ones play a key role on this new panorama (Goedegebuure, 2012; European Commission, 2009)

Among other things, higher education institutions are required to become international benchmarks (Aula and Tienari, 2011), often to the detriment of the role they are currently playing in their immediate setting with further decoupling of some institutions from their immediate surroundings. This has been exacerbated by the enormous impact of international rankings and the attention paid to them by both governments and universities (Goedegebuure, 2012), with some universities even reflecting this in their own strategic discourse (Aalto University, 2011). However, in their eagerness to become more international some institutions have asserted their “international benchmark” status without there really being any solid evidence to back up this

claim (Wangenge-Ouma, 2010) and this has had a deleterious impact on the standing that should be associated with the term. The longing to have top-level institutions that are an international benchmark is a legitimate goal, although some authors such as Aarrevaara, Dobson and Elander (2009) are critical of this approach and have shown how hard it is for a small country to get any of its institutions into the world top 100.

The political component in higher education, especially in its public aspect, plays a key role (Gornitzka, 1999) and on many occasions sets the guidelines to be followed by the institution (Harman, 2002) despite the autonomy that universities in many countries are supposed to enjoy on paper. New policies have also emerged, which seek to modernise higher education institutions (Gornitzka, 2010). In addition there is a strong influence of the ideas of 'new public management' in the Public Administration, which involves market orientation, a greater relationship between public and private, improvements in management, performance measurement and accountability (Tolofari, 2005). Those ideas have greatly influenced the management of universities, steering them towards a more professional model that can administrate more efficiently (Mok, 2005b).

Universities are moving towards the model that has prevailed in most of the reforms enacted, namely the "Entrepreneurial University" (Clark, 1998) in which academic structure and function are modernised and aligned with economic development (Etzkowitz et al., 2000). This model, according to some authors, is the one best suited to a situation marked by globalisation (Vaira, 2004) and is a response to the increasing importance of knowledge generation in national and regional innovation systems (Etzkowitz et al., 2000) as we stated at the beginning.

The restructuring and modernisation of higher education systems that have taken place should be seen as mechanisms that seek to improve the teaching and research of universities and achieve greater efficiency in their management (Mok, 2005b), but put higher education institutions under enormous pressure, having to deal with a situation that calls for further adaptation but based on structures that are resistant to change (Gornitzka, 1999) and an overly rigid regulatory framework that does not exactly help with this adaptation (Mok, 2005a).

Considering the environment described above and focusing on the role played by mergers on the different models of collaboration, we wonder if the literature has proved scientifically the benefits of each model, and particularly mergers. That is, are mergers, according to the literature, a recommendable strategic model of inter-institutional collaboration between institutions of higher education?

5.3 Methodology

We have conducted a content analysis of the literature on inter-institutional collaborations in higher education employing a search strategy based on keywords (Creswell, 2003; Neuendorf, 2002). The databases used have been Scopus Elsevier, ISI Web of Science and Web of Knowledge (Tabla 5).

Tabla 5. Keywords (authors' own compilation)

Topic	Words
Policies	European Union – Modernization – Restructuring – Policies – Models – Agenda
Models	Knowledge triangle – Triple Helix - Models
Inter-institutional collaboration	Amalgamations – Mergers – Federation – Collaboration – Models – Network – Associations - Affiliations

Institutions	Higher Education Institution – University – University of Applied Sciences – Fachhochschule - Colleges
Results	Cost efficiency – Budget – Efficiency – Results – Economies of scale
Education	Higher Education – Post-Secondary Education – Tertiary Education

After gathering the information, we have sorted it to find duplicates and see whether the underlying structure of the literature search covered the various topics (Medina-López et al., 2010). We also have developed a proprietary database using a relational database to facilitate subsequent information searches.

The most important content has been found in the journals: European Journal of Education, Higher Education, Higher Education Management and Policy, Higher Education Policy, Higher Education Quarterly, International Journal of Educational Management, Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, Minerva, Policy Futures in Education, Research Policy and Tertiary Education and Management.

The remainder of this article is based chiefly on our analysis of the content of the journal articles identified.

5.4 Mechanisms for inter-institutional collaboration

Universities have to map out new strategies to adapt to the situation described before, while also requiring them to anticipate potential changes by adopting a more active approach to their environment. In lockstep with enhanced management and more efficient use of resources, a central role is emerging for inter-institutional collaboration strategies that are much more active than those put in place to date, which in a globalised environment has led to the proliferation of university networks and associations (Kitagawa, 2010). European and national policies indirectly leave inter-institutional collaboration as the most recommendable option to compete internationally with other institutions (Kitagawa, 2010; Harman and Harman, 2003). The increasing paucity of public resources earmarked for higher education and research has accelerated this process of inter-institutional collaboration in a large number of countries. The models examined make it possible to structure several mechanisms for collaboration between higher education institutions. In addition, though still exist very well known small specialised institutions like the medical university Karolinska Institut in Sweden, the current university model is moving towards larger institutions of a scale sufficient to ensure their activities generate the desired impact on society.

Collaborations between higher education institutions are very common and also very varied. Recent initiatives such as the Campus of International Excellence in Spain (Education Ministry, 2009) originally appeared to encourage some differentiation of the higher education system and greater collaboration. In many regions where there is a binary higher education system (Aarrevaara et al., 2009), vocational institutions are often candidates for restructuring processes whose outcome is the setting up of new universities (Kyvik and Skodvin, 2003). This is the case of Polytechnics in the UK (Fazackerley and Chant, 2009) and the Universities of Applied Sciences in Finland (Aula and Tienari, 2011).

Higher education collaboration can take many forms, from highly informal and ad hoc linkages to formal institutional mergers or amalgamations (Harman and Harman, 2008). Some are between individual members of the institutions, for instance by contributing to scientific publications with researchers or taking part in research projects, while others are institutional, such as mergers

(Harman, 2002). Governments often see the latter as a mechanism to improve the efficiency of institutions, make them more competitive and better position them internationally as well as a way to reduce the excessive fragmentation of the sector in many countries (Mok, 2005a). However, such claims are far from reality (Goedegebuure, 2012).

The wide spectrum of possibilities for collaboration, ranging from occasional participation in scientific publications or research projects to mergers of two or more institutions, is classified according the level of integration attained (Tabla 6). This depends on how much autonomy the institutions originating the partnership manage to retain after the process (Lang, 2002).

Tabla 6. Definition of the different types of inter-institutional collaboration (authors' own compilation)

Types of collaboration	Definition
Informal cooperation	Participation of researchers in scientific publications or mobility programmes in which lecturers and researchers occasionally take part in teaching or research through invitations or cooperation agreements (Berriman and Jacobs, 2010).
Informal association/ Joint Business ventures	Staff from different institutions is involved in, for example, joint research projects or inter-university qualifications. They are formed by two or more institutions that provide a service or a specialised programme without compromising the autonomy of each party and without setting up any body that is independent of the founding institutions (Lang, 2002).
Networks	Shared financial management is an option to obtain an integrated view of all the participating institutions from an economic standpoint. Networks enable their members to share a number of resources to achieve common goals without the institutions that make them up losing their identity or autonomy (Berriman and Jacobs, 2010). This contributes significantly to improving the national research system as a whole (Goedegebuure, 2012).
Consortia	Consortia are institutions that exist in parallel to their founders and can be defined because they have their own corporate identity, their members join together voluntarily, they have their own staff and they maintain financial independence (Lang, 2002). Participation in a consortium entails that institutions transfer some of their functions to the consortium and no longer deliver the service in question.
Joint departments or research institutes	Combined academic departments or joint research institutes (Harman and Harman, 2008).

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Alliance	A more systemic form of collaboration between two or more partners, covering a wider range (but not all) of their operations, where the partners retain their separate identities (HEFCE, 2012).
Federation/Decentralised merger/Association	Participating institutions are more likely to be able to retain a measure of their own identity and autonomy (Harman and Harman, 2008); in federal structures institutions keep some of their functions while others are delegated to a supra-structure (Harman and Harman, 2003). Fielden and Greenop (cited by Hall et al., 2004) accept the term “federal merger” (Massingham, 2001). However other authors include it as an intermediate step between consortia and joint departments (Berriman and Jacobs, 2010). Hatton (2002) interprets the federation model as a network of universities which interact, share resources and conduct mutually beneficial cooperative activities under a single legal personality. Lang (2002) use “association” referring to colleges and universities that share similar natures and purpose.
Affiliation	A division of specialized labour among two institutions to deliver a particular program or service. Affiliation would probably fit between federation and merger because it allows the least autonomy (relative to consortia and federations) and is therefore closest to merger, which radically changes the autonomy of at least one of the participating institutions (Lang, 2002).
Centralised merger (unitary structure)	The combination of two or more separate organizations, with overall management control coming under a single governing body and single chief executive (Harman and Harman, 2008). Skodvin (1999) simplifies the definition by stating that it is the process by which two or more institutions are brought together in a single one. In unitary mergers the identity of the members disappears after the merger in favour of a new institution with its own governance structures, governing bodies and a single president (Harman and Harman, 2003). Amalgamation of two or more higher education institutions in a new entity in which control resides in a single governing body with a single board and where all assets, obligations and responsibilities have been transferred to the new entity (Goedegebuure et al., 1992).

This greater or lesser loss of autonomy should be offset by the benefits of the partnership. This does not mean that the goal of any partnership is to achieve maximum integration culminating in a merger. Each situation will have different needs defined by diverse variables that will make one

or another form of partnership better. However, some authors suggest that if the idea really is to achieve tangible results with greater impact, then a high degree of integration is required (Berriman and Jacobs, 2010).

Lang (2002) argues that a classification is well suited when institutional partnerships are forced, but should be reconsidered in the case of voluntary ones (Figura 11). The figure retains the ranking from low to high based on the autonomy that the institutions originating the partnership retain. We have sought to present partnerships between universities as a continuum in which some states have features of nearby levels, moving from collaborations by individual researchers to mergers.

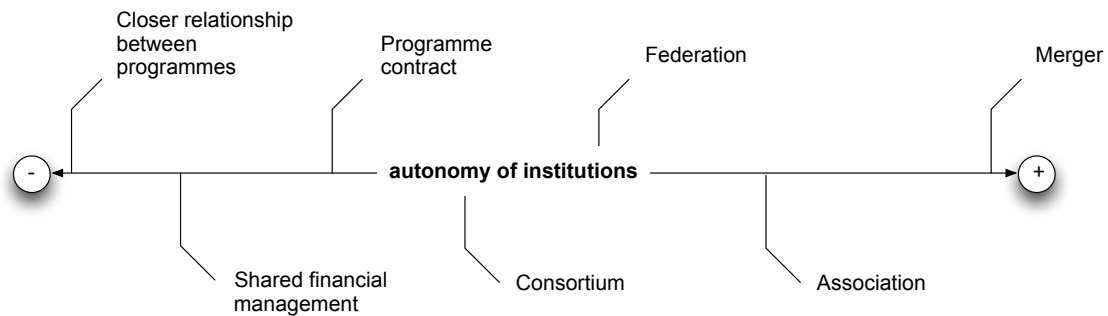


Figura 11. Types of voluntary university partnerships. Authors' own compilation based on Lang, 2002

In the case of mergers, Harman and Meek (2002) stress that there are few cases of true mergers since existing ones are normally more like acquisitions in which one institution takes control of another. Goedegebuure (2012) suggests differentiating voluntary mergers from those that are stimulated by governments. In the same vein Skodvin (1999) makes a distinction between forced and voluntary mergers, the former being generally induced by governments and the latter brought about by the institutions themselves. In the latter case the main argument for merger is diversifying academic profiles.

The few voluntary cases that do exist have arguably deep down been “forced by circumstances” such as regulatory changes that require institutions to have a minimum number of students in order to obtain funding or the need to avoid the bankruptcy of economically unviable institutions (Skodvin, 1999; Goedegebuure et al., 1992). Voluntary mergers are normally carried out to create an institution with better resources and which is better positioned to compete internationally, which some authors call mergers for mutual growth (Hall et al., 2004). In this type of merger it is common for institutions seeking partners to assess potential candidates based on the goals of the merger (Rowley, 1997). At any event mergers which are voluntary to a certain extent tend to achieve better outcomes (Skodvin, 1999).

Lang (2002) notes that federations, by their very nature, involve numerous problems and do not usually result in significant cost reductions. Federated structures also hinder the possible streamlining of academic offerings and are quite unstable in case of conflicts due to their reversibility (Harman and Harman, 2003). In some countries the federation experience has not been very satisfactory, as is the case in Australia (Massingham, 2001), with a few exceptions such as Charles Sturt University which, although it started out as a federation, shifted to a unitary model based on decentralised integration (Hatton, 2002).

5.5 Reasons for mergers: economies of scale and academic improvement focus on mergers

The main political argument for collaborations is the search for economies of scale. Even mergers that on the face of it have more academic or strategic objectives end up being in essence a means of delivering the same services at a lower cost (Lang, 2002). But in most of the cases those goals have not been reached (Goedegebuure, 2012). Simply merging two institutions does not lead to an immediate increase in the effectiveness and efficiency of the new institution (Fazackerley and Chant, 2009). At this respect Beriman and Jacobs (2010) note that simply merging two institutions does not itself bring any savings; indeed joining together two institutions with their features, weaknesses and strengths just means creating a larger entity with the same features, weaknesses and strengths of the constituent institutions and also with higher associated costs.

In the same vein, another important reason given is the “elimination of duplication” as a means of cost saving. Yet as Skodvin (1999) points out, extant duplication remains after the merger and the staff required to administer the new entity may even increase. Even Rowley (1997) states that merger does not lead to a reduction in the size of the new conglomerate that arises to manage the institution after the merger.

In other words, the merger process itself has high costs (Harman and Harman, 2003). If economies of scale are achieved they will only appear in the medium to long term but not immediately (Skodvin, 1999). In the short term (Berriman and Jacobs, 2010) it is necessary to reorganise functions, processes and procedures, to eliminate duplication, to promote efficient use of buildings and to sell those that are not necessary or to cut global management costs. Also Kyvik (2002) notes that the increase in size has two effects: it will generate some economies of scale but it will also increase management costs due to increased complexity derived from a larger system that requires more resources to coordinate and control its activities. Given an indiscriminate increase in size as a basis for reducing costs, Lang (2002) suggests an institution should have an optimal size in order to carry out its various missions efficiently. Beyond this size it is hard to find economies of scale. Cases where the idea is to consolidate two similar sized universities give rise to highly complicated situations typically based on the power dynamics of each institution (Hall et al., 2004). Skodvin (1999) concludes that achievement of potential economies of scale is perceived different depending on the group considered. While senior faculty members and administrators have the perception of greater management efficiency, the rest of faculty perceive increased bureaucracy.

In terms of academic improvements both governments and higher education institutions have teaching and research objectives. In vertical mergers with very similar academic profiles, an increase in multidisciplinary is sought, fostering collaboration between different areas of knowledge (Kyvik, 2002). In the case of horizontal mergers, the complementarity of the institutions allows for diversification of their academic profiles (Skodvin, 1999) with consequent benefits for students. When single-sector mergers take place, whereby small institutions teaching extremely specialised subjects are brought together, the idea is to create a new more generalist institution that can cover larger areas of knowledge (Mok, 2005a). Another teaching issue to address during the merger process is streamlining the educational offering by eliminating duplicate programmes (Skodvin, 1999).

In the more research-oriented aspect, mention is made of improvements such as greater coordination of scientific documentation services (Skodvin, 1999) or a more efficient use of scientific resources as was the case in Scotland (Kitagawa, 2010). What has been demonstrated is a quantitative, albeit not so much qualitative, increase in scientific production (Massingham,

2001; Sehoole, 2005). This is because in most cases it is teaching institutions with little background in research that merge (Fazackerley and Chant, 2009).

Mao, Du and Liu (2009) measure the impact on research outcomes of single-sector mergers between research universities in China, comparing their results before and after the merger. The indicators (scientific productivity: number of publications in impact journals, number of publications per researcher, number of research projects or number of books published) barely changed compared to those achieved by the originating institutions. Regardless of the better or worse outcome of research work, Kitagawa (2010) argues that mergers deliver greater international visibility due to the mere fact of seeking some kind of partnership. Equally it is arguable that through collaboration in research, universities can attract talent more effectively in terms of both faculty and students by jointly publicising a brand with a greater impact.

Another issue to consider is the possibility of achieving sufficient critical mass to compete effectively at the international level (Kitagawa, 2010). Yet Kyvik (1995), after conducting a study about the influence of the size of departments on the research results of Norwegian universities, concludes that there is no direct relationship between the size of a department and its scientific productivity. He does aver that larger departments can create better conditions for quality research, but nonetheless there is no scientific evidence that larger institutions are better for teaching and research (Kyvik, 2002), and hence creating critical mass should not be one of the triggers of a merger.

As, at the moment, leaders in higher education are concerned about the impact of rankings and they are increasingly responsive and reactive to them (Wilkins and Huisman, 2012), we have checked the international ranking score (ARWU, Academic Ranking of World Universities, 2013) of European universities ranked on the top 100 universities. For the sake of a comparability, we have focused only in the Bologna (Bologna Declaration, 1999) signatory states, so 32 European universities have been analysed (Table III). We have researched the 'model of inter-institutional collaboration' adopted by each institution, clearly identifying which institutions are coming from a merger, which ones are part of a federation, which are part of an association and which are operating as a single institution. Besides mergers and federations, all institutions have, at some extent a model of inter-institutional collaboration (See Tabla 7), but on those cases is not always clear which one they follow and further analysis is needed.

Tabla 7. European universities ranked in the 100 top ARWU (authors' own compilation based on ARWU)

WR 2013	WR 2005	Institution	C	NR 2013	NR 2005	Size (1)	Model	Notes
5	2	University of Cambridge	UK	1	1	17,868	-	
10	10	University of Oxford	UK	2	2	18,703	-	
20	27	ETH Zurich	CH	1	1	14,116	-	
21	26	University College London	UK	3	4	19,673	Federal	University of London
24	23	Imperial College	UK	4	3	14,047	Federal	University of London
37	46	Pierre and Marie Curie University	F	1	1	27,600	Federal	Sorbonne University
39	61	University of Paris Sud	F	2	2	12,900	-	
41	53	The University of Manchester	UK	5	6	35,796	Merger	Victoria U. of Manchester

MODELOS DE FUSIÓN DE INSTITUCIONES DE EDUCACIÓN SUPERIOR EN EUROPA

42	57	University of Copenhagen	DK	1	1	38,867	Merger	and U. of Manchester Inst. of S&T (2)
44	45	Karolinska Institute	SE	1	1	7,051	-	
50	52	Technical University Munich	GE	1	2	25,699	-	
51	47	The University of Edinburgh	UK	6	5	22,542	Merger	University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh College of Art
52	41	Utrecht University	NL	1	1	29,755	-	
54	71	University of Heidelberg	GE	2	3	26,732	-	
60	57	University of Zurich	CH	2	2	17,563	-	
61	52	University of Munich	GE	3	2	42,824	-	
64	64	University of Bristol	UK	7	7	16,284	-	
67	80	King's College London	UK	8	9	18,867	Federal	University of London
69	69	University of Oslo	N	1	1	29,810	-	
69	101-152	University of Geneva	CH	3	4	12,568	-	
71	93	École Normale Supérieure - Paris	F	3	4	2,700	-	
73	60	Uppsala University	SE	2	2	19,878	-	
74	72	Leiden University	NL	2	2	19,055	Association	(3)
76	76	University of Helsinki	FIN	1	1	23,250	-	
81	101-152	Aarhus University	DK	2	2	35,070	Merger	Aarhus University and Aarhus School of Engineering
82	93	Stockholm University	SE	3	3	28,021	-	
83	87	University of Basel	CH	4	3	10,569	-	
83	83	University of Nottingham	UK	9	10	28,325	-	
85	101-152	Ghent University	BE	1	1	32,411	-	
92	101-152	University of Groningen	NL	3	3	26,918	-	
97	92	University of Strasbourg	F	4	3	39,600	Merger	
100	91	University of Freiburg	GE	4	8	24,074	-	

WR: World Ranking; NR: National Ranking; (1) In terms of number of graduate and undergraduate students enrolled; (2) University of Copenhagen, Royal Veterinary and Agricultural University and the Danish University of Pharmaceutical Science; (3) Leiden University, Delft University of Technology and Erasmus University of Rotterdam

We cannot conclude whether or not there is a correlation between the mergers and its position on the ranking. Some institutions like the University of Manchester, the University of Copenhagen and Aarhus University have improved, but some others not (University of Edinburgh and University of Strasbourg). A deeper analysis on the process itself would be needed.

Mostly all universities working under a federation framework have improved their positions. This also opens a potential research line on how these federated institutions operate.

Though not represented on the table above, the case of Aalto University, a merge coming from Helsinki University of Technology, the Helsinki School of Economics and the University of Arts and Design Helsinki, has also raised high expectations. This institution has abandoned the ranking in 2013 while in 2005 would have been ranked at position 400-500 if considered as a single university at that time.

Another variable to consider on mergers is the size of the resulting conglomerate and the relevance of the optimal size. If take the number of students (graduate and undergraduate) enrolled on the university as a measure of the size of the university we can see that the 81% of the top European universities do not reach a number of 30,000 students and, if we take an average of the 32 universities, the mean is around 23,000.

Hence it is argued that the goals of collaboration between universities in general need to go beyond purely economic claims and focus on strategic approaches that enable universities to better position themselves and better fulfil their various missions. Hatton (2002) notes that to measure the success of a merger it is necessary to emphasize the richness and diversity of the new institution created because the cost reduction per se does not justify it, and it is even the case that the total savings of the new institutions resulting from mergers are not significant. There may be an initial fall in costs, but this is often detrimental to the quality of the service provided (Lang, 2002).

5.6 Conclusions and future research

Mok (2005a) suggests that in principle it should lead to a significant improvement in which "1+1>2". Aalto University's approach is similar in that it seeks to create something new which is not merely the sum of its predecessors (Aula and Tienari, 2011). However, although in general it is arguable that there is a long-term improvement in teaching and research outcomes (Skodvin, 1999), the specific results of mergers in these fields are fairly uncertain (Mao et al., 2009), including many cases in which they simply have not got better (Kyvik and Skodvin, 2003). Yet improvements in academic results as a consequence of a merger also take time to be achieved (Harman and Meek, 2002; Goedegebuure et al., 1992; Skodvin, 1999) as they are affected by administrative and cultural problems that arise in the new institution.

Higher education institutions are very heterogeneous in each country, where there are usually binary systems in which research universities coexist with other institutions more geared towards teaching or employment. This is the case of the Universities of Applied Sciences in Germany and Finland, and the Polytechnics in the UK.

However, the globalisation of higher education and its consequent internationalisation as embodied in rankings is leading to comparisons being made between countries and institutions without regard to important aspects of context that do not depend on the institutions themselves, such as government funding for research and higher education in each country. Attempting to import models from other countries without considering contextual factors may lead to highly complex situations delivering unexpected outcomes.

After our review we found that most of the literature studies the merger of higher education institutions, describing specific cases. Some of them focus at the country level whereas others look at a particular institution. In virtually all cases they are about mergers between higher

education institutions yet with very few examining mergers between research universities. Such mergers are rare, but we feel they could be researched in greater depth.

Our review has led us to the conclusion that there is no big impact of mergers in rankings, at least in the short term. A deeper analysis of this topic considering a wider time framework and also its impact on some other rankings beyond the Academic Ranking of World Universities should be considered on future analysis.

As for other kinds of inter-institutional collaboration, mapping out an appropriate conceptual framework for choosing forms of collaboration other than mergers could be evaluated. This model would provide alternatives for collaboration based on a number of parameters related to institutions and collaborations that can deliver economies of scale and significantly better results in teaching and research.

Merger is simply another collaborative mechanism to solve particular problems in very specific settings, but it is a mistake to try to apply it as a general solution to the problems of higher education. If the idea is to improve a system's performance there are other, much better collaborative mechanisms for achieving concrete results in the short to medium term and whose cost-benefit ratio is much higher.

We found that the type of merger which works best is one between institutions with complementary knowledge areas (horizontal merger) involving a maximum of two institutions, one of which is substantially larger than the other, and which is voluntarily.

As for the grounds for inter-institutional collaboration, such as alleged cost savings entailed by a merger between higher education institutions, there is no evidence that these processes generate considerable cost savings in the short to medium term that may lead to economies of scale. Major investment is needed to cover the costs of the process itself. For example, Worthington and Higgs (2011) have examined economies of scale in Australian universities over the period 1998–2006 (after their period of mergers) and have concluded that after a point, diseconomies of scale arise, at least in terms of ray economies of scale.

There is a belief in the need to create large institutions in order to have sufficient critical mass to generate good teaching and research results. However, it has been shown that above a minimum level, greater size does not help to achieve better outcomes. Recent results in Spain, for example, show a notable difference between universities with a higher research production (in number of articles in Journal Citation Reports by Thomson Reuters JCR-indexed journals, scientific research periods, Research and Development R&D projects, doctoral dissertations, Pre-doctoral scholarships, doctoral programs, and patents) and those that are the most productive (according with their number of professors) (Buela-Casal et al., 2012). Attention should be paid to what is called the optimal size of an institution, which is the one that delivers both economies of scale and also excellent results in teaching and research. Examination of the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU, 2013) does show that none of the institutions in the top 100 has over 40,000 students (with the exception of the University of Munich). And, according to some literature, the highest levels of efficiency with higher education institutions are identified in a size between about 15,000 and 25,000 students (Klumpp, 2012). As a conclusion, there is not a pattern of model of inter-institutional collaboration to perform better, at least at the international research ranking.

Yet Harman and Harman (2003) point out that merger is not the only alternative, much less a panacea when tackling the restructuring of higher education systems. There are numerous cheaper alternatives giving more immediate results. Excessive use of merger, especially in the

case of federated models, may end up generating mini higher education systems in which incompatibilities and system complexity increase (Lang, 2002).

6. Higher education mergers in Europe: a comparative study of the post-merger phase

Ripoll-Soler, C., de-Miguel-Molina, M. and Haug, G. Higher education mergers in Europe: a comparative study of the post-merger phase. Artículo enviado a la revista *Journal of Studies in International Education*, ubicada en el cuartil 2 del JCR.

Con el objeto de mantener el anonimato de las personas entrevistadas, a lo largo del texto de este epígrafe se hace referencia a ellos como “informant”. Se le ha añadido un número para diferenciarlos de acuerdo a la siguiente lista:

- Informant 1: Aalto University
- Informant 2: Aalto University
- Informant 3: Centrale-Supelec
- Informant 4: Universidade de Lisboa
- Informant 5: University of Manchester
- Informant 6: University of Strasbourg
- Informant 7: University of Strasbourg

6.1 Abstract

The aim of this study is to compare the results of successful mergers of world-class European Union universities that have led to an improvement in their ARWU ranking, with a view to identifying the challenges these universities face in their post-merger situation and strategies. To gather the necessary data, we applied a triangulation model. Our sources of information were university reports (official documents), ARWU rankings, a literature review of specific cases and in-depth interviews with managers involved in the new university model. After a content analysis, four themes emerged: crucial factors at the pre-merger phase to ensure a successful merger, the best actions to be performed at the merger phase to ensure a successful merger, the main challenges faced at the post-merger phase, and post-merger strategies in the last phase. Then, we analysed the institutional post-merger strategies to find differences between different mergers: university+university, specialised institution+specialised institution, and university+specialised institution. Our research shows that in all cases there is a mix of various local and national/international factors that need to be analysed in the post-merger phase before a merger can be deemed to be “successful” overall and before the various dimensions of the global impact of the merger can be assessed. Our results may be of help to national or regional governments considering mergers, whether for local reasons (such as productivity, economies of scale, quality in education/training and research/innovation, or for broader regional development) or other factors (such as recognition, prestige, attractiveness and visibility).

6.2 Introduction

Mergers in higher education have been studied from different points of view, but the post-merger phase (i.e. the results achieved, the overall impact and the new challenges opened by the process) has been the least studied area in this process. Few examples have been analysed in depth, except for South Africa (Barnard & Van der Merwe, 2016; Kistan, 2005; Mabokela & Wei, 2007; Straaten Theron & Dodd, 2011). In Europe, the DEFINE project (2014: 55-56) offered some recommendations to universities facing mergers, based on a comparative analysis of various types of mergers.

Although most authors think of mergers as the highest form of collaboration in higher education (Lang, 2002) the concept of institutional mergers in higher education is not a homogenous one.

With a merger, two or more separate organisations form a unitary structure and overall management control comes under a single governing body and single chief executive (Harman and Harman, 2003; Harman and Harman, 2008; Goedegebuure et al., 1992).

In recent years, higher education mergers have mainly been used as a means to improve their international position and as a way to enter the group of the so-called “world-class universities” to gain more “world visibility”. Moreover, “excellence in research underpins the idea of world-class research that is recognised by peers and that pushes back the frontiers of knowledge” (Altbach, 2015: 6). We can assume that cross-national competition is behind the desire to become a world-class university. Although internationalisation is difficult to define and criticism of international rankings has been widespread (Hazelkorn et al., 2014; Altbach, 2015), it is a fact that internationalisation (Deschamps and Lee, 2015) and world visibility (Docampo et al., 2015), underlie the concept of world-class universities. World visibility is mainly measured by the Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU 2005-2015, University of Shanghai), but also by other rankings such as the QS University Ranking (QS company).

Despite the autonomy universities are supposed to have, governments actually set the guidelines by which institutions in their countries have to abide (Harman, 2002), so both government and universities play a role in mergers and have used mergers for different purposes. The first, especially in Europe, as an attempt (Walsh, 2014) to include their universities in the international top-100 league while increasing and improving academic productivity (Mok, 2005a; Mok, 2005b and Slade et al., 2016). The latter also promote mergers as a way to combat financial cuts by increasing efficiency (Johnes, 2014) or to compete better globally by becoming a “world-class” university.

In this study, we compare the results of successful mergers involving world-class universities in the European Union that have subsequently led to an improvement in their position in the ARWU, with a view to identifying the challenges these universities face in their post-merger situation. Therefore, we defined four research questions to analyse the post-merger situation in terms of enablers and results: RQ1 Why were these mergers successful?, RQ2 Were there any differences depending on their international position?, RQ3 How are they facing the post-merger phase?, and RQ4 Can we identify any differences in post-merger strategies in terms of their institutional model? Following Creswell (2014), our conceptual world view was twofold, based on pragmatism, using mixed methods to study and compare different cases, and constructivism, exploring post-merger models.

6.3 Literature review

In order to cover the related literature, we used the Scopus Database, improved with Web of Science and Google Scholar. In an initial search, we obtained 1,394 results in Scopus using the keywords (merger AND higher education) OR (merger AND university), in the fields of Social Sciences. Then, we refined the search, focusing it on papers in academic journals, written in English, only related to Higher Education, and excluding journals which had no related scope. In this second search, we obtained 74 results. We found 14 false positives that were removed. From previous searches with the Web of Science and Google Scholar, we had added 31 papers. However, 10 were duplicates (that is, we obtained 21 false negatives), thus bringing our final total to 81 papers.

As Figura 12 shows, the papers found in Scopus formed three groups from keyword co-occurrences. We used VOSviewer software to display this information with different figures. “The

colour of an item is determined by the cluster to which the item belongs” (Van Eck and Waltman 2016: 4). A first group (green) focused on the impact and change that the merger represents (this could be the pre-merger phase); a second group (blue) focused on the process of “building” a new university and the role of the different institutions (merger phase); and a third group (red) focused on the results of the merger in terms of performance and research (post-merger phase).

The post-merger phase, perhaps the least studied one, is a phase of evaluation, where the results can only be assessed after some years (Skodvin, 1999; Mao et al., 2009). According to the literature, mergers are complex processes (Berriman y Jacobs, 2010). The pre-merger stage is especially stressful, due to the uncertainty it generates among employees (Aula y Tienari, 2011) if an active communication plan is not designed (Berriman & Jacobs, 2010; Govender & Rampersad, 2016). Therefore, the participation of employees from the very beginning is a must (Saarti & Juntunen, 2011).

The integration process requires the implementation of a new mission, vision, culture, identity (Puusa, & Kekäle, 2015), processes and procedures, and serious efforts to reduce bureaucracy as much as possible (Hall et al., 2004). In this phase, strong leadership is crucial to bring together all the previous cultures (Puusa, & Kekäle, 2013).

According to the literature, mergers in general, and higher education mergers in particular, face critical cultural factors. These are related to attitudes of resistance (Aspara et al., 2014; Daniels and Khanyile, 2013), the perceived benefits for each party (Gleibs et al., 2013), organisational change and destabilisation (Lawlor, 2013), future challenges (Mael, E. 2014), an increase in stress (Evans 2015; Ribando and Evans 2015), redefining the academic profile (Marcussen, 2008; Ylijoki, 2014), and culture confrontations between the different parties (Ripoll and De Miguel, 2013a). In general, employees have positive and negative perceptions (soft factors) that have received less attention in literature (Lawlor, 2013).

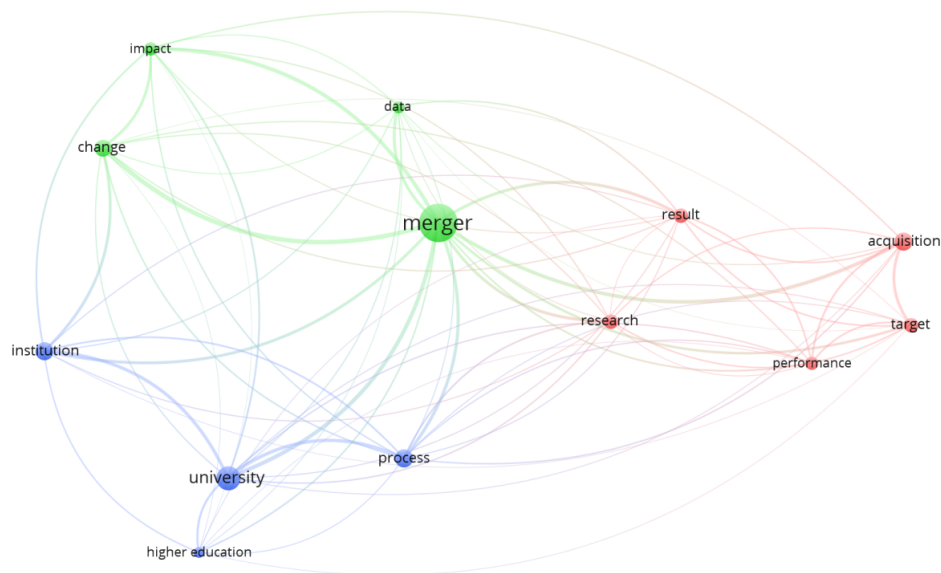


Figura 12. Papers' network using Scopus Database and VOSviewer (Van Eck and Waltman 2016)

Skodvin (1999) studied higher education mergers and the radical change they involve for partner culture. He points out that, without an appropriate strategy, stress and fear become greater. Fazackerley and Chant (2009) and Locke (2007) suggested reviewing the cultures before a merger to construct a common vision. Aula and Tienari (2011) highlighted the social complexity of a merger which, without appropriate control, could lead to a continuous dispute among partners (Hatton, 2002). To sum up, one of the major challenges in the post-merger phase is to create a common academic culture (Salmi, 2009) which can create a new institution with a sense of community (Harman 2002).

Different case studies have also shown that the crucial factors to generate this new culture in the merged institution involve a voluntary process of merging horizontal and complementary institutions, bilateral partnerships and a favourable context (Ripoll and De Miguel, 2013; 2014).

Therefore, our first research question 'RQ1 Why were these mergers successful?', should be related to this question: Can the case studies explored be related to 'crucial factors' to create a common vision?

The DEFINE project (2014: 55-56) presented some recommendations on how to obtain successful results, such as synergies with public authorities, giving precedence to the academic mission, exploring other alternatives, using change management methodologies, and internal and external communication. A comparisons of these 'best actions' in the mergers under study can help us to respond to 'RQ2 Were there differences depending on their international position?'

Ripoll and de Miguel (2013: 330) classified the outcomes that a merger can achieve in the new institution according to the main areas concerned:

- Bureaucracy: more complex administration processes, conflicts between internal services (Munene, 2008).
- Economics: An increased need for resources (human and financial) (Hidalgo-Hidalgo & Valera, 2016).
- Academic area and research: multidisciplinary, more partnerships, better range of courses for students, improved research rankings, greater international impact.

In short, according to the literature review, the 'main challenges' of a post-merger phase are to achieve a common culture, to tackle bureaucracy, to adjust existing resources, and to improve the range of academic courses on offer as well as the international research position. Moreover, physical location can also be a key factor (Lawlor, 2013). These are the challenges that we must tackle with our third research question: 'RQ3 How are they facing the post-merger phase?'

6.4 Method

We followed a descriptive and deductive method, based on the results of the literature review, in order to compare cross-case studies of mergers in Europe. Our research design, based on the theoretical framework, took "successful higher education mergers in Europe" as its unit of analysis, involving universities, and studying why they succeed and how they face future challenges (RQ4). Moreover, we used an inductive approach to determine three institutional models according to the type of merging institutions (university+university, specialised institution+specialised institution and university+specialised institution).

To gather the necessary data, we applied a triangulation model (Berg and Lune, 2012), using multiple data sources. Our sources of information were university reports (official documents), ARWU rankings, a literature review of the specific cases and in-depth interviews (n=7) with managers involved in the new university model.

We chose cross-case studies to compare some mergers, following Berg and Lune (2012: 325), because “the case study is an approach capable of examining simple or complex phenomenon, with units of analysis varying from single individuals to large corporations and businesses to world-changing events; it entails using a variety of lines of action in its data-gathering segments and can meaningfully make use of and contribute to the application of theory”. Indeed, “a case study approach to this problem-solving can reveal both the shared and the unique sense-making decisions” (Berg and Lune 2012: 328).

Our sample consisted of five universities. Firstly, four of them were from ARWU: two universities (Strasbourg and Manchester) from ARWU 2015’s Top 100 (from five “hard” mergers whose ranking improved) plus two universities (Lisbon and Aalto) which ranked lower in ARWU 2015 but whose results improved (around 15). From the ARWU 2015 Top 100, we excluded the cases of two universities whose results remained the same or got worse: Edinburgh has ranked 47th since 2005 and Uppsala fell slightly to 61st. Therefore, we can observe that out of 22 European mergers (ARWU), only 7 appear in the ARWU Top 100: Strasbourg, Manchester, University College London, Copenhagen, Paris Sud XI, Edinburgh and Uppsala.

In parallel, as a control, we compared these universities with a case in which two specialised institutions (Centrale-Supélec) merged. This case did not appear in ARWU but improved its ranking slightly, entering the QS ranking in 2015 at 156. The merged institution also participated in another federation Project called Paris Saclay. Though Paris Saclay is not the focus of this paper, it is interesting to note that this parallel project exists.

Additionally, we gathered public information from the EU-backed DEFINE project (2014) (although its results include other kinds of collaborations based on the CAM concept – collaborations, amalgamations and mergers), to check whether our cases followed the DEFINE recommendations. According to the DEFINE online tool, there were around 32 European mergers outside ARWU. Once again, we can see that out of a total of 54 mergers in Europe, only 22 of the merged universities appear in ARWU.

Moreover, we used semi-structured in-depth interviews as part of the data triangulation. As we have considerable experience in this subject and since the scope of our study was narrow, we only recorded a small number of interviews. We can also say that the group of informants was homogenous (university managers) (Bonde, 2013). The sample was purposeful and had sufficient data saturation (Guetterman, 2017). Around 17 hours of interview time were recorded and transcribed. It should be stated at this point that when citing these interviews we have corrected mistakes made by the interviewees as they are not native-English speakers. The interviews took place between October 2014 and May 2016. In total, the seven interviews gave us 72,432 words (most cited ‘university’: 941, ‘merger’: 422, ‘people’: 317, ‘government/ministry’: 210, ‘students’: 164, ‘research’: 131, ‘culture/change’: 126, ‘process’: 113, ‘rankings’: 40). Aalto University was the first case analysed, so we held two interviews in order to validate the semi-structured questionnaire. In the case of University of Strasbourg, we also did two interviews and included some information from the literature review as the first interview was not long enough and the second one was too focused on culture. Five of the participants were male and two were female.

To analyse the different documents, we used content analysis. Berg and Lune (2012: 349-350) defined this method as: “a careful, detailed, systematic examination and interpretation of a particular body of material in an effort to identify patterns, themes, biases, and meanings” ... The analysis is designed to “code” the content as data in a form that can be used to address research questions”. It was used in various forms of communications (documents and audios).

Four themes emerged: crucial factors (C1) at the pre-merger phase to ensure a successful merger (RQ1), the best actions (C2) to be performed at the merger phase to ensure a successful merger (RQ2), the main challenges (C3) faced at the post-merger phase (RQ3), and post-merger strategies (C4) in the last phase. Our categories for each research question were defined by the research team so they could be consistently answered. We grouped and coded the information as follows:

- C1-RQ1 Crucial factors: voluntary (1.1), horizontal and complementary (1.2), small number (1.3) and favourable context (1.4).
- C2-RQ2 Best actions: synergies with public authorities (2.1), precedence of academic mission (2.2), other alternatives explored (2.3), change management methodologies (2.4), internal communication (2.5) and external communication (2.6).
- C3-RQ3 Challenges: to achieve a common culture (3.1), to tackle bureaucracy (3.2), to adjust existing resources (3.3), to improve the range of academic courses on offer (3.4) and the university’s international research position (3.5), and physical location (3.6).
- C4-RQ4 Post-merger strategies related to the type of merger: strategies were defined following an inductive analysis of the interviews.

These categories are summarised in the following model (Tabla 8) which presents a typology of descriptors to compare three types of higher education mergers and the institutional model that emerges: university+university (t1), specialised institution+specialised institution (t2), and university+specialised institution (t3):

Tabla 8. Model to compare different types of university mergers

Institutional Model	Deductive from literatura review			Inductive	Results
	RQ1 Crucial Factors	RQ2 Best Actions	RQ3 Main Challenges	RQ4 Post-merger Strategies	
T1: University + University T2: Specialised Institution + Specialised Institution T3: University + Specialised Institution	c.1.1. voluntary c.1.2. horizontal and complementary c.1.3. bilateral c.1.4. favourable context	c.2.1. synergies with public authorities c.2.2. precedence of academic mission c.2.3. other alternatives explored c.2.4. change management	c.3.1. to achieve a common culture c.3.2. to tackle bureaucracy c.3.3. to adjust existing resources c.3.4. to improve range of academic courses on offer c.3.5 to improve international research position c.3.6. physical location	To determine	Positive Negative Equal

The model was used to prepare the interview protocol and carry out a content analysis of the interviews and the rest of documents. Aalto University was used as the first pilot case, conducting

two interviews in order to validate the semi-structured questionnaire. The interviews were structured around the following sections:

- a) General overview of the merger process and its context.
- b) University merger models.
- c) Government influence.
- d) Partners involved in the merger.
- e) Creating the new culture.
- f) Results of the merger.

6.5 Results of the comparative analysis

6.5.1 Aalto University (Finland):

Aalto University started to operate in 2010. It was the result of a merger between one large university (Helsinki University of Technology), and two smaller ones (Helsinki School of Economics and the University of Arts and Design Helsinki). It was horizontal and complementary in terms of their different academic profiles with few overlaps.

The merger of Aalto was not voluntary. Instead, it was forced by a shift of paradigm. It was the answer to a new context where complexity was dominant and the competition for talent became international.

“To understand the reason why it was necessary it is fundamental to first look at universities on a global scale, where there is increasing competition between universities all around the world. It is not so much about money, but rather about talent” (Informant 2).

Meanwhile universities were seen as “being not good enough” by government and industry, which were asking for a radical change to tackle key issues in the Finnish higher education system. Companies were also looking for better access to human capital. Though government and industry were not asking for a merger, they created the opportunity window for it to take place. Aalto’s partners saw the opportunity and proposed a merger project based on a strong, multidisciplinary academic identity, financial and administrative freedom and separation from the State.

Many European universities have seen the case of Aalto as being an example of a successful merger, not because it moved into the top 100, but because it fulfilled most of the crucial factors for a merger. However, the former universities faced drawbacks as a result of the merger, such as difficulties to agree upon common increased bureaucracy.

Though they were in ARWU and had had the same ranking (401-500) more or less from 2005-2015, there was a negative initial effect on their international research position, according to ARWU.

“TKK was more research and publishing oriented than the two others... if you go for the general ranking the numbers will go down because there are not many publications in the other 2 partners” (Informant 1).

Therefore, the new academic model was firstly based on attracting the best students and secondly on incorporating the best academics from all over the world with a tenure track system. This change is underway but will need at least 10 years before it is finished:

“It takes up to 10 years to complete, because after 10 years you can roughly say that all the students that have come to Aalto don’t know the former universities as such” (Informant 1).

6.5.2 Centrale-Supélec (France):

Centrale-Supélec merged in 2015 and is the result of merging two specialised institutions in France called “Grandes Écoles”: École Centrale and Supélec. They both had a very high educational profile but were looking to promote their research activities. A preliminary analysis conducted by École Centrale concluded that they needed a critical mass in order to have quality research and that research would be the best way to achieve international relevance and a means to attract more funds and to be present in rankings. Their result is quite satisfactory and the merged institution currently ranks 156th in QS, though has a better standing in engineering (101-150).

The merger between Centrale and Supélec was voluntary. Government approved the merger although it did not provide many economic incentives. It was horizontal and complementary with teaching profiles that did not overlap as there were only two institutions and both had very good connections with industry. They complied with almost all of the “best factors”, though the context, which was not necessarily “unfavourable”, lacked the necessary pressure and economic incentives to move things along faster:

“Between 2008 and 2012 the directors from both Centrale and Supélec appointed an independent project leader to make them agree on the project” ... “the pre-merger phase... lasted more than 4 years. This is definitely too long” (Informant 3).

In this case, generating a common culture is very difficult, at least in the initial years of merger implementation:

“You need to make big efforts to get people to work together, get to know each other, share spaces, build a new culture” ... “Now we are merging the core activities: teaching and research” (Informant 3).

At the moment, apart from building a common culture, Centrale-Supélec faces two main challenges:

- Their location, as both previous universities were on different campuses: “they are in different sites, it is very complicated to gain benefits. So really, ... we are still in the process and we will need another two or three years to achieve this merger” (Informant 6).
- Their participation in a big conglomerate promoted by the French government called “Paris Saclay” which involves 18 different institutions. Though an analysis of this process was not the reason for the interview, we detected that its objective was almost the opposite to that of Centrale-Supélec, lacking most of the best factors, except for the fact that the government was pushing integration by injecting additional resources into the project.

6.5.3 The University of Lisbon (Portugal):

In order to increase their international profile, develop their academic profile and achieve higher positions in rankings, the University of Lisbon and the Technical University of Lisbon, two universities each with about 25,000 students with complementary profiles, merged to create the University of Lisbon in 2013. They merged voluntarily as a reaction to the crisis, with few overlaps. There were historical reasons involved in the operation.

The main characteristic of this merger was the autonomy of the different schools, making the merger process easier because no restructuration of schools was required thus leaving power relations before and after the merger mainly as they had been:

“One of the things discussed during the merger process was that there should be a big autonomy within the hands of the Schools” (Informant 4).

The main aim of the merger process was to reduce the size of the rectorate and central services and to channel human resources to the schools. The main focus of the people in charge in of the merger was to build the new central structure and regulations:

“A huge part of my work during the first two years has been mainly bureaucratic, to make regulations for everything” (Informant 4).

The merger centred on improving its research position by being a larger institution and increasing the number of new multidisciplinary approaches by having more disciplines in the same institution. There was almost no mention of any teaching restructuring beyond some changes in doctoral training. Their strongest action before and during the merger was internal communication, carrying out negotiations with all the personnel.

“You can’t take organisational decisions. They have to be postponed to the post-merger” (Informant 4).

In terms of rankings, they focused on improving their ARWU position, which seems to have been achieved. Last year, it ranked in the 201-300 bracket (ARWU 2016).

The role of other stakeholders in this process was very low key. Companies had no role in the process and the government role was restricted solely to approving the merger decree. It did not provide any economic incentives beyond transferring real estate to the universities as a way to support the process.

6.5.4 The University of Manchester (United Kingdom):

The University of Manchester is the result of a merger between a small, highly specialised university, the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology (UMIST) and the Victoria University of Manchester (VUM), a large generalist university. The new university started to operate as such in 2004. A joint working group, made up of four members from each institution, was set up by the heads of the two universities and was independently chaired by a former executive and government adviser. They analysed the different types of partnerships available and ended up opting for the dissolution of the two existing universities and the creation of a single new one.

This merger was the reaction of both universities to achieve world-class status to compete with the very best universities (Georghiou, 2015) by means of rankings, fund raising and internationalisation. In the case of UMIST, it was also a survival strategy. The influence of industry in the city is almost inexistent nowadays. Regional government reacted by providing additional funding for the new institution but did not promote any other changes to support the merger.

Strong leadership, cooperation and the precedence of an academic mission was fundamental for the success of this merger. Though they first focused on the academic part, they also followed a structural approach to diminish administrative redundancies two years after the merger. Cultural shocks were quite relevant in this case:

“I think there were probably three cultures, three strands of opinion: there were the people on either side that were not really very sure or not really very happy. Then there were those who were saying ‘well this is a new opportunity, let’s go for it’. And those against it, trying to understand something new by oversimplifying” (Informant 5).

It was very clear that for these two universities the main objective was to be in the top 100. In this sense, they are the best example of success as in 2016, they ranked 35th on ARWU 2016:

“The Shanghai Jiao Tong index doesn’t change the weightings so rapidly from year to year as the others, so it is a more consistent indicator” (Informant 5).

In 2015, the University of Manchester had around 35,800 students (ARWU 2015). Therefore, it is still within the limit of what we found to be the optimal size. According to Ripoll and De Miguel (2014), this optimal size is around 30,000.

6.5.5 The University of Strasbourg (France):

Three universities merged in 2009 to create the University of Strasbourg. These were the University Louis Pasteur, the University Robert Schuman and the University Marc Bloch producing the “Renaissance” of the former University of Strasbourg (Musselin and Dif-Pradalier, 2014) that had been split into three different universities after the 1968 student protests in France. It was a long process as different cultures were involved:

“We needed five years until the impact of the merger could be considered a success” (Informant 6).

Though informant 6 says “it was voluntary”, the Government played an important role in pushing PRES and IDEX initiatives to improve the performance of French universities in ARWU. The vision of the new university itself was not so clear. There was a lack of internal communication with the academics and administrative personnel during the merger.

In 2015, the new university had around 42,000 students (ARWU 2015). That is, it is a large university, compared to those in the top 100.

After six years, some objectives have been reached but no new organisational structure has emerged for the university, regardless of the fact that there were clear overlaps between the three former universities. In addition, cultural roots are still difficult to handle and people still feel quite upset about the merger:

“Researchers do work with other institutions and when they have results they mention their research centre but they do not mention they are part of the University of Strasbourg.” (Informant 6).

“They have a very negative outlook about the merger, they felt that they had been mixed together, as a result of the destruction of the former institutions they belonged to” (Informant 7).

From 2005-2015, the University’s ARWU position improved and it moved into the top 100, but last year, its large size and excessive dependence on public economic support decreased its position on the ranking to the 101-150 bracket (ARWU 2016). Moreover, cultural resistance and the lack of strong leadership are not helping to give the university the necessary power to move forward:

“It needs a core team of people who are going stick together whatever” (Informant 7).

6.5.6 Revision

Therefore, after an inductive content analysis of all the materials, we found a new crucial factor for RQ1 related to decentralisation (c.1.5), another best action for RQ2 about connections with industry (c.2.7) and six potential merger strategies related to size (c.4.1), rankings (c.4.2), support (c.4.3), funding (c.4.4), orientation (c.4.5) and new business model (c.4.5). An updated version of Tabla 8 is shown below (Tabla 9) including the new insights.

Tabla 9. Model to compare different types of university mergers (revised)

Institutional Model	RQ1 Crucial Factors	RQ2 Best Actions	RQ3 Main Challenges	RQ4 Post-merger Strategies	Results
T1: University + University T2: Specialised Institution + Specialised Institution T3: University + Specialised Institution	c.1.1. voluntary c.1.2. horizontal and complementary c.1.3. bilateral c.1.4. favourable context c.1.5. decentralisation	c.2.1. synergies with public authorities c.2.2. precedence of academic mission c.2.3. other alternatives explored c.2.4. change management methodologies c.2.5. internal communication c.2.6. external communication	c.3.1. to achieve a common culture c.3.2. to tackle bureaucracy c.3.3. to adjust existing resources c.3.4. to improve the range of academic courses on offer c.3.5 to improve international research position c.3.6. physical location	c.4.1. size: big/small c.4.2. rankings c.4.3. support: public/private c.4.4. funding: research/fund raising/real state c.4.5. orientation (city/business) c.4.6. new business model	Positive Negative Equal

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		c.2.7. connections with industry			
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Source: Own source

Next, after a content analysis of all the materials, we found the following comparative results (Tabla 10):

Tabla 10. Comparative analysis of the results

Type of merger	RQ1 Crucial Factors	RQ2 Best Actions	RQ3 Main Challenges	RQ4 Post-merger Strategies	Ranking result 2005-2015
University of Strasbourg (T1)	c.1.1	c.2.1	c.3.1	c.4.1 (big)	2015 P
	c.1.2	c.2.2	c.3.3	c.4.2	
		c.2.6	c.3.4	c.4.3 (public)	2016 N
		c.3.5	c.4.5 (city)		
Universidade de Lisboa (T2)	c.1.1 c.1.2 c.1.3 c.1.5	c.2.1	c.3.1	c.4.1 (big)	2015 P 2016 P
		c.2.5	c.3.2	c.4.2	
		c.2.6	c.3.3	c.4.4 (real state / research)	
				c.4.5 (city)	
University of Manchester (T3)	c.1.1 c.1.2 c.1.3 c.1.4	c.2.1	c.3.1	c.4.1 (big)	2015 P 2016 P
		c.2.3	c.3.2	c.4.2	
		c.2.5	c.3.3	c.4.4 (fund raising)	
		c.2.6	c.3.4	c.4.5 (city)	
			c.3.5		
Aalto University (T3)	c.1.2 c.1.3 c.1.4	c.2.1			2015 E 2016 E
		c.2.2	c.3.3	c.4.1 (small)	
		c.2.3	c.3.4	c.4.3 (public and private)	
		c.2.4	c.3.5		
		c.2.5	c.3.6	c.4.6	
		c.2.6		c.4.7	
		c.2.7			
Centrale-Supélec (T2)	c.1.1 c.1.2 c.1.3	c.2.1	c.3.1	c.4.1 (small)	2015 P 2016 N/E
		c.2.3	c.3.2	c.4.2	
		c.2.4	c.3.3	c.4.3 (public)	
		c.2.5	c.3.4	c.4.6	
			c.3.5		

Source: Own source

According to our comparative analysis, the merger that has performed best in ARWU is the University of Manchester and the merger that has performed worst is the University of Strasbourg. This is in accordance with the most recent ARWU 2016, in which Manchester's ranking improved while Strasbourg lost ground. As Tabla 11 shows, not all the universities have improved their ranking since the merger, even when they grouped the research of the merged institutions together.

Tabla 11. Comparative performance in the international ranking 2005-2015

Type of merger	Merger year (rank)	2005 Rank	2015 Rank	Results	WoS 2005	WoS 2015
U. of Manchester	2004 (78)	53	41	P	5,065	7,768
U. of Strasbourg	2009 (101-151)	92	87	P	1,527	2,760
Aalto University	2010 (401-500)	401-500	401-500	E	1,137	2,223
U. de Lisboa	2013 (301-400)	401-500	201-300	P	2,224	5,420
Centrale-Supélec	2015	-	156 QS	P	431	1,202

Source: Own source. WoS: Web of Science publications.

Furthermore, the co-occurrences in the content analysis of the interviews (Figura 13) enabled us to confirm some of the categories in our model:

- The importance of internal communication to discuss the merger has been clearly demonstrated, with strong leadership and a robust team being crucial (green cluster).
- Conversely, external communication mainly involves government and ministries, but also industry (blue cluster). In this case, students are normally seen as stakeholders rather than participants (with few exceptions).
- Finally, the post-merger models face a major challenge: people and culture (red cluster). However, this is also influenced by the type of merger, with a special focus on mergers between two different institutions (university and specialised institution) or when one of

them wants to maintain its status (specialised institution with another specialised institution).

According to Informant 2, “If you develop an administrative culture that is dominated by one of the previous cultures it has negative effects”.

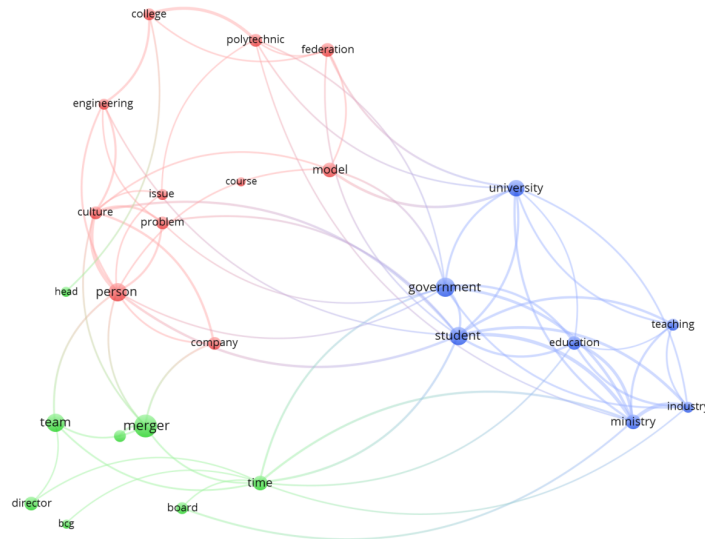


Figura 13. Interview network using VOSviewer (Van Eck and Waltman 2016).

Moreover, while mergers require strong leadership, not all merged universities provide this:

“It needs a very strong Rector, very strong leadership able to take the whole team somewhere outside, with no computers, no iPhones, we are here, and you go into this situation and say “Ok, we go, and we go naked”, not taking along all the things we have known. We go in and we try to be as open as possible because we want to do this together. It needs very strong leadership, and it needs a huge dose of humility and generosity” (Informant 6).

To be identified with the main city they belong to also seems to be very important for the majority of universities, but not for the specialised ones.

6.6 Concluding discussion

We first detected that only Aalto University admitted that the merger could be a reaction to external pressure. The rest claim that the mergers were totally voluntary given that nobody can force them to do so, according to the law and principle of autonomy. Governments in Europe cannot force universities to merge, but they can create a favourable context providing incentives. The effect is even greater if industry also cooperates.

If the university is strongly decentralised, as is the case of Lisbon, the process itself becomes very smooth and all the efforts concentrate on merging central services and channelling excess capacity to the schools. The challenges are considerably reduced, with no need to achieve a common culture because the predominant cultures are the ones that prevail in the schools.

Only Aalto excluded rankings as part of the main rationale for the merger. This idea centred on comprehensive reorganisation of the university to build a truly new institution by putting almost all of the potential best actions into practice:

“To create a world-class university by 2020. That means that you are among the best universities but not in terms of specific numbers. World-class is a statement of excellence in all aspects” (Informant 2).

The only case that underperforms in rankings is the University of Strasbourg, which has the least crucial factors (only voluntary and complementary). Though it has been positively assessed over the last ten-year period, it underperformed considerably at the time of the merger and in the 2016 results.

The case of Lisbon is closely connected with the size effect of merging two institutions, yet its performance in publications and impact on the ranking is very low when compared to Manchester which, with almost the same number of publications in 2005, had moved up the ranking much further than Lisbon in 2015.

It can also be said that working on best actions helps to reduce uncertainty in the environment, implying the institution has to face fewer challenges. The institutions implementing the largest number of best actions had less challenges to face than their counterparts.

Like mergers that take place in other types of entities, institutional mergers in higher education are always special cases that bear the footprint of those who initiate and implement them, as well as the distinctive features of their location, the starting position of the entities involved and the ambitions that guide them. The key factor determining relative success or failure is human attitudes and behaviour, in particular in terms of the ability of individuals and groups to anticipate, accept and shape the necessary cultural change required by mergers.

While all these aspects need to be dealt with in the pre-merger and implementation phase, they are of particular relevance in the post-merger period, given the patterns that change over time after the formal merger date. We believe that our observations can be of great help for all those in national or regional government considering mergers, whether for local reasons (such as productivity, economies of scale, quality in education/training and research/innovation, or broader regional development) or for other reasons (such as recognition, prestige, attractiveness, visibility). Our research has shown that in all cases there is a mix of various local and national/international factors that need to be analysed in the post-merger phase before a merger can be deemed to be an overall success, and the various dimensions of the overall impact of the merger can be assessed.

We are also fully aware that as time goes by after a merger the balance of benefits and problems may shift in one direction or another – since the post-merger phase has a starting point but no end, and corrective measures may or may not be taken in order to address ongoing or new difficulties faced by the merged institution. From this perspective, it would be highly interesting to re-evaluate the cases reviewed in this article in another five to ten years.

7. Conclusiones

Tal y como se describe en el capítulo introductorio, esta tesis es un compendio de tres artículos. Dos de ellos están publicados en revistas y el tercero está pendiente de aceptación.

7.1 RQ1: ¿Cuáles son los factores críticos de éxito de una fusión?

7.1.1 El concepto de “fusión exitosa”

Para poder responder a la primera pregunta, es necesario en primer lugar contextualizar qué se entiende por fusión exitosa. Como punto de partida, tomamos la definición de fusión de Goedegebuure (2012), para quien la fusión supone la “integración de dos o más instituciones de educación superior en una nueva entidad en la que el control reside en un único órgano de gobierno con un solo consejo de dirección”. Así pues, podemos decir que una fusión es exitosa siempre y cuando derive en la creación de una nueva institución que suplanta la identidad de las anteriores. Todos los casos estudiados en esta tesis han derivado en nuevas instituciones, con lo que se puede considerar que son exitosos y pueden servir de base para establecer aspectos comunes.

Aun así, consideramos que existen multitud de dimensiones a tener en cuenta más allá del hecho de la creación de una nueva entidad. El éxito se medirá en función de los resultados esperados de la fusión frente a los realmente alcanzados que, como se puede ver en la Tabla 4, no siempre son los mismos. En la fase post-fusión es donde se pueden contrastar estos resultados.

7.1.2 Determinación de factores críticos de éxito

Por otro lado, resulta imprescindible definir lo que es un factor crítico de éxito que, de acuerdo a Boynton y Zmud (1984, p. 17), se define como “aquellas cosas que deben ir bien para garantizar el éxito en la misión de un Proyecto u organización, representando áreas a las que hay que prestar atención para garantizar un rendimiento alto. Los factores críticos de éxito incluyen temas vitales para las actividades actuales de una organización y su éxito futuro”. En el epígrafe 6 se ha hecho referencia a ellos como “crucial factors”.

Atendiendo a la revisión de la literatura y a las entrevistas en profundidad realizadas, se presenta en la Tabla 12 la lista de temas agrupados según las dimensiones definidas para las entrevistas.

Tabla 12. Dimensiones, Temas y totales. Elaboración propia.

Dimensión	Temas	Total
Contexto	Contexto favorable	5
	Implicación de agentes socioeconómicos	
	Propuestas radicales	
	Proximidad geográfica	
	Sostenibilidad económica	
Cultura	Aclarar condiciones laborales	15
	Apoyo de estudiantes, académicos y personal de soporte	
	Cambio generacional	
	Considerar todos los grupos de interés: estudiantes, profesores y personal de soporte	
	Crear nuevas tradiciones	
	Demostrar que la fusión es beneficiosa para las personas	
	Empoderar a las personas	
	Estudiar inicialmente las culturas de las instituciones por separado	

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	Participación de todos los empleados desde el principio Plan de comunicación Proporcionar el mensaje correcto a cada grupo Respetar el trabajo de las anteriores instituciones Strong leadership Usar técnicas de gestión del cambio Valorar el pasado del que viene la nueva institución	
Gobierno	Aclarar condiciones laborales Apoyo de estudiantes, académicos y personal de soporte Cambio generacional Considerar todos los grupos de interés: estudiantes, profesores y personal de soporte Crear nuevas tradiciones Demostrar que la fusión es beneficiosa para las personas	6
Modelo	Autonomía académica Autonomía de las escuelas Autonomía económica Complementariedad de las instituciones Explorar otras alternativas Fusión como modelo de desarrollo institucional Implementación de nuevos procedimientos Implementación de nuevos procesos Implementación de una nueva misión Implementación de una nueva visión Plantear nuevos retos Priorizar la misión académica Reducir burocracia Reorganizar funciones Tamaño de la institución resultante Visitas a otras instituciones	16
Proceso	Acuerdo inicial al máximo nivel Ajustar el uso de recursos Apoyado desde el máximo nivel Armonización currículos formativos Asesor externo que monitorice el proceso Conversaciones preliminares privadas Coordinación de los servicios de documentación científica Creación de grupos de trabajo Crear estructuras comunes que faciliten la colaboración Diferenciar el nivel estratégico del nivel táctico Establecer un equipo para pilotar la fusión Estrategia bien definida Estudiar otros procesos de fusión Evitar despidos Evitar una visión tecnocrática Implementación de una nueva cultura Implementación de una nueva identidad Incluir la figura del facilitador Incorporar a la secretaría general al equipo de fusión Iniciar proyectos comunes Involucrar al mayor número de personas posible	27

	Líder externo del proceso	
	Metodologías de gestión del cambio	
	Orden de la implementación: administración - investigación - docencia	
	Preparar a los socios para la fusión	
	Uso más eficiente de los edificios	
	Venta de edificios no necesarios	
Socios	Cooperación previa	7
	Especialización de los socios	
	Fusiones entre dos socios	
	Integrar instituciones con objetivos similares	
	Perfil de las instituciones de origen	
	Tamaño de las instituciones que se fusionan	
	Valorar los beneficios percibidos por cada socio	

7.1.3 Propuesta de factores críticos de éxito para una fusión

De estos temas, y siguiendo la metodología mencionada en el epígrafe 6, los factores críticos de éxito serán:

- Fusión voluntaria en la que las instituciones deciden fusionarse y, en caso de haber un papel para el gobierno se focaliza en guiar el proceso, pero nunca en forzarlo.
- Fusión horizontal en la que los perfiles académicos de las instituciones que se fusionan son similares pero las áreas de conocimiento son complementarias, reduciendo al mínimo el solape entre áreas de conocimiento existentes.
- El número de socios óptimo para fusionarse es 2 en lo que llamaríamos una fusión “bilateral”. En caso de haber más de dos socios se incrementa el número de retos a abordar haciendo más probable el fracaso de la fusión.
- Contexto favorable en el que se crean o existen las condiciones de contorno necesarias para que la fusión llegue a buen término. Es el caso de los incentivos económicos por parte de los gobiernos, la necesidad de búsqueda de recursos adicionales u otros aspectos que acaban creando una “ventana de oportunidad” que hacen que la fusión emerja como opción.
- Descentralización de la institución, con escuelas y facultades autónomas en las que la creación de una nueva universidad no va a afectar a las culturas subyacentes.

7.2 RQ2: ¿Se puede generalizar un modelo de fusión?

Tras analizar los diferentes casos estudiados en esta tesis (epígrafe 6) y los relacionados con el análisis de contenido (epígrafes 4 y 5), se puede concluir que existen una serie de elementos comunes a partir de los cuales se podría generalizar un modelo de fusión.

El modelo aquí expuesto define una secuencia lineal de etapas que se dan en las fusiones entre instituciones de educación superior. Esta secuencia puede sufrir algún tipo de alteración.

7.2.1 Definición de un modelo de fusión

Los modelos de fusión existentes definen el conjunto de fases que transcurren hasta que se genera una nueva institución. En el apartado 3.1.3 se describen los modelos existentes en la actualidad, siendo tres los más relevantes:

- El modelo de Hall et al. (2004) que define tres fases: la pre-fusión, la transición y la integración.
- El modelo de Goedegebuurde (Goedegebuurde, 1992 citado por Hall et al., 2004), según el cual existen cuatro fases: contacto inicial, integración inicial de recursos, integración total de recursos y la aceptación de la nueva institución
- El modelo de Eastman y Lang (2001 citado por Hall et al., 2004), que sugiere tres fases: negociación, transición e implementación.

En esta Tesis coincidimos con Hall, Eastman y Lang en la existencia de tres fases. Respecto al modelo de Goedegebuurde, observamos que también define tres fases salvo que la intermedia la divide en dos estados: integración inicial de recursos e integración total de recursos.

Tras la revisión de la literatura y el análisis de los casos de fusiones seleccionados, observamos que:

- No existen claramente definidos momentos concretos mediante los que se pueda concretar el paso de una etapa a otra.
- La aparición de una “ventana de oportunidad” que hace emerger la fusión como opción marca un antes y un después en el proceso. Esta ventana viene determinada por un contexto en el que se dan cita diferentes elementos (Ver más adelante). Los tres modelos mencionados anteriormente no hacen referencia al contexto como tal.
- Existen numerosas conversaciones informales e incluso secretas antes de que se tome la decisión de seguir adelante en el proceso.
- Todos los casos desarrollan un proyecto de fusión que es el que marca el camino a seguir.
- Independientemente de que sea voluntaria o forzada, existen una serie de comunicaciones con los diferentes grupos de interés, especialmente con el gobierno, que deben ser consideradas y que suceden antes de elaborar el documento de la fusión.
- Hay una fecha a partir de la cual se decide que la nueva universidad empiece a operar. Aun así, las estructuras subyacentes, y no solo los recursos, siguen operando para mantener en funcionamiento el sistema.
- A partir de ahí se producen una serie de dinámicas hasta que la situación se estabiliza, dinámicas en las que los aspectos culturales juegan un papel clave.
- Las propuestas de fusión siempre provienen de los órganos directivos de las universidades, siendo un requisito imprescindible una historia de colaboración previa y una buena relación entre los máximos responsables de cada institución.

Teniendo en cuenta estas consideraciones, nosotros definimos un modelo en base a cinco fases: aparición de la ventana de oportunidad, fase conceptual, pre-fusión, fusión y post-fusión. A continuación, se describe cada una de estas fases con algo más de detalle.

Aparición de la ventana de oportunidad:

Tras el análisis de contenido realizado y las entrevistas en profundidad, podemos concluir que existen una serie de condiciones de contorno que definen un contexto y que son fundamentales para que surja la opción de una fusión. Esto es, además, coherente con el resto del trabajo en el que se considera como factor crítico de éxito la existencia de un “contexto favorable”. Este contexto permitirá que la solución de la fusión emerja como una alternativa para abordar un contexto cada vez más complejo. La definición de este contexto la hacemos en base a los resultados de los epígrafes 4, 5 y 6 y al análisis de las entrevistas que figuran en los anexos (epígrafe 9).

De ahí obtenemos una lista de elementos que definen el contexto y que acaban justificando la necesidad de una fusión. Hemos pensado conveniente diferenciar los aspectos académicos de los más economicistas, como son la búsqueda de eficiencias o las cuestiones vinculadas con los recursos. Al mismo tiempo, se incluye una cuestión adicional vinculada con la globalización de

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la educación superior y la necesidad de ser más competitivos a nivel internacional que ha surgido en las diferentes entrevistas. Esto último se engloba dentro del tema "Internacionalización". En la Tabla 13 se presentan los temas, subtemas y elementos que justifican la necesidad de una fusión.

Tabla 13. Temas, subtemas y elementos que justifican la necesidad de una fusión. Elaboración propia.

Tema	Subtema	Elemento
Académicos	-	Diversificación perfil académico
		Excelencia en docencia
		Excelencia en investigación
		Incrementar la multidisciplinariedad
		Cubrir más áreas de conocimiento: institución más generalista vs especializada
		Incrementar la producción científica
		Atraer talento
		Crear mejores condiciones para la docencia y la investigación
		Mejorar la productividad académica
		Competición global por el talento
Internacionalización	-	Crear masa crítica para abordar con solvencia retos docentes y de investigación
		Competir internacionalmente
		Posicionamiento internacional
		Incrementar visibilidad internacional
		Impacto en los rankings
		Afirmar ser una "World Class University"
		Mejorar la capacidad de competir a nivel internacional
		Internacionalización y globalización de la educación superior
		Políticas para estar entre las 100 mejores universidades del mundo
		Mejorar la posición en los rankings
Económicos	Eficiencia	Mejorar la eficiencia
		Generar economías de escala
		Eliminar duplicidades
		Reducir costes de gestión
		Venta de edificios
	Recursos	Obtener más financiación
		Evitar la bancarrota
		Disponer de mejores recursos
		Uso más eficiente de los recursos científicos
		Incentivos económicos

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Incentivos organizacionales

Combatir la reducción de financiación en la educación superior

Aumentar la autonomía

Situación de escasez de recursos

Aumento de tamaño para mejorar las posibilidades de supervivencia

Aumentar el tamaño para ser demasiado grande como para caer

Fase conceptual:

Se inicia por parte de la alta dirección de una o alguna de las instituciones interesadas en fusionarse. La ventana de oportunidad genera la idea de poder fusionarse en algún miembro del equipo de dirección de la universidad, normalmente el rector. A partir de ahí comienzan a buscarse socios posibles mediante una serie de conversaciones informales en las que se plantea la conveniencia o no de hacer algo así. Esta fase se subdivide en dos en función de su carácter, secreto o público. La primera de ellas se lleva a cabo en secreto y participa un pequeño grupo formado, normalmente, por los rectores y personas de confianza. Deriva en la elaboración de un documento estratégico sobre la forma que podría tener esa nueva institución que se plantea. Terminada la parte secreta, y con el acuerdo de todos los implicados, se hace público el documento y se inicia un proceso de consulta con las comunidades universitarias implicadas para valorar si se debe o no se debe seguir adelante con la idea. Mediante estas reuniones se va evolucionando el documento hasta que se tiene una versión más elaborada que se somete a votación entre los órganos de gobierno. Esta fase concluye cuando se establece si se debe seguir adelante o no y, en caso de seguir adelante, la fecha en la que debería empezar a operar la nueva universidad.

Pre-fusión:

Es la etapa más operativa. Se establecen los diferentes grupos de trabajo para tratar las cuestiones más operativas que deben desarrollarse para poder llevar a cabo la estrategia marcada. Esta fase se caracteriza por las negociaciones con los diferentes grupos de interés, especialmente con el gobierno. Las negociaciones con el gobierno deberían derivar en el establecimiento de los incentivos y cambios legislativos necesarios para que la fusión pueda llevarse a cabo. En esta etapa se hacen los cambios necesarios en las instituciones socias para garantizar que la nueva institución pueda funcionar en la fecha prevista.

Fusión:

No tiene una duración como tal, y viene determinada por la fecha en la que empieza a operar la nueva institución. En este momento no quiere decir que estén todas las estructuras creadas, sino que la nueva universidad existe y sustituye a las instituciones socias.

Post-fusión:

Esta etapa se inicia desde el momento en que se comunica la existencia de la nueva universidad pero no tiene establecido un fin claro en sí mismo. Aun así, sí podría establecer una parte más inestable en la que se deben fusionar en la práctica las instituciones implicadas. Normalmente se recomienda iniciar el proceso con la parte administrativa, continuar por la de investigación y terminar por la educativa. Es en este momento cuando los costes se disparan y las economías de escala no aparecen, ya que es necesario poner en funcionamiento toda la maquinaria de la

nueva universidad y, al mismo tiempo, mantener vivos los sistemas de administración, investigación y docentes de las instituciones preexistentes. En esta etapa las cuestiones culturales son clave para conseguir minimizar la duración de la parte más inestable y poder comenzar a funcionar de manera más estable.

7.2.2 Propuesta de modelo generalizado de fusión

En la Figura 14 se muestra nuestra propuesta de modelo generalizado de fusión.

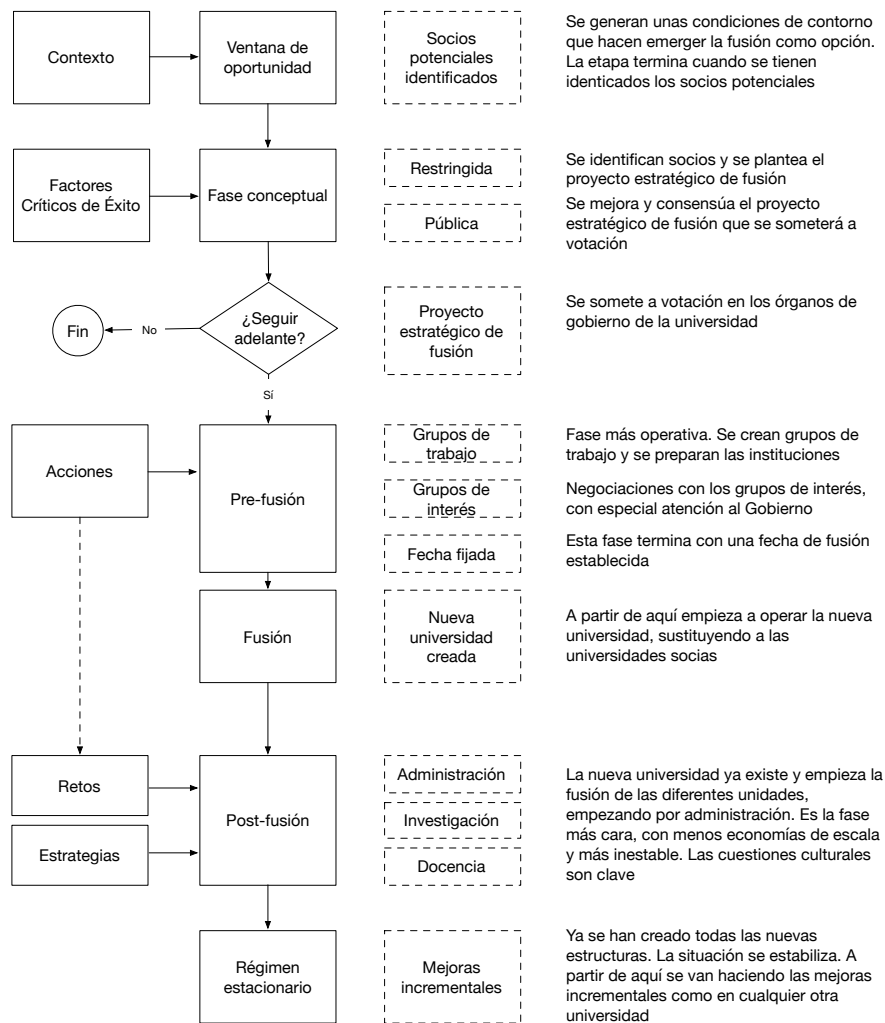


Figura 14. Modelo generalizado de fusión. Elaboración propia

Este modelo desarrolla las etapas mencionadas anteriormente, las vincula con resultados e hitos concretos que marcan el tránsito de una etapa a otra y se relaciona con los factores críticos de éxito, las acciones, los retos y las estrategias detectados en el epígrafe 6.

7.3 RQ3: ¿De qué manera se aborda la etapa post-fusión?

En la Tabla 9 se muestran los principales retos que tiene que abordar una institución tras superar la fase de fusión y entrar en la post-fusión, a saber:

- Alcanzar una cultura común
- Acotar la sobrerregulación de la nueva administración central
- Ajustar los recursos existentes
- Mejorar el catálogo de cursos que se ofrecen
- Mejorar el nivel de investigación de la nueva institución
- Ubicación de la nueva institución: proximidad o lejanía de las instituciones fundadoras

Para superar esos retos se plantean las siguientes estrategias post-fusión:

- Aumentar o disminuir el tamaño de la institución
- Mejorar el posicionamiento en los rankings
- Conseguir el soporte de instituciones y organizaciones públicas y privadas
- Mejorar la financiación mediante la investigación, la captación de patrocinios o la gestión del patrimonio inmobiliario de la nueva institución
- Orientar la institución hacia una mayor relación con la ciudad o las empresas
- Desarrollar un nuevo modelo institucional

Se ha observado que abordar las siguientes acciones reducen la incertidumbre del entorno y, por tanto, el número de retos a abordar:

- Sinergias con las entidades públicas como gobiernos nacionales, regionales o locales
- Dar prioridad a la misión académica frente a otras cuestiones como la reducción de costes o la búsqueda de economías de escala
- Explorar otras alternativas diferentes a la fusión o valorar diferentes instituciones para realizar la fusión
- Aplicar metodologías de gestión del cambio
- Acciones de comunicación interna
- Acciones de comunicación externa
- Mejorar las conexiones con las empresas

7.4 Líneas futuras de investigación

Consideramos que sería interesante repetir este análisis en las instituciones seleccionadas en el epígrafe 6 en un plazo de 5 años para comprobar cuál ha sido su rendimiento. Existen diferentes cuestiones que permitirían definir con más detalle esa fase post-fusión y cuáles son los resultados que pueden esperarse de una fusión.

Por otro lado, resultaría interesante abordar un estudio que permita definir indicadores de rendimiento de una fusión en diferentes dimensiones. En primera instancia se puede suponer que esas dimensiones estarían vinculadas con las tres misiones universitarias (docencia, investigación y relación con el entorno), aunque no obstante sería conveniente validar si habría que introducir alguna otra.

Creemos que también puede ser interesante estudiar fusiones fallidas o que están teniendo un rendimiento muy bajo. Nos parece especialmente interesante el caso de Paris-Saclay, una iniciativa del gobierno de Francia que pretende federar una serie de instituciones de educación superior y centros de investigación. Actualmente existe Paris-Saclay pero ha sufrido diversos problemas que han ocasionado la baja de un total de 10 de las 17 instituciones que se incluyeron en esta iniciativa.

Por otro lado, los aspectos culturales de una fusión se han mostrado como elementos clave en los diferentes casos que hemos estudiado. Una línea de trabajo en relación a este tema podría

aportar importantes beneficios a la hora de crear una cultura común asumida por los miembros de la nueva institución universitaria.

Teniendo en cuenta que esta tesis se ha centrado en el contexto europeo, donde el modelo predominante de institución de educación superior es el público, sería también interesante estudiar fusiones en universidades de carácter privado en Estados Unidos y quizás en otros países. Es bastante probable que surjan temas diferentes respecto a la parte de la misión a priorizar o el peso que debería tener la búsqueda de eficiencias y economías de escala.

Finalmente sería conveniente realizar una comparativa de los resultados obtenidos en esta tesis con la extensa literatura sobre fusiones y adquisiciones en el sector empresarial privado. Es bastante probable que existan numerosas buenas prácticas y lecciones a tener en cuenta del sector privado que puedan ser adaptadas al entorno de la educación superior.

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9. Anexos

En este apartado se recoge, en primer lugar, el cuestionario semiestructurado utilizado para hacer las entrevistas. En segundo lugar, aparece la transcripción de las 7 entrevistas realizadas.

9.1 Cuestionario

Se utiliza el modelo del cuestionario semiestructurado (Berg, 2014). Se han definido las siguientes preguntas:

1. Introduction

Q1.1. Why was the merger necessary?

2. Merger models

Q2.1 There are different types of mergers in higher education, varying between mere federations till the creation of new universities. What models were considered in the case of [Name of the institution]?

Q2.2. Were some other merger processes in the world evaluated in order to select the best one for [Name of the institution]? If yes, which ones and how they were taken into account? If no, why?

Q2.3. Why was centralized integration of [Number of merged institutions] universities into a single one the option chosen in the case of [Name of the institution]??

Q2.4. Did the universities had external pressure in order to choose one specific model?

Q2.5. Did exist consensus among the three universities for one merger model or did not exist?

Q2.6. Which were the key references taken in to account from other merger process in other parts of the world?

Q2.7. University of California is a reference of a federated university. Why was not selected a similar one for [Name of the institution]?

Q2.8. Mergers can be voluntary or forced. Which was the case for [Name of the institution]?

3. Context and the role of the Government

Q3.1. Which was the main goal of the Government when they promoted the merger between the three institutions?

Q3.2. Who suggested the merger as an option?

Q3.3. Do you think mergers are applied as an answer to the problems higher education institutions face in [Name of the country]?

Q3.4. Do you feel the return of investment in social terms has been positive in the case of [Name of the institution]?

Q3.5. Were rankings and globalisation a key topic that highly influenced the decision to create [Name of the institution]?

Q3.6. How other universities in France reacted when the Government expressed its interest for the [Name of the institution] merger?

Q3.7. Were enough economic incentives to support the merger process? Have all merger costs be covered?

4. Selection of partners for the merger

Q4.1. Were other type of partners considered when designing the new institutions? Was an option to merge [Partner] with a university of applied sciences? Was also considered to include on the merger to an applied research center?

Q4.2. Would it be possible to plan an international merger?

Q4.3. Existed any kind of hostility between the three former institutions before the creation of [Name of the institution]?

Q4.4. Did companies or private sector have a special role in the creation of [Name of the institution]?

5. About the merger process

Q5.1. Which characteristics would you remark concerning the team in charge of the merger negotiation process?

Q5.2. From which institutions were the members of the negotiation team?

Q5.3. Do you miss somebody on the merger team?

Q5.4. Which are the main characteristics of the phase before the merger? Could we call it pre-merger?

Q5.5. How long before the creation of [Name of the institution] started negotiations?

Q5.6. Was the pre-merger phase supported by an external body like a consultancy company or similar?

Q5.6. Which are the main phases of a merger process?

6. Rankings and specialisation

Q6.1. How as the position in the ARWU of the former [number of institutions] universities compared with the one obtained by the new [Name of the institution]?

Q6.2. How has the merger influenced in this?

7. Culture

Q7.1. At what extent would you say that cultural shocks constrained the possibilities of the new institution during the merger process?

Q7.2. How was the transition from being [position] at [former institution] to become [new position] at [Name of the institution]?

Q7.3. Would you consider it exist a new [Name of the institution] reputation?

Q7.4. Would you say that university members feel well identified with [Name of the institution]?

Q7.5. Have been specific policies being set up to reduce cultural shocks?

8. Expected results

Q8.1. Scale economies?

Q8.2. Duplications have been eliminated?

Q8.3. A stronger academic profile?

Q8.4. Better academic integration and collaboration?

Q8.5. Rationalization of the educational profile?

9.2 Entrevistas

En este apartado se recogen las entrevistas realizadas para el análisis cualitativo. La información que aquí se recoge es confidencial y debe tratarse como tal por parte de los miembros del tribunal y los evaluadores.

9.2.1 *Entrevista Aalto University (1)*

General overview of the merger process and its context

CR: Why do you think it was necessary to merge? Why University of Art and Design Helsinki needed to evolve on something called Aalto together with two other universities?

YS: To understand the reason why it was necessary it is fundamental to first look at universities in the global scale, where an increasing competition between universities in the world is happening. It is not so much about money, but talent. The interest for Higher Education was growing rapidly all over the world, specially in Asia, and different countries were trying to respond to that demand. If Finland wanted to have a role in the global competition on Higher Education, we had to do something to “increase our muscles”. I was president of a university that was very

high ranked in the world, but that was maybe not enough. The second reason was that the world we are living, the world that is emerging, is becoming more and more complex. Therefore, we need capabilities to broaden the resources to tackle those problems properly. So the main reasons are global competition in higher education and the change of the world emerging complex problems. For both you need different kind of universities.



Imagen 1. Prof. Yrjö SÖtamaa y Carlos Ripoll durante la entrevista

CR: What do you mean when you say “different kind of universities”?

YS: Most of the universities, of traditional universities, are built on grand areas of science and art: technology, business, design and so for. The problems we are facing are very complex and we need to combine knowledge from different areas to solve them successfully. You have to develop knowledge and competences in science, technology, art, design and business, but in order to find solutions to the problems, whether they are company problems or environmental problems or whatever, you need to combine knowledge from different areas too. The solution will never be based on one single discipline or in one area of science.

CR: So the main reason is multidisciplinary in a way.

YS: That is one side, but the other side is global competition in higher education.

CR: And what is for you “global competition in higher education”?

YS: I think the global competition, in the case of universities, is mostly about attracting ambitious talented people. And, in the global scale, in order to get the best people, you have to have an attractive university environment to get that kind of people. So the competition is not so much about funding, that is the easiest part, is about how to attract and recruit the best young students and the best professors. That is the competition, the competition about talent, not about numbers or indicators.

CR: *And a merger helps on that?*

YS: Yes, I think it helps and it was a solution to both of the problems. Nothing that has happened is against that. I can say we have evidences that shows that we have been able to create a solution for some major problems, so things are moving well in the right direction. We are getting better people to Aalto. People to educate, to do research, to study, so in terms of human resources I can say we are better than before.

University merger models

CR: *There are different types of mergers in higher education. You can have a federation like in University of California, you can have a single agreement to have a master program together. You can have several ways of collaboration between different universities. Which other models were considered in the case of Aalto?*

YS: We never considered any other option than becoming a private foundation. That was the proposal from the first beginning, and it became a private foundation at the end. The first reason was that when we were looking at successful universities around the world, they all seemed to be independent foundations, though of course there are others like Berkeley, UCLA and others that are run by the State. We tried to answer the question “which models can you find in the world that seem to work well?”. The second one was a very practical reason: we were fucked out by the Finnish government because they were trying to control the universities in greater detail and we dislike that. We thought that universities should be autonomous and should have freedom to decide how organize themselves, what they do, how they do and not controlled by some government officials. So, there were two reasons to choose this model. And we also wanted to have academic autonomy and economic autonomy. We had 20 universities at that time in Finland and they were all government universities, totally funded by the Government. We wanted to have also economic independence so the foundation model was a solution for that

CR: *But the Constitution guarantees some level of autonomy before that, isn't it?*

YS: Well, according to the University Law, they are autonomous in terms of research and education. They can decide themselves what they teach and what they research. There is nobody from the outside can come and say “Ok, you have to do this”. But the other one was the organizational and managerial autonomy where we wanted to have as much freedom as possible to decide about how we wanted to do things.

CR: *Could you also consider that instead of having one single university called “Aalto University” you could have something lighter as the 3 universities under the umbrella of a kind of federation of universities?*

YS: We didn't consider that.

CR: *Why?*

YS: Well, I think we really never discussed that. Some other universities in Finland did that kind of mergers, but it seems, in a look at night, like they will have just a new sign in the front of the building but nothing really changes. We wanted to build a strong multidisciplinary academic identity that has financial freedom and financial muscles. With academic freedom and administrative freedom. We never, I think with Matti and Eero, we never discussed other alternatives.

CR: When the process of merger started, or even before, did you checked other places in the world that were having that kind of mergers?

YS: We didn't study any previous merger. We visited universities ranked high, like MIT, Harvard, Cambridge and others. All very best universities. We had a very simple question to them, asking them to explain why they are so good. We wanted to learn and to find answer why those institutions felt that they were ranked so high. They said "we get the best and brightest students and we let them do what they want". In a way, the reason for starting the merger was the global competition of the talent. I think that is really the case. If you want to be at the top you need to have top people. If you have poor students then good teachers will not come. I think best professors want to work with best students. It seems that the key issue is to get good students because it is easier to get good staff like professors and researchers but it is more difficult to get the best students. The competition is much more difficult at that respect than to get good researchers and good professors.

Context and Government influenced

CR: The goals seem to be clear, but did you have some external pressure to do the merger or not?

YS: There was a strong pressure from the Government. They said they want to reform the university system in Finland, but they don't want to decide what are the solutions. They asked the universities to make proposals. And industry was strongly pressing the universities to reform themselves and to do something to raise the level of education and research. Their argument was that, for the global companies is not a problem on recruiting people, because they can go anywhere in the world to any university and employ people. They would like to employ people that were trained in Finnish universities. They said that if the level of education and research is not higher they had to go outside of Finland, so it would be a bad thing for us. For them it was also a question of human capital, human resources and how to get access to that. The company which operates in 50 different companies (countries) have no problem, but there are other types of companies that were depending highly on what the Finnish university system produces. It was a pressure both from the Government and from companies. Of course, that created a situation where changes would be possible. If there would not have been a request from the Government or pressure from industry, the situation would have been very different. There was, in a way, an urgent need to rethink some things, and it opened a window of opportunity where Aalto could fit. That made easier to make things happen.

CR: Which were the arguments of the Government?

YS: It was the global university competition. They felt Finnish universities were not good enough in the context of global competition. That was, in a way, their argument and the argument of the companies was basically the same: "how to raise the level of education and research"

CR: Was there a kind of agreement between companies and the Government to do that?

YS: No, there was no agreement but there was, in a way, somehow, they understand how a general understanding of urgency to change the university system. That was the overall climate and attitude. There was also, the third element was about the question of innovation capability of Europe and Finland. I think Finland was, in the beginning of 2000 holding the presidency of the EU. Many of the documents produced during top level meetings were dealing with the innovation

capacity of Europe and, of course, Finland. There was a question of how Europe could make better in the global innovation competition. That was a general argument for doing something to universities, education and research.

CR: So, the political level was national and European.

YS: Yes, there was a European agenda built around innovation and, of course, the national discussion was dealing with the same issues.

CR: Do you mean also that universities wanted to change?

YS: Well, not really. There were many changes internal, but to make any organizational or structural changes was not in the agenda. Ministry Industry said that Finland can have only 3 international level universities, but we were 20 at the moment. If they had to decide they would have put the 20 in 3 piles. But the universities were not really ready to make any radical changes. When the Ministry in 2005 asked the universities what they would like to do, the proposals were very modest. The only one that was, in a way, a radical change was Aalto University, that it was called at that time "Innovation University".

CR: Why do you consider it was a radical change?

YS: We really had to do something. It was a question of the success of Finland. How Finland could make in the global competition. In that context, we needed to do something radical, not just being "better friends" or have joint programs. We needed to make profound changes.

CR: So, the Government was not forcing the merge because they wanted to save money.

YS: No, it was not a question of creating mergers to save money and reduce the administrative cost. That was not the reason. The question was more about how Finland could succeed economically at the global competition, and it was of course the basic question: your capability to innovate. In a way that is why I called it the "Innovation University"

Merging the three institutions

CR: You were the one that clearly said "why don't we merge with Helsinki University of Technology and Helsinki School of Economics?"

YS: Yes, I was the one that suggested it.

CR: So why did you call "the innovation university?"

YS: Because Europe was lagging behind the United States in terms of innovation capacity, and it has always been behind. On the other hand, Finland was lagging also behind innovation capacity. So, the question was what would we be able to do? Now, if I look at the economic situation in Finland it is very much about the lack of innovations which leads to successful companies of a global position.

CR: What about the consensus among the three universities? Did you have a real consensus to create that kind of "innovation university"?

YS: It was not an immediate decision. I had not discussed with Eero and Matti the idea before. I phoned them one hour before, and I told them that I would make that idea public: "I am going to do this". So, it came as a surprise to them, but that was also important. If we would have discussed and prepared it, the idea would not have been as clear and sharp as it was. I think University of Technology had been lobbying for a long time to get an increase to their funding from the National Innovation Council. They had supported the idea of increasing the funding of TKK significantly, so what I proposed was endangering that plan, and business school I think they also were, because all the universities had not considered that possibility and instead were thinking on how to improve their position and their funding of the single universities. But rather quickly we all understood that if you want to improve the financial conditions this could be the way. And the idea got immediate support from the industry. They were supporting the idea from the very beginning. Universities slowly understood the idea too. But it was thanks to a lot of lobbying and work within the individual universities to get support from the university community to do it in practice, it was not just doing it.

CR: So, at the beginning everything starts because the 3 Rectors had a very good understanding, isn't it?

YS: We are close friends, trust each other and we worked together for years and years in different ways.

CR: And how was convincing the rest of the university?

YS: That was tough. That was not easy at all, but there were some key people from the industry who developed a lot of lobby Matti Tien Matti Lehti and Yro Nero Yrjö Neuvo. They worked in the business school and TKK with professors, support staff and students to change their minds. The students were very much against the idea. but I think in TKK and business school students were not revolting, but my students were revolting, and they liked to revolt. But they also had serious doubts it would be good for them. We had different groups in different universities with other opinions, but on the end in all the universities their board decided they would support the idea.

CR: Did you also face some kind of opposition from the non-academic staff?

YS: Yes, they were critical to the idea we had set with Eero and Matti. We would like to change the way we recruit people and the terms of employment and so on. We wanted to have more flexibility, but the non-academic people thought it would not be good for them. The proposal also included a new kind of governance system, moving from internal board to an external board, and it would be a big issue for both the academic and non-academic people. At that time, all university boards were compound of students, academics and non-academic staff. The proposal was that there would be an external board where they would not have direct representation. Our idea was that we would strength the strategic leadership capability of the university. They all are people who, at that time, all members of the Board were benefitting from the decisions, and they all are sitting on the board to make the decisions, so it was not easy to change that. At that time, it was difficult to make strategic decisions because the members of the Board were mainly watching their own interest.

Partners for the merger

CR: And thinking on the different models of a merger, would you consider on having something similar to University of California?

YS: We didn't discuss that. I know there was in the 70's a Director General of the Ministry of Education, Jaakko Numminen, who proposed that there should be one single "University of Finland". It was a very radical idea. If you think, California has 30 million people, and the number of universities is lower than the number we have here. A lot of different ideas have been discussed in the history about the universities in Finland, but not this time. The idea of University of Finland was not an academic discussion, but most probably a kind of visionary thinking. I don't know if that would be good or not. The major complain in Finland is that, in a country of 5 million people, we have 20 universities and many of the institutions and the areas of research were very small, and there were similar areas in many universities, so there is an overlapping work. The argument was that this way we would not be able to create large enough critical masses on research areas. We have rather small clusters of people working on different areas, so it was the argument so the main idea was to reorganize universities, to rationalize, to get the universities to focus on certain areas and build bigger clusters on research areas.

CR: The merger was considered as an option to do that, isn't it?

YS: Well, in the case of Aalto not, because there were no overlapping areas. We were all complementary: technology, business and art and design. There was no overlapping, and that was the easy side. That It would not be necessary to reshuffle or reorganize all the education structure.

CR: Would you say that the merger of Aalto was something forced or voluntary?

YS: It was not really forced. Nobody came to us and said: "You have to do it". I made a proposal of the "Innovation University" and we started working on it. It finally became to the solution, but there was nobody forcing it. We were once, at the very beginning, on a meeting with the Ministry of Education. He was not happy with the universities and their rather modest reform plans at that time. University of Technology was very focused on research and the business school too. The Minister of Education Antti Kalliomäki urged us for radical reforms. said they were hepp was not very happy with this and the We asked the Minister how far can we go. And he He said "you can go as far as you want, and dare and imagine". He said that he wanted a bigger reform than what universities had already presented. I had made a proposal and then we had discussions but universities, University of Technology specially, was very reserved and would make a proposal to the Ministry with a solution that the Ministry was not happy with it. And that led them to the process and planning and formulating the big investment and the establishment of the foundation and so on. This statement opened the door to a unique process, which resulted to a plan of a new type of university, a very big public-private investment and establishment of a university foundation. Nobody forced us, but we were given with the opportunity to do something radical.

CR: What was the difference between that first proposal you presented to the Ministry and the second one after this conversation at the Ministry?

YS: The second one led to the proposal of creating a completely new university through the merger, the establishment of the foundation and the big financial investment from the industry and the government. The first one was the establishment of an Innovation Institute, which could have a kind of would enable deeper cooperation between universities but not a merger. This was mainly because University of Technology was still thinking that they could still get the additional funding promised, so they wanted to be engaged at that.

CR: So, the commitment of the government with University of Technology to increase funding was also a barrier on this merger.

YS: Not really, but there was this proposal from the Innovation Council that funding for University of Technology should be increased.

CR: And what happened with that funding?

YS: TKK and the other two universities understood that if they wanted to get additional funding a merger could be the way to get it. What TKK had been previously lobbying for, could not be possible. Aalto University then got from the Government additional funding for the operational costs and the establishment of very big public-private investment to the endowment of the university foundation.

CR: So, to have a merger was totally suggested by the universities

YS: Yes, that was. It was our idea and our proposal. Then we had a working group led by the Secretary of State of the Ministry of Finance, Raimo Sailas, the most powerful civil servant in Finland, was the Chair. The other members were the three Rectors and few We had also the three Rectors and people from the industry. and then we made the practical proposal. We had to do were given a task to make the plan of how to establish the new university. Of course, we needed all the partners, but the idea came from universities. I think that.

CR: Do you think that mergers are applied as a general answer to the problems of higher education?

YS: Not necessarily. It seems that is very difficult to make changes in the European kind of societies. If you want to change something it is dam difficult. There That is a problem with democracy. If you go to Asia it is sometimes easier because you have a different system. If you want to make a bigger change this might be one way to do it, because I think this has led to problems, and solutions to those problems, we were not happy with it. But it has also led to opportunities which are unique and very successful. But if you really want to change you have to be able to shake up the things and rethink things radically. This might be a way to do it. Other solutions might lead to minor changes like changing names and a little bit the structure, but nothing very big. This creates Radical reforms create new opportunities and the people who understand the opportunities will benefit and lead the development. A best example of this is the Aalto Design Factory. Kalevi Ekman says that "you need to shake up things and create a situation, which is in a way, fluid and flexible, where people can grasp the opportunity to do something innovative in that new context". But of course, you have thousands of professors, 20.000 students, so it is an enormous machine. You cannot change everything at once. You have to start the process. It is like a virus that starts spreading and slowly things change. The opportunities are there and, therefore, things emerge like this from inside the university. Otherwise is easily just a saving money approach, and that is not a good idea. The situation in the world of universities is the opposite. The best ones are enormously well funded and the ones that are not so good are poorly funded. If you try to cut costs they come even worst funded. It should be necessary to create the situation on in the society that the society itself believes it is necessary to invest even more. Then cutting expenses, specially in small countries like Finland.

CR: How would you define that "situation" that makes necessary to invest more in universities?

YS: In this case, the idea came from the universities to find a solution to a problem that was discussed in the society. The stakeholders said “yes, this is something we should do”, but the lead has been mainly in the hands of universities.

CR: How do you feel the return of investment, in social terms? Has been positive in the case of Aalto?

YS: In some areas, it is still difficult to judge whether or not significant changes have really occurred. One of the areas that it was said in which there were problems was entrepreneurship and innovation capabilities. In those two areas Aalto has made a fantastic return of investment. Think what has happened around the Design Factory, Venture Garage, Startup Sauna, SLUSH and others. It could have not been imagined that such a big change would happen so quickly. It is a very vibrant community of young people working hard with entrepreneurship and startups companies. This is a driver that has had an effect. That is something that and will be reflected to the overall development of Finland in the coming years. But if you look then at specific areas of science and research it is difficult to say what comes out because the process is so long. I think that Aalto has internationalized, for instance, with bigger number of professors coming from other countries than before. It was one of the key issues. What it will bring is too early to say, but in a way new resources are coming in terms of human resources. There was a very heated discussion about entrepreneurship, and the business school said that “yes, but we have in this Pianuri Tiskeskus”. Here you have very dynamic growing community working hard with their ideas and creating new companies, so it is a very different setup.

CR: Where rankings a topic discussed during the merger negotiations?

YS: Yes, that was of course an issue like in all countries. It provides to politicians and business people a simplified way of looking at universities. They are there today part of the game, get they create publicity through it, people can read easily understand it them and make comments on it, but you never have them discussed what is behind the ranking and how they are created. We said that we wanted to create a world class university, not be on the top 10, 50 or 100, but to create until 2020 a “world class university”. That means that you are among the best university but not concrete numbers. World class is a statement of excellence in all aspects.

CR: How was the reaction of Helsinki University to the merger? I read that they were complaining about the government decision “to create a world class university” when they were already that.

YS: The reaction of the other 17 universities was very negative, and still is. We are collaborating with Helsinki University and I think that situation is very good because Aalto and Helsinki University are not competing. They are complementary and we have good relations, but in general many universities are still very strongly opposing and lobbying against Aalto. That is also a positive challenge.

CR: And why do you think they are against it?

YS: They would like to have the money that we were given. They are simply jealous. The other universities were lobbying against Aalto but not Helsinki University. Aalto and Helsinki University both understand they are the best in the country, they are close by, so it does not make sense to fight and we can do more through collaboration. But the others university are doing bad job lobbying against Aalto.

CR: Did you consider other partners beside Helsinki University of Technology and the Business Schools?

YS: No. We had had cooperation for years among the 3 universities in different areas. We knew each other, we had good experiences of collaborating, good results, so there were no other alternatives. We were not competitors, but collaborators and fairly good friends.

CR: Would you consider to include other kind of institutions in the merger, like VTT or a technological center for instance, inside the new institution?

YS: Not really. I think that What has happened is that companies have established their research organizations within Aalto. The environment should become attractive and good enough for companies to work within university and with the university rather than being a separate thing. We have a lot of cooperation with companies and cooperation with major companies in the form of joint labs. VTT is here at the campus and when the whole university starts to operate on one campus you can imagine that a lot of things could happen. It could lead to new kind of collaboration between companies and the university once they are all here and provided they have a good experience with what they are doing. It is easier now.

CR: Helsinki University was not considered as a potential partner?

YS: No, I don't understand the added value of that merger. The only main thing is that it would be big, but it would have had a university like University of California with technology and architecture, and business and medicine... It would have an impact on rankings of course, but nothing else. I do not think that size matters. The key is a rigorous and ambitious culture. This is really the Aalto has real added value, the combination of business, technology and arts and design. This is really adding value, but having Helsinki University on the merge would only make a big university but nothing else. For us it is important that we are collaborating with companies and . This is essential in Aalto that we have good contacts with companies, we collaborate with them. This is not so typical in other universities but it was clearly there in Helsinki University of Technology, Business School and University of Arts and Design. So, our merger was in a way natural.

CR: Did you consider having an international merger with a partner coming from another country?

YS: No, we didn't (maybe we should have considered that). The kind of, not a merger, but initiatives in Shanghai, the agreement established a new type of college university. We are now building together with Tongji University the Shanghai International College of Design and Innovation in Shanghai with Tongji, so we are experimenting now with deeper international cooperation. The problem with Aalto is that it has the Aalto Executive Education (AEE), they have programs in Singapore and they have been working for a long time in Korea, in China, in Iran, but beyond that Aalto has no experience of degree level collaboration with other universities abroad. We only know the Finish market and slowly maybe, through the Design Factory Network something could grow, but that it is something difficult to predict what it will lead to, but as long as far it is forbidden by the legislation to charge fees (this was changed 1.1.2016).

Merging the three institutions

CR: From your point of view, which are the main characteristics of the pre-merger phase, the phase before the merger becomes real

YS: Very important, from the very beginning was that there was a common will of the three university Rectors. We were working together to create a change., defining the details required a lot of time and another type of people, but the general idea that 3 persons want to take forward and are willing to collaborate That was very important. The other important thing was that the government was giving total support. The Ministry carefully chose those persons to lead the working group. Chose a person who knew how to guide decisions though in the government side, that it is not an easy system. I mean, the government had a very complex situation, with some others lobbying against this, so you needed somebody who can take it through on that side. The third element was that we had total support from the side of the economy industry. The most powerful individuals in Finnish economy were giving support to this idea. We had somehow been fortunate to have support from 3 sides. But of course, it meant also we had to gain support from the personnel and the students., and so for, but those are different issues. Stakeholders, the 3 universities, the government and the industry they all were supporting the idea and we had powerful people to take this through. Otherwise it would have died very quickly because we were trying to do, the most radical reform in Finnish university history, in terms of merging, separating university from the government, the foundation, getting the government to decide about funding and getting a commitment from the industry to give us a very large amount of money for the endowment. There were 3 individuals Antti Herlin, Matti Alahuhta and Matti Lehti. They were 3 persons from the economy that had to work very hard to get the part from the industry ready for the change and the very big investment. We had to work with the universities, the minister, and the state.

CR: I assume there was a working group. Who was there?

YS: The key people were the 3 rectors, Raimo Sailas who is the Secretary of State in the Ministry of Finance, Yrjö Neuvo who was board member from Nokia, and Matti Lehti who was at that time CEO of TIETO Corporation. They were people who had a very strong board trust to the idea and a strong position in economy or in the industry. All of them had to work of course with their own people to get it together. So, we had an excellent team.

CR: Would you say there were different phases on a merger process?

YS: Yes, of course. This merger it was, we say it was a unique of "window of opportunity" at the beginning. There was my initial proposal idea of what should be done. Then decision of the 3 rectors to take the idea forward. We discussed then with the Ministry and people in industry, Academy of Finland and Tekes and got the support from them. We knew that there was Then the establishment of the working group. Then decision to establish the foundation, and there was another working group that worked with the name and some other process issues. There were many different phases to get it done.

CR: It was until getting the foundation working. Once it was set up, everything worked smoothly.

YS: No, the foundation was just, in a way, the platform to do things. Collect the money was another big job which the industry people had to do, with their people to get the money they promised to invest they would put. It was also a merger of the 3 students' unions, which was very complicated with still unsolved issues. Choosing the board, deciding about the name... There were some other

single issues that had to be decided, but the only thing that led to serious conflicts was the merge of the 3 student unions.

CR: Once the merger was already done there were some other issues, isn't it?

YS: Aalto started to operate officially on the 1st of January 2010 but it started in practice already before that date. At that time, there was the governance system and the leadership structure established, but the to turn it into a new university in practice it was only the beginning. To create a new kind of university was still in a process, and that was the more difficult part, and that was where mistakes can be done too. I said that what we actually created was a new kind of organizing platform with a lot of opportunities, but whether the opportunities have been used in the right way it is another issue. We are still in a process and it takes quite a long time before until the majority of the people are recruited by Aalto University and the student population consist of a majority of people that came to study at Aalto University. Then it starts to function differently. Otherwise you have people who identify as TKK students for instance and professors that feel other identity than Aalto. Turning the opportunity to reality and success takes a lot of time, and you can make a lot of mistakes in that process. The implementation is the difficult phase. We had a lot of discussions if things have been made on the right way.

Creating the new culture

CR: How was the change from being the rector of University of Arts and Design to the Dean of the School of Arts and Design?

YS: I was lucky that I was not in that position. I moved to China, but Eero and Matti were there. They both felt that they were set aside what was, maybe good or maybe not. They were the people who created the idea and in a way pulled it through to in their academic communities, to support it and go for it. Where on the end they were not any more working or deciding about the implementation. I can understand why it was done but I don't think it was necessarily the best solution. Extend the whole, the idea that we had developed and worked for a long time is was given to other people's hands and they start, in a way, from the outside working and developing it a bit differently that we had thought. So, I think we should have been included us in to the implementation process, differently than what they did was done. I understand of course they probably told it is difficult for the new leaders and the new board to work if there are some "old guys" looking and watching and controlling what they are doing. I still think it would have been good to have us in the board. We had a clear idea about what to do and what the university should be like based on what we had discussed and studied. We had a clear idea how should we build and function slightly different. The problem that seems to be in many mergers is that when you have like in our case, one small, one big and one very big university merging, that the bigger one starts to dominate, and the culture of the two others comes under pressure. In a merger like ours you build working groups and always take people from the 3 universities. But the majority of people in the working group will come from the bigger one. When you start recruiting people for the administration they come from the bigger one. It means that the culture of the biggest entity becomes somehow dominant, and that leads to problems. The uniqueness of Aalto is that you have technology, business and design, and each of them are equally important and the capability to strengthen the culture of each of the three would make the whole university stronger. If you develop an administrative culture that is dominated by one it has negative effects. This happened to Aalto, but it seems it happens frequently in mergers in other countries too, it is a natural law, a mathematical question. You should take attention to that and make sure it does not happen,

because otherwise you lose something that would have been very important or you create tensions or conflicts, which are not good. I think that is the difficult side.

CR: But do you think there is an Aalto culture?

YS: It is of course developing, definitely, but it takes time before all comes together. Like in all social organizations this is a question of power, of position, values, it is a very complicated thing. It takes time to develop and mature but I think the most common crucial mistake done is that the process has been mainly top-down with an intention to “homogenize” many things. The idea that we had, the idea of Matti, Eero and myself was that the new university should provide better conditions for TKK, Business School and Design School to develop their strengths, and a culture typical to them and deepen their collaboration. But the leadership was working with a lot of emphasis on central administration, recruiting a lot of people there, using a lot of money to that, taking people away from the schools’ organizations and taking them to the central administration. That might be a good business organization, but not an academic one. Because the People who work in the different service functions in the 3 universities should be close to the academic staff. If they are taken away to the central administration, we lose essential services, and create a very powerful new entity that is living its own life. Administration is always good on creating tasks for itself. Instead of getting less bureaucracy the new university has increased it. The implementation is a very tricky issue.

9.2.2 Entrevista Aalto University (2)

General overview of the merger process and its context

CR: Why do you think it was necessary to merge? Why TKK needed to evolve on something called Aalto together with two other universities?

MP: That is a good question but I think we first must go to the background situation in Finland. There seemed to be inside the Ministry of Education an understanding that universities needed structural development, both inside the universities and, perhaps, also in the university network of Finland. At that time, Finland had a nationwide university network with about 20 universities and, in addition, 30 polytechnics.



Imagen 2. Prof. Matti Pursula y Carlos Ripoll durante la entrevista

CR: You mean universities of applied sciences

MP: Yes. And of course, those 20 universities also included some very small art schools, but anyway, we could say first there were quite a lot of institutions.

Second, there were also some worries about the role of the Finnish universities in industry. The question was: "Were Finnish universities doing well enough to give the Finnish industry the support they needed?". We must not forget that it was the time of big changes in the world, like digitalization, new processes, outsourcing to China, Asia and to other lower cost places. Global competition was increasing very quickly and there were many big companies that were worldwide. Nokia, for instance, was very big and strong at that time. Companies like that needed the best knowledge on the market all the time. There was also the situation that some of these companies were also working with other universities rather than Finnish. Nokia, of course, had many connections to USA and British universities. So, the Ministry came to the conclusion that the level of Finnish universities, especially in terms of research and maybe also education, was not fitting well industry requirements. The discussion started with this question:

"is the level of research in Finnish universities good enough to satisfy Finnish industry demands?".

Third reason for this university structural development process was related with financial problems inside the universities, mainly because State funding was not enough, so the Ministry of Education was also pushing universities to restructure inside themselves.

Fourth there was a problem with overlapping functions among universities due to the reason of having so many universities in the nationwide university network. Therefore, universities needed to focus more in order to avoid overlapping. So, there was this push from both the Government and the industry.

The universities tried to react to that and gave declarations about how they liked to be developed. There were two questions that the universities had for a long time on the table and have always

been trying to push Ministry of Education discussions: autonomy in financing and in strategic decisions, including the status as independent legal entities. Even though universities had certain kind of autonomy, which is written into the Constitution, the universities were part of the State organization, they were direct part of the State budget and they were operating like State offices. So, universities wanted more freedom, in a way, wanted to be independent from the State.

Talking about financing autonomy, universities could not have money of their own because they were State offices. So, for instance, if they some year could have saved some money, they could not put it aside and save it for the future. They had 3 years to spend it but there was no way of making reserves for a longer time, because they were part of the State budget. Only University of Helsinki, which had been established already in 1634, had a special privilege to do so, because it has got some donations from the State during its history. They had also some premises and, basically, funds of their own.

And also, the State then had a very strict guidance on the universities. When we looked at it, from the university side, we considered it was a little too detailed. They wanted to control too much things and we had no possibility to do things the way we considered best. Basically, the autonomy as such was already there. We had autonomy in how to organize teaching and what we teach, it was our own decision. Only if you wanted to go for a new field it needed authorization from the Ministry, because the fields of the university had been defined. So, if you wanted to go out of those fields you had to go on for an approval from the Ministry of Education. This was, and is, a general rule, not a rule for engineering universities only. If we had wanted to go business school field or natural sciences outside the engineering we should have got the permission from the Ministry of Education and of course the other universities had looked it like a threat and say that "we are already taking care of that field, so there is no need or room for a new actor". So anyway, there was certain autonomy, but not full, especially in economic and strategic sense. So, there was this pressure and then inside the university we were saying the funding was not enough in order to fully finance university activities, so we had to earn money, quite a lot of money, from research funding organizations.

CR: Like TEKES

MP: Like TEKES or the Academy of Finland and the industry and that is of course partly a good thing, but if that funding comes too big in comparison with State funding it puts pressure in basic tasks of teaching and education, mainly because all the time and effort goes to get the additional funding and taking care of the research that you had to do with it. It was about of 1/3 of TKK funding that came from outside, but you should take into account that the State budget of the whole TKK was paying for the premises, libraries and IT infrastructures and so on. Then when you go to basic unit level more than half of many unit budgets was outside funding and that was not the best situation to maintain a good balance between university tasks...

So that kind of situation was there and we could say there was quite a big pressure. Ministry of Education put some letters and said that the universities had to do structural changes. They wanted to have radical proposals and so but, of course, universities were not willing to do very radical proposals and it did not go so fast.

But then in 2005, as probably you know, the Rector of the University of Art and Design Helsinki, made this proposal that... Well, there was in the background a proposal to merge three small art universities, School of Fine Arts, School of Theater and the Sibelius Academy of Music, actually four art universities including the University of Art and Design Helsinki into one single university. So, the Rector said that "merging arts universities is ok but from our point of view, the School of Arts of Design, merging with technology and business is better because University of Art and

Design Helsinki is not pure art, it is applied arts". For them it was important the cooperation with industries and business life like us. And we also had a long history of cooperation, with about 10 years having a joint degree program, named International Design Business Management (IDBM). This program helped students to, in a way, work together in fields like engineering, business and design work so they get business orientation and how things are done in real world.

CR: Like the PDP, project development product program, or something like this.

MP: Yes, that was part of that degree program. So, Rector Sotamaa made this proposal and headed it in to us not too much in advance, maybe a day before he said: "Matti I will say this way". But anyway we, I said that, "in my opinion this is a proposal to be discussed", but at that time there was no premises and all related with that. In general, you could framework for the idea to go tightly together or to form a new university. We decided to start discussing and thinking about what that could mean and then we formulated a question that would guide the discussion: "What would we like to have from this new university? The autonomy, separation from the State and foundation to give us economic support". Financial autonomy, including the say that the pre-requisites for working should be the same as those in the best international universities, so also the support from industry, outside board or outside members in the board beyond the university people, top level people from industry, artistic life and the society was needed. In a way, to form it a new kind of culture inside the university, more open and supporting young people. So, we agreed on this kind of goals, and then the Ministry of Education asked again for proposals.

There was still some hesitation especially inside TKK about this merger: in TKK strategy, the university was defined as a science based university, but the new formation was in the public discussion called "the innovation university". There was, in a way, this kind of risk in the public discussion that it was all going to be about innovation and that kind of things. There was fear that the university would not base its work on science as we wanted to do to be a high-level science university. After discussing it in our board, the first proposal was only to form joint institute for three universities, but Ministry of Education was not pleased with that. It was not really pleased with any other university proposal of cooperation not even weaker probably. And that was the phase of hesitation.

Then in November 2006, almost 8 years ago, the Ministry of Education put on 3 working groups, one of them was for the Aalto University proposal. This working group had to work out a proposal for tight cooperation between the universities, in our case TKK, Helsinki School of Economics and the University of Art and Design Helsinki. There were also two other working groups, one in Turku, where there was a university and business school, and another one at the East Finland, where there were two universities: University of Kuopio and University of Joensuu. The three groups had to make proposal of how the universities in question could cooperate as deeply as possible. The Aalto working group had to make a document with a strategy for "Deepening the cooperation between the three universities" plus a work plan with timetables and so on. Precisely the document should consider "how to deep cooperation as much as possible inside their present working areas" ..

CR: So, merger was a kind of "prohibited" word

MP: It was not used there. So, in our working group there were the rectors of the three universities, members from industry and also the chairman and a secretary set by the Ministry of Education.

CR: For each cooperation project?

MP: For each project, they had their own groups. There has been quite a long-time discussion about the cost of a merger. We had also talked to the Ministry of Education in an earlier phase and we noticed them that “if there were a new university coming from a merge it would cost a lot and you have to be prepared”. And there... of course they didn't say anything about that and they didn't promise anything. So, after just 3 months of work, in February 2007 the proposals from the three working groups were given to the Ministry. At the same time, there was a public meeting and the Aalto one, our proposal, was fully from a different planet than the two others. While the two others just said that “we could make some kind of new cooperation structure but maintaining all universities its independence, and maybe it cost 2 or 3 million to make it happen”, what we proposed was the Aalto University.

CR: Oh, so this is really challenging

MP: Yes. And we stated that it is needed to double so much yearly funding as now, and it was also needed 700 M€ into the foundation, where the industry maybe could provide 200M€ in funds and State should put the other 500M€. So, we want independence, we want the premises, we want the Foundation with the money and more yearly funds to operate. So, it was quite radical.

CR: Yes, it is a really radical change

MP: Yes. And the industry had already early said that it supports the merger.

CR: Yes, they supported it.

MP: Yes, and the industry support also meant that they would have their representatives into the working group. We also had the goal that the Aalto University should be get into the program of the new government, because in the spring there were elections and a new government should be formed. And we succeeded.

CR: Ah, this is really interesting. Commitments are made after the election, when the parties negotiate to form a new government, but the idea of Aalto was under discussion in the parties before the elections.

MP: Yes

CR: This is something important

MP: Yes, and the industry pushed in that way, they gave a commitment that they would put 200M€. When the program of the government was under writing, the Technology Industries of Finland, which is the biggest and the most important industry cooperation group, they pronounced “we have made a decision, we put 80M€ on the Foundation”. So there was a seed, there was a big seed, so it also gave politicians the message that the industry is really with this proposal and it finally came part of the Government program.

Later the Ministry of Education set up working groups before making the charter for the Foundation, with people from universities and the Ministry also as members of those working groups. Mainly because at the same time there was a decision made that there would be a new university law where university autonomy for all universities would be put into that law. That meant that all universities would become independent institutions separated from the State. The basic proposal of the experts at the earlier government working groups was that universities should

become something we call a “public entity”, a legal person, that means a public institution but independent from the State.

CR: Through a Foundation

MP: Not a Foundation. Something that is in the Finnish law for a public organization that is outside of the public budget.

CR: Yes, like a public company or public entity or something like this.

MP: Public entity not a company.

CR: Yes, something different but supported by the Government

MP: Supported by Government but not a part of governmental organization. And because of this Aalto proposal, the new university law was written in such a way that also a foundation based university was possible. There was also a heavy discussion in principle level about what does autonomy in Constitution mean and how can a foundation fulfill the autonomy principle. It culminated in such things that autonomous university must have the power to nominate itself all the members in its administration and also the board. The original proposal for the Aalto university board was that industries and the Ministry Education would also have power to nominate some members. But that was not allowed because of the autonomous principle. So finally the university also got, even the foundation based university, the right to nominate the board though industry gained the right to put forward candidates.

CR: Yes. And you can choose from the candidates

MP: Yes, and they must put at least double the number of candidates compared with the number of vacancies in the board. The university decides, and even the regulation does not force foundation based universities to have a board composed fully by people outside the university, we decided to have a board with all members from outside.

CR: All?

MP: All, and that is how we work, but actually the law says nothing about that. Aalto University could even nominate all the board members from inside.

CR: Yes

MP: But that would not change anything because it was how the board was formed earlier, internal.

CR: I assume that the definition of the board is in the bylaws of the university, isn't it?

MP: Yes, it is in the university bylaws, and it is basically in the university law. It says the foundation based universities must have nominated people on the highest level of science, art and societal impact, so they must be really high level people.

CR: High level people, coming from companies, from other universities...

MP: Yes, so we have all the time also members that are coming outside Finland.

CR: And do they change regularly?

MP: Yes, they change. One person can only be elected for three years' periods and in practice one or two members are under election yearly. The number of board members is seven.

CR: *This is very interesting because the autonomy debate is a very hot topic always in the university sphere.*

MP: Yes

University mergers models

CR: *Would you say Aalto merger was a voluntary process or was in a way forced by the Ministry?*

MP: There are both aspects here. In a way, we could say it was forced because of a general pressure to do structural changes and then forming of the three working groups. But it was also a voluntary process started by the universities. We, the universities, defined within this working group, the goals, and those goals stated very precisely that top level science university was also aimed, as a way to align with TKK strategy and also bypass TKK hesitations at that respect. We also defined in that sense the conditions under this merger process could be done, whichp included autonomy, a foundation based organization, additional yearly funding and the necessary foundation seed capital to guarantee progress. And basically, it went fine, though there was cut half of our additional yearly funding. From the 100% additional funding, we asked it came to 50% and they said this is only for 10 years. And now when the times have been bad they have given a bit less, and less and less. But anyway, there was additional funding for the foundation of 700M€ million, because the State got in with 500M€ and the industry with 200M€. And for all universities there was this kind of "carrot" given. The Ministry said "we give you 2.5 times the money you can get from industry". This 2.5 was that because Aalto could do 2.5 times funding. So, the same option was given to others but the amount of money other universities were able to raise was very small compared with what Aalto got. Tampere University of Technology, which decided also to become a foundation based university, collected about 30M€ and the State put in about 75M€.

CR: *So, there is a big difference*

MP: Yes, it is a big difference in that.

CR: *So then, would you say that the Ministry created the necessity of being more cooperative with other institutions and then the solution of the merger came from universities (TKK, University of Art and Design Helsinki and Helsinki School of Economics)? I mean, was the Ministry talking about mergers from the beginning?*

MP: No, the merger discussion started when that proposal had been put forward by rector Sotamaa. But is partially because of TKK hesitation until the working group set by Ministry of Education gave its proposal

CR: *Wow, that is really amazing, yes*

MP: That was the order. There was that proposal from the Rector Sotamaa, then our discussion and finally the detailed proposal for a merger raised.

CR: *This is really interesting, because in most of the cases the Ministry uses the merger as the solution for everything.*

MP: Yes, that is true if we look at the long-term development, but later it turned out also there were not so many mergers. There was a merger in Turku and another one in eastern Finland. The first was a merge between University of Turku and Turku Business School. The second it was a merger Joensuu University and Kuopio University. But neither of those two cases got any other money than what they earlier they asked in the working groups. And there is also now the merger of the art universities that has been finally done.

CR: You mean the original proposal of merging art related universities except the University of Art and Design Helsinki

MP: Yes, there is now a University of the Arts Helsinki formed by the former Sibelius Academy, Theatre Academy and Academy of Fine Arts. This new university is operating since 2013.

CR: So, the debate about mergers was opened due to Aalto creation, and then some others proposed also mergers.

MP: You could say on that way but in a way, there was this proposal on the merger of the art universities. That was before the proposal of the Aalto merger, but Aalto merger was partly a reaction from the University of Art and Design Helsinki to that process, because they felt in a way that they were not the right partners for them. The other mergers were pushed by the Ministry, and not so much proposed by the universities.

CR: If we think now in the models for a merger, why did you choose to create a single university? You could also have gone for something similar as in California, where there is a federation of universities under the University of California brand. Was it considered here something like that?

MP: Well we... To be honest we did not make very systematic analyses of different kinds of university mergers. Some of the working groups of the Ministry of Education had done some of that kind of background work. But basically, we thought on it as a possibility, because we are in the same metropolitan area. If we want to cooperate loosely we can do it without a merger and we were already doing at that time. Going for some kind of lighter merger model would not bring anything additional.

We are currently each of us in different campuses: Arabia, City and Otaniemi. What we believe is that what we really need to get all the fields in the same location. It really creates the meaning and meeting possibilities. In a way, it creates possibilities for cooperation, new ideas, different kind of meetings and so on, and that would require we had to be in the same location. That was of course a sensitive point. Business School has a nice location in the city center, and the University of Art and Design Helsinki was an important part of the whole Arabia area which has been in a way built around it or at the same time as it. Anyway, the most important thing is that we wanted to create something that really can set the bases for cooperation, real cooperation, and not only cooperation on paper, but that has been to be done step by step. If I'm not wrong, next autumn all bachelor education starts here in Otaniemi, also the Business School. Arts and Design may come a year later, because we are starting a construction project that still needs to be developed. Basically, the idea is that all the bachelor education should be on the same campus.

CR: And what about the master programs?

MP: Master programs can be in a way a little different in the case of Business School, but the all the University of Art and Design Helsinki comes totally here.

CR: So, it means that really only the possibility of having a single institution was considered. As you mentioned there was no systematic study of another merger in Europe.

MP: no, we did not that but there was some background work done by the Ministry of Education earlier. All the three rectors we made a small trip to the USA and looked at Harvard and some places to see how they operate. And then during the work of the constitution we had a working group from the Ministry of Education that visited Manchester and London to discuss about the merger and how do they work. But I think we really wanted to have a single university, not some loose way of cooperation that would create some kind of administrative burdens without any real benefit.

CR: Like what? Which benefit do you have on mind?

MP: I think that we were lucky we had no really overlapping activities in the field of science or education. Of course, there are some mathematics in Business School and some basic education in design that is also in Architecture, and also in logistic area or business area, but really very little overlapping, so we really could support each other to create a new kind of institution. Of course, there are some benefits that can be in the long run created at the administrative side. Instead of three universities independent administration, finances or some other things can be put together, but we did not expect big benefits on the administrative side. Aalto University is not an operational downsizing project. Aalto is a development project, so the administrative increase in efficiency they are side effects, but not part of our goals. Basic thing is development, because cooperation in three fields creates new possibilities, new ideas, and new atmosphere. Of course, new administration and probably better economies will arise. We defined very carefully also in the working group that there must be a mechanism to involve students so there will be a student-centered learning culture.

Thinking about benefits, if you want to put it in one sentence it would be the change on the state of mind. For example, in TKK most of the professors were very ambitious and wanted to do the best possible science, but the economic situation, with less resources, made it hard to get the funding for the best possible research in that sense. In a way, we wanted with this merger to create new things and give people the possibility to raise the level, a quality step, a quality jump to a next stage or higher level. We wanted that to happen. Of course, this kind of work in the long run when you define your goals and it also means internal restructure, but that happens all the time in the university. Some areas are put aside because new areas emerge, but that is common everyday life. Aalto is a development process, not a process to push people aside.

CR: Not a kind of radical changes on that, isn't it?

MP: No, but it goes through the recruiting in new professors for new fields and when a person retires on one field that can continue or not.

CR: We were talking about the different types of mergers. You were visiting with some other people Manchester University and University of London. University of London is more a kind of federation of different universities while Manchester University is a real merger that has been a very successful case in fact. The thing is that we were talking about the benefits in a way. When you were studying potential model, you were not forced by the government to go for one or other model, it was your decision.

MP: In a way, there was a push for merger of course because Ministry of Education wanted better statistic. Twenty universities for a small country looks bad, so in a way the Ministry of Education I think was supporting mergers but did not define what kind of mergers. There are different kinds

of cooperative groups and so and so, but they did not have in a way defined the form in that sense in the background papers. And we also visited some other places, in a later phase of the project. Then we already had the Aalto Foundation created and we choose the President of the University even though Aalto was not functioning. We visited the École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and Munchen Technical University for example. EPFL had done what we wanted in a way: to raise its level in about 10 years. They had no mergers but they had raised the level of science and had come forward in international rankings very much. We wanted to learn in a way.

CR: Did you notice they had a higher level of autonomy?

MP: Not necessary because the Swiss universities use to be a little bit different. EPFL and ETHZ are State or Federal universities. They have different governance systems than other universities. They have a common board for these 2 technical universities. But about the proceeds one of the things that they emphasized, something which we had in Aalto from the beginning, was that we should create a kind of tenure track system. Choosing our professors is the key and that has been a success here in Aalto. The amount of applicants, also international applicants, has raised incredible fast. About one third of the new professors have been nominated come from outside Finland.

CR: And the selection of professors is in the hands of university?

MP: It is in the hands of university, everything is in the hand of university.

CR: So, this is an important step forward

MP: Yes. It was also earlier in the hands of universities since about 1998 or so. Before that, nomination of professors went through the Ministry of Education to the President of the Republic. Professors got a letter from the President of the Republic, but basically very seldom changed the proposal. After 1998, the board of university nominated professors.

CR: This is very important part of autonomy

MP: The earlier procedure was very strictly defined in the university law. It is still defined in the university law though it gives more freedom to the university. Aalto University has to follow the procedure given in the university law. Earlier those candidates that were not nominated could also make a complaint, because if you had made a mistake, you had to go through the procedure again. A complex procedure. Now it is not possible in the same way.

CR: So now the process is more effective and simpler

MP: It should be more effective but actually because it is so crucial for the university, people who are involved in the process say it is more demanding. There is a working group who looks at the candidates, there is also the board of professors of the School, the board of professors of the University and finally there is the Presidency. If you are making a nomination of assistant professor the, then it is inside the School but then if you want to get a tenure it goes all the way to the board of professors and the President. In the case of assistant professor, which is limited term from 3 to 5 years, the evaluation and nomination that can be done inside the School.

Context and Government influence

CR: And now if we move into the topic of context, including some other universities here in Finland and the Government, could you say one goal that the Government has, not the university, with this merger?

MP: Well I think that the goals of the Government were also parallel in this sense. They wanted universities to raise the level of research and education and they also wanted a more balanced university system, in the sense they could in the long take out overlapping activities in general level for the whole Finland. Probably governments always have in the back of their minds they could save some money but basically the university reform in Finland was done so it was neutral for the cost or the financing, if we take out Aalto. It was also defined in the decisions that universities got the right to own their premises, which earlier it was not the case. There was specific statement in law that funding of the universities has to follow certain index: yearly there is a calculation of life cost changes in the society, including the changes in premises too, and the funding should be increased according to that index. But then when we are now in bad times the Government has cut off the index on behalf they can get back to it. From the Government point of view universities should have better strategies defining things like "where they want to be good" or "what they want to do". In that sense, Government also wanted to cut overlapping things. And the funding models were set a bit different to push some things at universities, with a funding model that takes into account how well universities perform on science or how quick the student finish the degree. As we discussed earlier there are so many universities in Finland that there is quite a lot of overlapping, giving same kind of education in many parts of the country. It is locally important, of course, but from the efficiency point of view it might be not so good. The universities are important both for the local communities and for the development of that part of the country.

CR: Yes, at some extent they are part of the regional development policies

MP: Yes, very important in many areas throughout the country.

CR: Do you think the Government was blaming the universities for not being as well as they could be?

MP: It was blaming, you could say in a way. We were told we were not doing well enough. Of course, the universities said "it was not justified" or "you cannot put it so badly". We wanted to point out, and I think it is true, that university rankings do not measure the quality of education and we think the Finnish university system is quite good and, what is also important, the education is basically about the same range all over the country. For the employer is not so important from which university of engineering a graduate comes from. If, for instance, if it is a mechanical engineer you can believe it is a good one, and that is the same for any field of engineering. Of course, there are some variations over the centers. That is also true that in the scientific output the Finnish universities were not doing well, if you exclude University of Helsinki that has long traditions and also better funding situations due to the use of its own funds. We must consider that engineering specially serves the national needs and a lot of publications in the past were only Finnish. During the last 20 years, the need for international publication has been emphasized and all the time increased. In the case of Finland, which is a very small language group, it means that beyond national public, the work is not known anywhere else, while Spanish is a different thing because it is a big language.

CR: Yes, but we are not so fluent in English.

MP: That can create also some other problems, it is true. And we must not forget that traditional universities in social sciences are very national.

CR: Does it mean that rankings and internationalizations were two of the main reasons for this merger?

MP: They were very important, yes. Internationalization has already been emphasized both by the Ministry of Education and by the universities. For example, TKK put internationalization strategy as one of the four main points, and we worked hard on that also. But, on behalf of good results in the number of foreign PhD students, results are not so good as they could be but anyway, they could increase. As long as teaching language is mainly Finnish, you don't get very much international master and PhD students and neither professors. We have international master programs also, the European Erasmus programs for instance, but still there is quite a room for improvement. Internationalization is one of the key issues also here.

CR: And rankings is the other one

MP: Well rankings are in a way one of the pushing forces that put in line industry and the government to say that we are not doing well enough but what we have in Aalto emphasized is that going upper in the international rankings depends on the field where the university works. In general, of course one of the best universities in the world is MIT that basically is an engineering university though it also has some other fields like arts, business or biology. We could say, in general, that those universities with medical Faculty and bio sciences are doing better in rankings because in those fields the culture of publishing is very much more common than in others. They do very much publishing in fields like physics and natural science, but engineering is not a similar case. Engineering focus on doing things and its applications.

CR: More connected with applied research

MP: Yes, and not concerned on publishing every small detail, more focused on doing something and then maybe publishing the whole thing. But there are cultural changes happening. What we have tried to emphasize is that we want to be in the higher levels in our own fields, and that does not necessary mean that we are on the absolute top on the international university rankings, mainly because we are not working on all fields. Each field has different possibilities to be top rated, so we want to be good in our own fields. For example, that means that in international ranking we have to look what is our location in engineering or what is our location in information and communication technologies. The other way of looking this is to define group for comparison. How do we do when we compare ourselves with the best Nordic universities, the best European engineering universities in these fields. So, you cannot promise that we will be on the top of the international rankings but we want in a way to achieve excellent results in our specific fields.

CR: And, talking about rankings, how would you explain that when you were TKK the institution was performing better in the Shanghai ranking than now as Aalto?

MP: Yes, it has happened, but I think it has something to do with the difference in the fields. If you take a look from the beginning, TKK was 2/3 of the whole university in terms of number of professors, students or Ministry funding, but TKK covered 90% of outside research funding and about the same rate of publications. TKK was more research and publishing oriented than the two others. University of Art and Design Helsinki probably will never be a very publishing school, but it is ranked among the 40 best schools of arts and design in the world, that is very high level, but if you go general ranking it is putting down the numbers because there are not many publications.

CR: Yes, you are now bigger adding people that perhaps is not focused on the typical things that rankings measure.

MP: Business School is also another example. It has a very good ranking in its own field, but although the number of publications is raising now, the publications has not been in focus of the older professors, there were other interests like being in the board of the companies and so.

CR: Business Schools are measuring the activities in a very different way.

MP: Yes, I think that... they are going up. When we made the proposal to the Government we said that it would take 10 years before you can know where we are and where we can reach. In a way, we think it was the minimum time, but of course we could not say to Government "give us all the good resources and wait up to 20 years". Politicians would probably not want to follow that, but there is some evidence in literature about 10 years.

CR: Yes, this is one of the conclusions of my literature review, you need about 10 years to start collecting the benefits

MP: Yes. So, rankings are a good thing to follow and it is of course nice if you are well ranked, but you have to know their weaknesses. In a way, you have to define in which sport are you playing.

CR: After this merger of Aalto, do you think that the Government is thinking as mergers a general solution for the Finnish higher education?

MP: Oh, that is a hard question, I can't know what they think, but if I were administrator at the Ministry of Education I still would take some look on potential mergers. Actually, there are two levels to consider. The first one is the universities, and there is one big university concentration in Finland that still could be merged: Tampere. They have a good strong technical university and a strong traditional university which actually, for historical reasons, has a very big emphasis on society. They have education, psychology, sociology and also medical school. That could be a strong university to put together, they would be bigger than Aalto and could be the second biggest university after Helsinki University, but so far, they have not been very interested on that. Tampere University of Technology is a foundation based university while Tampere University is a public entity, so they have different administrative bases in a way. Actually, there is no other place where you have close enough universities that could merge, except Turku, where they have the Swedish University, but that is a different and not really an easy task.

CR: But they remain as Turku University, they have not changed the name.

MP: No, they have not changed the name.

CR: And they have included the Swedish speaking university?

MP: No, the Swedish speaking university remains independent. They are not part of of the University of Turku.

CR: Is it a similar situation as that with the Hanken School of Economics?

MP: Yes, that could be merged to Aalto, but of course language is a border a little hard to go over because the Swedish language has a minority status in our land. I don't think the Ministry of Education is looking for some other mergers once the merger of the art universities has been completed. I believe that they were happy if the universities in Tampere merge, but I don't think they are going to push them to do so. The second level is related with the polytechnics. There has been also a push for polytechnics to merge and there have been mergers of polytechnics. Now there are less polytechnics than 5 years ago.

The next step is the cooperation between universities and the polytechnics and in some regional areas they are tightening their cooperation, even trying to locate themselves on the same campus areas. So, in the long run it might be that kind of arrangements could arise. Every now and then there are proposals that the bachelor level education should be left to polytechnics.

CR: So that would mean that universities would focus only on masters and doctorate levels, isn't it?

MP: Yes, but I think that the universities lose something if they leave bachelor education out. You have to understand that in Finland the bachelor, the status of bachelor, is different than in many countries. In Spain bachelor is the main degree?

CR: In Spain, there was a change in the law. Before the change, to become an engineer it was needed a 5 years' degree, and now we have a system of bachelor plus master.

MP: Well in Finland traditionally the basic degree in University is master degree, so almost all of our students achieve the master degree and very few people leave the university after completing just his/her bachelor. If they do so it must be probably because they go to some other university abroad. So we don't really know if the labor market for bachelor or could increase because we have this system.

CR: It is very tight connected the bachelor with the master

MP: It is, but basically when choosing your master, you have freedom in selecting the subject of your master. The education program, depending on your bachelor, will decide if you are applicable to one particular master degree. So that is the case, but there is a discussion about if polytechnics could take care of bachelor education while universities would take care of the master and doctoral programs. I think universities should take care at least a part of its own bachelor education to understand the whole process.

CR: In some cases, in this kind of mergers are expected to give a higher return of investment to the society. Do you think that return to society has increased in the Aalto case compared with the former TKK?

MP: I believe that it will be in the long running. It is a good investment of the society. So, studies, hopefully as I believe, will become and be more effective. Students in a good and inspiring environment will study more and learn more, making their degrees in a shorter time. This is an important thing in terms of results to society. I also believe that totally new kind of things will come out of the cooperation, so in a way there will be new kinds of engineers, new kinds of designers and new kind of business administrators who have more ideas and broader view.

CR: Compared with the three former institutions?

MP: Yes, but of course we have decided and emphasized that we have to be good in the core basic fields, only that way the cooperation can bring new things. It is not the idea that we give up in our basic fields and try to create some kind of generalist individual who knows something about everything but not very much about anything. The basic idea is that we have to be good in the basic fields we have, and based on those capabilities we can create new kinds of things if the best people of our fields have possibilities to meet each other and create new ideas.

CR: Is it a multidisciplinary approach?

MP: In a way, it is. We are going through a curriculum reform. We have already reformed the bachelor and the master curriculum, and there is a little more on multidisciplinary aspect. Students can choose something that goes out of the traditional fields. We need to find a good balance between multidisciplinary and specialization. So, if someone is interested in doing top level engineering in certain fields, it has to be possible in the studies also, but if somebody is interested in different kinds of aspects of engineering, not necessary to become a scientist or top specialist in certain field, then she or he has possibilities to create a little bit different curriculum.

CR: And talking about the context, there are some other relevant actors like Helsinki University. What was the reaction of Helsinki University towards this merger?

MP: Well, the reaction of other universities in general, if we put aside Tampere University of Technology that also become a foundation, was that they had nothing against the merger, but they had a lot against the conditions. In a way they say "this is unfair that you give to one university this special status and give it that much money, that is not fair". They consider the money could have been divided to the universities based on a "fair competition". That is what, in a nutshell the other universities have said. But of course, there are some benefits for the rest of universities. You have to remember that when the Aalto merger came, all the other universities got benefits, like giving the premises to the universities, most of the universities had not the premises before, they also had the possibility for additional funding through collecting money from industry and the government also gave capital to the universities. In a way, it was clear that when they go out of the State budget to independent organization they need some capital for daily activities which they did not have before because State always paid directly. They also had some additional capital so that they could start, and they also had got the right to choose outside members in the board setting limits and conditions to it. So, the Aalto merger and the conditions as prerequisites for Aalto merger gave benefits also to other universities which they don't want to say so much instead of that "additional budget to Aalto is unfair" complaint. They say also about "unfair competition" but, as I mentioned there were three working groups looking at the mergers. The two others did not make any proposal like we did.

CR: So, there was an open competition really also for the rest of universities.

MP: In a way, they could have done. They had the possibility. A specific possibility was given to universities Turku and East Finland. They didn't push away to tighten the cooperation. They could also have got money from industry but they did not succeed as much as us. I can understand we have had a few years more time to think about that. And we were in that sense ready because we had in our mind what we wanted, and we wanted to give the message the Government that if they want this it will cost 1 billion or a little more.

CR: But the relation with Helsinki University is a kind special relation? Is it considered a kind of competitor?

MP: It is of course about competition also but we have a good and long cooperation history with Helsinki University. And also, the other two schools had cooperation with Helsinki University. So, the relation in that sense was ok. We cooperate in several fields like our engineering and the medical faculty, because they need each other. And also in many other fields. And we also have quite common interests, because TKK and University of Helsinki anyway have always been seen as top universities in Finland, TKK in the field of engineering and Helsinki University in some others. So, we compete in a way to be better in the rankings but we also do not have very much overlapping so we can cooperate also. And cooperation is even increasing as the Aalto times goes along. But of course, in general when we discuss about conditions and universities, and who gets the funding and how much we get from the Ministry of Education we are competitors. That

is clear, but the relation in general is good. Of course, the University of Helsinki also said in the merger phase it was not fair and that kind of argumentation. Their view was also important in the interpretation of the university autonomy so that it changed a bit when also Aalto nominates its own board no outsider has voice on that board except that kind of proposing candidates. But relationship is good.

Partners for the merger

CR: So, the relation is good, but if we talk about partners or potential partners for the mergers, have you ever consider to have the merger with Helsinki University or it was completely out of the scope?

MP: Yes, I think it was completely out of the scope and the reason I think is that Helsinki University is too big. Has over 35.000 students, 12.000 engineering students additional would have created something that administratively would be too big. Because Aalto merger it was not a question about size or becoming bigger. No, we wanted to be better. And we are not too big university yet.

CR: Yes, because the size is quite ok.

MP: Yes. It is a bit less of about 20.000 students so, and I think it would have be too laborious and not really creative to merge with Helsinki University, because that university is already located in 4 campuses around Helsinki and then Otaniemi would have been the fifth. The possibilities for daily meeting or students or faculty would not have increased. The situation would be it was except some additional administrative meetings. I think some people put on the proposal that TKK should join all the technical universities in Finland with the target of creating a big and strong technical university. On the other hand, we would be several hundred kilometers away and there would not be real synergies. That would be more like the American universities systems.

CR: Like this kind of federation that we mentioned before

MP: Yes, something like that, and I think it was not the case for us.

CR: Can we go beyond the universities and join other type of institutions, for instance VTT?

MP: The right example, as you would probably know, comes from Germany. The Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT), they did this kind of merge a few years ago by joining the Karlsruhe University of Technology and their local institute of research. Regarding VTT I don't know if you know the history, but VTT is an offspring of TKK. In late 1800 TKK had what we could call a kind of material testing department, but in the long run in 1940s, during the war, it was made a decision that testing should be separated from the university, because it had not enough possibilities of development inside the university. I think that it was mainly because there are better funding opportunities when they are a different institution and the tasks can be redefined easier if they are not part of a university structure. In 1942 VTT was separated administratively from TKK but it was probably until 1970's that it was, in a way, loosely connected with TKK so its budget went through TKK, at least in the beginning. And professors in TKK were also the leaders on VTT laboratories, so there was this kind of union. But that finally ended or came to real end in early 1970's when all the universities were put under the Ministry of Education. Until that TKK, University of Art and Design Helsinki and Business Schools were under the Ministry of Trade and Industry. Then when TKK and business schools were moved to the Ministry of Education, VTT remained naturally under the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

CR: But would be something valuable to include other type of institutions inside a kind of conglomerate?

MP: There could be. VTT is of course the closest example that comes to one's mind. Could be some benefits from including VTT in Aalto? Well it needs a very careful consideration. Of course, VTT is strong in several fields, also in research, but its task is to help industry and do more applied research. VTT has been in a process of reducing step by step its basic research activity and going more into how to make business out of research. And we must also consider that that kind of merger would again create a very big thing because VTT has more than 2.500 employees. You should also consider that you would merge two institutions that have partly different goals, so it would again create a long merger period. And VTT has other locations besides its main location here in Otaniemi. Now VTT will become a company on the beginning of next year because of EU regulations. Maybe if Aalto owns VTT as a company that could be different, but being part of the university as such I don't think is a good idea. Most of the benefits are there already because we have very good cooperation with them

CR: Isn't there a kind of overlapping in terms of applied research?

MP: There could be but basically Aalto's focus is in science, in basic research in different fields. Without forgetting the application and cooperation with industry. So, I don't think that overlapping is in that sense. It is more in that we used to have same fields, and if both are doing basic research then in a way the resources are divided and can create some problems. On the other hand, we have some joint facilities like Micronova that is the microelectronics laboratory and the clean rooms. We cooperate very well there.

CR: Thinking also on partners did you ever consider to have a kind of international merger?

MP: No, we did not think on an international merger.

CR: Why?

MP: University system has been created during the Finnish nation and it has to remain in Finnish hand. That would probably not pass through the Ministry or the Parliament and of course there are the regulations about who can give degrees and so. Five or ten years ago there was quite a lot of discussion on attracting some international university here for IT education. But that did not succeed. The Ministry of Education did not like that. I must personally say that I did not like too that because the idea was in a way to subtract the best students and the best teachers from the system, from us mainly, use our laboratories and then those students had paid tuition fees that would have created a strange situation. But we did not think on creating an international merger though internationalization is something very important for Aalto. Aalto has tried very carefully to define important international partners and concentrate international cooperation with some partners.

CR: Some kind of strategic alliances

MP: Yes, try to get that kind of this. In Europe, we have the Cluster network and the Nordic 5 Tech network with the main Nordic engineering universities, and then we try to cooperate, we have quite good cooperation with Stanford for example. Then we have strategic cooperation with Jiao Tong University in Shanghai. We have a location there also.

CR: What about the existing three partners? Do you think there was hostility among the three institutions? Most probably not at the presidency level, but what about the base level?

MP: Well, there was some. You mean in the merger phase?

CR: Yes, people against the merger or that you got that perception.

MP: I think there was suspicion, something very natural, one of the main reasons was that TKK was so big in comparison with the two others that could diminish the role of the other 2 institutions.

CR: It could be perceived more as an absorption

MP: Yes, and also, especially in certain parts of University of Art and Design Helsinki students and professors were clearly against. I think in TKK probably the first reaction was “no way” and a little bit skeptical. But then the conditions came out (autonomy and more funding) so that we could show that this kind of possibility comes once in a hundred years or less. You can get autonomy, more funding and so on. In a way, we could work on not getting opposition against it. Maybe there were some people who were hesitant about it or in a way thinking “this is again a new invention from the administration”, “no good will come out of this”. And at the Business School I think that probably had the best procedures inside. It was discussed in the board very carefully so this kind of conditions could be defined well in order to get this school model: business school, for instance, would be an entity inside Aalto University with no diminish, and also the school of Arts and Design would be a school and also TKK. Opposition was especially strong in the Arts, with students and some personnel very much critics with the merger, but there was no clear opposition in Business School. People from the University of Art and Design Helsinki discussed that “business and technology has nothing to do with arts. Art will be thrown away inside the new structure”. Especially the people from cinema were quite against the merger. Some other of those who thought that arts were a priority against applied arts. And they demonstrate it collecting name of famous artists and cinema people against the merger. But step by step it went forward.

Students in TKK were since the beginning in favor of the merger when the university itself was still hesitating. And I think the students in the business school were worried about what would happen with their properties. According to the law, students must belong to the students Union. They have a legal position and they were concerned about where the Student Union of Business School would go when the new Aalto Student Union would be created. And the decision was anyway there would be one joint student union for the whole university without the faculty structure. That created some problems because Business School Student Union was quite wealthy. They own property and money, about 30 to 40 million euro. TKK Student Union was also wealthy but what it owns was mainly the student housing. Their strategy has been to put Student Union money in the student housing and build the student house for renting places to students. Business students had also some houses but they had mainly invested their money to create more money. Before joining the new Aalto Student Union, they moved part of their money in a different organization to support students later. And that created some problems in the relation with the new Aalto Students Union. They still have some court causes regard if it was legal or no but so far, the business students have won all the trials. Regardless this issue we could say that basically the new Aalto Student Union works fine.

CR: Has the new student union has taken the role of the three former?

MP: Yes. Regarding the Student Union of Arts and Design there was no problem, mainly because they owned almost nothing. Their way of keeping the student union was more like a kind of association. Basically, the student union works fine as far as I know and they have good relations with the Aalto management and they have been involved in all the procedures of how to create a

better environment. What you probably know is that we have a very active entrepreneurship society.

CR: Aalto entrepreneurship society.

MP: Yes, that came along after Aalto merger by students' initiative.

CR: Startup sauna?

MP: Yes, startup sauna and all those things. Students at least in this certain field have found something to do together in common and they have been very active and very successful.

But coming back to partners I would say that there was opposition against the merger, specially from part of the University of Art and Design Helsinki. They actually say that they would be better with the Theatre Academy Helsinki. But they have stayed and they are here.

CR: If we think on students, academia and administrative staff, would you say there was a kind of opposition from one of this three groups?

MP: Well, the most clear was that I mentioned with part of the University of Art and Design Helsinki people, that they were clearly against it.

CR: The three groups?

MP: I think students and certain parts of professors, not so much the administrative personnel. I think the administrative personal was quite neutral in general but of course it created quite a lot of pain when the new administration started and we had to create all the procedures to relocate the people of the TKK central administration. I think that Aalto administration and management made a clear mistake when they publicly, or semipublicly at least, created that kind of understanding that the new management does not give any value to the old administrative procedures. It was like the old administrative staff and maybe also the old professors, that were not so active in publishing, were doing all things wrong. In one hand the Aalto management said that they build the new institution on the work of the old merging universities and also remarked that they were best in their fields in Finland, but on the other hand they had also approved the industry rhetoric, in a way that research is not good enough and so on and so on. Because if you think how the new university starts, even though it began recruiting new professors and renewing 1/3 of our professors that were retiring in 5 years or so, the success of the merger in the beginning is in the hands of the present people. They already are in the university and you should be careful when treating them and showing them that the merger is in favor of them, that they win with the merger and that they get better possibilities to do what is their passion. But that is only part that was not so well done. Aalto management could have done better in that sense, even though it was necessary to change administration, we became a foundation based university, not anymore part of the State. It gave possibilities to renew things that had to be renewed, there were also new tasks that we had no experience, like taking care of funds and capital and many other things. You had to renew it, but it was not good to state that it was all wrong in the administration, in a way if you exaggerate a bit.

CR: But when was done the new administration? Before the merger, during the merger or after?

MP: In the merger phase.

CR: You mean that the new administrative structure created was not well done in a way

MP: Well what I wanted to say is that when the new administration started, the management team, did not give the right message to the people. In a way, they looked down to them and say "Now we change everything", but it was clear that most of the procedures were good. They had been created during a long time. Of course, they had to follow the State administration rules, but TKK administration was very effective, even it was by far the most effective administration of all the universities. That has been benchmarked, and we knew it. Of course when a merger like that is done, you need to create new administration and in the first phase you have for sure some overlapping and over population in the administration. You have to take new people in the top management, take care of the new tasks. At the same time, you don't want to put old people out of the house, so you do it on a softer way in the long run. And now when Aalto has been working, this is the fifth year, they are re-structuring the administrative services because they have now seen that they have over calculated the administration. They have seen the procedures and the administration people are above the level it was before.

CR: So, it's too big now you mean.

MP: Yes, it is in comparison to the situation before the merger. Before the merger. It is now a little too many people. And because they created / we created new kind of services new structures. Now that have been working a few years you can see where it is good or where it is not good. That will happen now.

CR: So, you are in a phase of finding the scale economies.

MP: Yes, I think in that sense we are finding the scale economies in the administrative side. But as such I think there was no opposition from the administrative personnel to the merger. They were loyal to the management. And we also try to involve people because it was clear the merger will come, the merger came into the program of the new government and then the 3 universities started the preparation, even though there was no final decision and there was no foundation. We worked in groups in all the fields of administration, and people got to know each other. We were discussing how should we do it and how to do it. It doesn't necessary mean that they ended up to such conclusions or such proposals as then finally were done, but they had been thinking about it, they saw it is possible and they had seen some solutions to all these things. We have been working a year, about a year, with the merger before the foundation was established in summer 2008. The foundation board started then to guide the merger, chose the president and so on.

CR: So, the foundation board was created to conduct the merger process

MP: Yes, and then to take care and be the board of the university. Foundation was established in summer 2008.

CR: And they were taking decisions about the merger process

MP: Yes, but the three universities still existed as independent entities so each university still had all their responsibilities on daily activities, their own budget and their own administration.

CR: And on this merger process, you said that it was in a way conducted by the Foundation, but I suppose there was a kind of merger team.

MP: Yes, there was

CR: And who composed it?

MP: There was a merger team where there were, 7 different fields in each tem plus a project leader. There was a person responsible for research, in personal, in business, in education, finances and so on, international collaboration and so on. And each member of the team, we could call "sub leader", each of those 7 people had working groups under them. The people from the working groups were collected from all the three universities. We also had different kinds of workshops. At the end, we calculated that we involved about 600 people in the process by means of working groups and workshops. So, we tried to involve as much as possible people. We talked to them and said "it is your possibility, what kind of university should the new university to be? So, come with your ideas, joint the working teams and bring your ideas". We tried also to involve young people.

CR: *Students?*

MP: Students yes, but also young researchers, because we said them that "this comes for you, not for the old professors that will be soon leaving the university. You can create the university where you are going to stay". I think that was an important part of the process, that we could involve people as much as possible.

CR: *But did you also students or not?*

MP: Students also

CR: *Did they come from the students' union?*

MP: Yes, through the students' union

CR: *So, they were part also of the merger groups*

MP: Yes, they had representatives in the working groups

CR: *All the expectations of the students were also there?*

MP: Yes, we basically tried to involve them and get their ideas in.

CR: *And were you also assisted by an external advisor like a consultant?*

MP: Yes, there was also a consultant helping the merger group. It was Mc Kinsey, they did it for free because that was their societal project of the year.

CR: *And what was their role?*

MP: They tried to structure the process and all the different things that had to be taken into account before the merger. They helped on creating the procedures and getting all the important decisions done before hand.

CR: *And was it useful?*

MP: I think it was seen useful

CR: *So, what would be from your perspective the phases of that merger process?*

MP: That's not necessary a question that I am the best person to answer.

CR: But do you have something in mind?

MP: Basically, there was first the idea phase from the proposal of rector Sotamaa in 2005, then came the pre-merger phase, and then the merger phase which started in 2007 after the memorandum of the Ministry of Education working group and the inclusion of the proposal to the program of the new government in spring 2007. There were 12 programs including also the mission and the vision of the university and what had to be done to achieve the goal. There was not necessarily in chronological order but there were all the things that had to be done.

I have to go back a little to answer the question if the administrative personnel had something against the merger. There was this general question about the university reform. That reform included also that universities were going to be separated from the State so all the employees who had been state officials would be employees in a private organization. It was a concern for all the people, but especially for the administrative people. There was a big discussion about the working conditions, how people would be put away from their work or the retirement rules. There was some reluctance because somebody could be put away because he or she is no more needed on the university. In the new institution you could be fired, but it was necessary to clarify in which conditions you would be fired. It was very relevant for state officials, because those who are like professors are on a very strong position. Actually, it is extremely hard to fire a professor in Finland. You cannot fire a professor because of what they say about the administration or the public, like a kind of controversial scientific statements. Most of the things were defined very clearly on a procedure by the State and agreed with the labour unions. It is very clearly stated in the charter of Aalto University, that the university respects freedom of research. But that was a hard discussion in a way. It was not against the merger, it was more about the labour conditions change once that you are no anymore paid by the State.

CR: Would you say that there are clearly identified steps or milestones in the merger process?

MP: Are there milestones? Yes, there was this pre-phase, idea phase, then came this memorandum that described what we wanted and how it could be done. Then started the working phase, when details on how to create the new university were discussed. The pre-phase was about what could we do before the foundation was established. We could only do some preliminary work because there was no decision maker who say: "yes, this will be done this way or the other way". We did mainly preparatory work. After this pre-phase there was more guided preparations, which were on the hands of the management board of the Foundation, the President and the merger team.

CR: So, there was a phase before the Foundation, then the Foundation was created and with the Foundation there were more clear decisions.

MP: Yes, the foundation could make decisions about how we do things, how we organize the procedures and so on. But also, the Foundation had problems, because merger was part of the university reform, and there was no law of the reform yet, so the law came in summer 2009, and Aalto started at the beginning of 2010.

CR: So, it was quite close.

MP: Yes, but basically there was a good cooperation between universities in general, between universities and the Ministry of Education and between Aalto people and the Ministry of Education in the preparations of the law. So, the preliminary work for the merger was done hand in hand. The only drawback or problem was this definition of autonomy, because Aalto merger had been planned on the idea that also the industry and the Ministry, the State, would have right to nominate

members of part of the board. But that was not allowed by the interpretation of autonomy, so that was changed.

CR: In the law or in the Aalto plan

MP: In the Aalto plan. Law was so that the university itself would nominate all its organs including board. That gave a couple of months' delay in the process on how making the law and so on. And then after that came the real merger phase when the Aalto University starts. The first year was just to build up the structures, and maybe the second year almost. Some of the management team members, like the President, the Vice-president or the CFO, had been selected and nominated before the university started already some of them almost a year before.

CR: By the foundation?

MP: Yes, by the Foundation because they are who nominates them, also now, but last members of the management team were nominated at the end of 2010, so it was as long and hard procedure. The last one to be nominated was the chief of public relations. The first year, and almost the second year, were in a way building up the organization. For example, TKK functioned the first year very much based on its own organization, because it was only one school, so did of course the other schools. And... step by step, the new organization took over. Formally of course from the beginning of 2010. In practice, it took the whole year 2010 to get it working. I would say it took about 3 years to get the new organization to function smoothly. It included the finalization of the strategy of the whole university, the working plans, how to work in order to fulfill the university structure, how to define the details of the tenure track system, how to put the tenure track system in work and the position of other researchers than professors. And so on and so on. There were many things of course you had to do, but 3 years I think it's the time we needed to put the new organization to work.

CR: Since the creation of Aalto?

MP: Since the beginning of Aalto's activity. And then you can put 2 more years before the merger took place. Two years of planning.

CR: Before?

MP: Yes, before and those additional 3 years to put things really in practice once Aalto was created. Of course, things were working since the beginning of Aalto. At the beginning, it had 3 schools and everything was... in a way running, but not necessarily so smoothly before people got involved in at the right time and on the right way. As I mentioned, putting the tenure track system into action and defining how other people than professors would work. Part of them were PhD students, which was easier in a way, but we had researchers that work with outside money. They were working as researchers in project but not doing its PhD. What to do with those people? How to define their position? The goal of Aalto was that the research is done by its PhD students, and postdocs, and professors and master students, and so on, and we do not want to maintain a big group of researchers who do not have academic goals. All of that took time. And now, there is the implementation phase when we are, you could say, "normal" phase. At the same time restructuring in all the administration is now going on.

CR: Are those working group still maintained?

MP: No, their work ended, I don't know exactly when they formally ended, but their tasks moved step by step to the Aalto management. And I think that they have partly existed during 2010.

CR: And then they had been absorbed by the management of the university?

MP: Yes, what they did was given to the management of the university so there was no need any more for that role in that sense.

CR: And the role of the Foundation now has been taken by the management of the university. I mean the role of conducting the process.

MP: Yes, the Foundation board only makes strategic decisions.

CR: Because before the merger they were really conducting the process

MP: Yes, but on the strategic level, not in the details. In the details, there were the working groups, and the presidents, and step by step the new top management. The university law said that the foundation had to do the merger together with the 3 universities. So, the Rectors of the founding universities participated partly in the meetings of the board until the end of 2009, as long as the independent universities existed. It was a way to get input to the former institutions.

CR: And you mention something about the role of the law. Was it necessary to change the law to have the merger?

MP: It was necessary, because previous university law defined all the universities as State offices and gave them all the rules. As part of the nationwide university reform the new law was done and changed the positions of all the universities in the system.

CR: So, this was not an ad-hoc law for the Aalto merger.

MP: No, it's a law for the whole university reform, and it included Aalto.

CR: So, with the former law it was impossible to have a merger.

MP: Well, it was not impossible but it would not have been different from the old universities. We wouldn't have got a different position or bigger autonomy. No anything at all it would be the same but bigger. All the universities were named in the old law and are named in the new law. A merger means in minimum to make a change in the list of the universities, but in practice more changes in the law.

Creating the new culture

CR: Talking about culture, is it also an important factor of the merger?

MP: Yes, it is.

CR: In many cases a constraint to have good results.

MP: Yes, I agree.

CR: So, at what extent could be said that this kind of cultural shocks of the three former universities constrained the possibilities of the merger?

MP: Well, that is a very important question in the whole merger process. You have to be able to create a common culture for the whole university, but there is also the school culture, that should be able to maintain its own specific features in a way. That was one of the main things in the school model. Even though we wanted the university to be one single institution with a common culture, it is clear that art and design has a different atmosphere than the school of science or the school of engineering. It was part of the school model to give certain kind of independence, or feeling of independence, to the school. But creating the common culture for the whole university is extremely important. I must say it means also for people who have in a way committed their own university, it's a very hard thing. It creates quite a lot of pain to give up the culture or features of your own university, features that have been there for 100 years or more. You have been working with in, so I personally have said it and said to my people and the university that "giving up the old is painful in personal level and also for the organization, but you have to give up certain things in a way to make room for new". You have to try to create this, and it was Aalto. TKK very clearly stated, also in an official status that "when we go to Aalto we will do our best to create a new university, and not to build up a wall between TKK and the others". I think it is a process that continues for quite a long time. It takes up to 10 years to complete, because after 10 years you can roughly say that all the students that have come to Aalto don't know any more the former universities as such, they are involved in the new university and they are used to the ways Aalto works. So, for them it is natural that business people and engineering students are there as well as art students. After 10 years, it is also a big amount, a very big share of professors, that have come to Aalto through Aalto recruiting system, tenure track and so on, so they are used to the Aalto way of doing things. And step by step, the old procedures, the old traditions, step aside, but of course it is important to keep something of the old, and remember that you have put this on the work of the former universities, and you have to respect that work. Aalto university, part of the Aalto core, must show a respect to the work of the old universities. We are now trying to create new traditions, like for instance by renewing opening ceremonies. We have something called Ceremonial Conferment of Doctoral Degrees, which is a very big academic fest which we celebrate in engineering every 2 years, because there are 150-190 doctors per year. So far the four engineering schools have their common ceremony, Business School has its own and Arts and Design has its own too. So the former TKK has so many doctors that we have to keep it every two years, Business School and Arts School have less doctors so their tradition has been to celebrate it every 5 years. But in the long term probably we will try to unify them to one ceremony, so that the whole Aalto would be represented. Nonetheless, University of Helsinki, which is very big, has these confirming ceremonies by faculty. So, it is also an option to have them separate. I think that Aalto management is now discussing about making something in common to put the Aalto culture in value. We have tried many ways to create Aalto new kind of common culture in studying, like the Design Factory. We also have joint research projects that you can't get it if you don't have participants from different fields. Even the university puts its own money in this kind of programs. There are many ways to create cooperation and, in a way, strengthen the common culture. In studies, for example, students choose something from the different fields. Yes, but this is a long process. The changes with new traditions and new people takes time.

CR: You then need to create those new traditions, don't you?

MP: Yes, I think it is also important that the university has traditions that are clearly its own.

CR: So, there is a necessity of generational change?

MP: I think so, even though I am very much in favor of Aalto and have done a lot of work to create Aalto, I every now and then feel sorry when I see they have changed this and this... I have to understand that it is part of the process. I understood it from the beginning. You have to give up many things, like independent TKK and many other things. It takes time.

CR: How was your transition of being TKK President to become the Dean of the School of Science and Technology?

MP: In my case, it was quite smooth. It was not a problem, because I have been working for Aalto and I was very much in favor of it. And I had said from the beginning publicly that I am not aiming to be the President of Aalto, because it needs a different kind of person. I have done my career as state official and I am close to retirement so I'm not aiming on competing for that position. It was of course clear also for the board chairs, the board needs different kind of persons that should not be blamed of being in favor with any of the former universities, specially with TKK that it was so big. In that sense, I am not disappointed of not being the president of Aalto. I had that clearly in my mind and already on my longer perspective that my term as President of TKK ends in 2010, in the summer, if everything has gone as expected. Then I was very close to retirement at that time, so, I stayed during year 2010 like the Dean of the School of Science and Technology, it was the former TKK. The School of Science and Technology went quite nice and we had very much practical work to do for the merger specially on restructuring the former TKK, because we had to put aside the old administration, the old, in a way, the old Rector's organization, the top Administration, the Officials, the studies, the Students Affair Office, the Financial Administration, Human Resources and so on. We had to restructure the functions to go partly to the school level and partly to the central Aalto services. It took a year.

CR: I can imagine it was a hard work that year

MP: Yes, it was. I must say quite well after all that in some cases our top administrators at Aalto failed on not valuing enough the experience of the former administration, and I think that is true in part. As I mentioned the Aalto top management looked downwards to the old administration and also to the people. It was like if the former organization had not done a good job. They had in mind something like "now we will do it better and smoother than before because we have become private". In a couple of years, they found it was not the way of doing things, but anyway, basically it went quite well. Of course, it also cost pain in the personnel, but Aalto did not fire anyone. As I said this is a development project not a downsizing process to put out a lot of people. And in my opinion TKK people in 2010 took care of quite many things that Aalto should have taken care of it, but we were the only organization that could do, because we had the experience and the necessary organization to take care of a big university. Business School or Arts School did not have that, so it was a very, I think it was also an important part of the success of the merger, and it was a very important year at that sense. The role of TKK as supporting the merger and the administration of Aalto was key.

CR: Was the transition so smooth with the 2 other former presidents?

MP: I think that it was similar. The Business School Rector actually step aside earlier and a new Dean were chosen during the phase of merger, at the end of 2009. The new President and the Foundation nominated a temporary Dean to stay in office for about 2 years. It was only temporary because choosing a Dean it is a hard job that takes time. The University of Art and Design Helsinki had a new President since the summer of 2008, so Rector Sotamaa was not anymore there. The university chose a new President, Helena Hyvönen, who had then continued as the Dean on the School of Arts and Design until the spring of this year. She stayed there for that period and she stayed there helping the administration.

CR: But did they have so much responsibility in the success of the merger? You mentioned that TKK was having a strong role supporting the merger, but what about the 2 others?

MP: They were supporting yes, but their schools remained almost as they were during the first phase. They were smaller and they almost fully maintained the old administration. They did some restructuring inside but not so much as moving people from their own administration to the Aalto administration or to the schools, because they were a single school. There were different tasks for them of course, and they were supporting the merger in the way they could.

CR: But the workload would not be the same.

MP: It was different. We discussed at the beginning of 2010 inside of TKK School of Science and Technology whether or not we should keep on going this way or we should go on dividing into four schools and take away TKK administrative level. In Business School and Arts School their Deans were directly under the President of Aalto and I as the Dean of the TKK was also under the Aalto President, but at the School of Science and Technology there were 4 "internal" faculties whose Deans were under me. It could be said that we had one more administrative level than the others, mainly because we were so big.

CR: So, you mean that inside the School of Science and Technology, there were also 4 different faculties.

MP: Yes, because TKK was divided in 2008 in 4 faculties to make the administration better and also to prepare TKK for the merger. It was part of my idea to do those changes that had to be done in advance so they don't come at the same time of the merger increasing the workload of people. In the case of University of Helsinki, for example, they had to do quite a lot of this kind of restructuring at the same time as the university reform started. Due to that, the university reform got very much bad reputation for things that were not really part of the reform itself. People did not like restructuring. It was just things that had to be sooner or later, but we decided to do it in advance. I must say it was a good job in that sense, then we had a real top management team, the Rector and two vice rectors at TKK, the chief of administration and the four deans. We had 8 people.

CR: And those 8 people became then part of Aalto?

MP: With this team could create TKK strategies and decide how we go and how we deal with the money and all of that. That was much easier than if we had a structure with 12 faculties as well as departments and more than a hundred independent laboratories chaired by the professors. And at the beginning of 2011 TKK was ready to operate as four Schools of Aalto, though TKK was already divided in 4 faculties in 2008 as a preparation for the merger. TKK functioned during 2010 as one school (The School of Science and Technology) inside Aalto, though it had inside the four former TKK Schools. Then from the beginning of the year 2011, the School of Science and Technology was divided in four schools based on the four former TKK Faculties. The new schools are: School of Science, School of Engineering, School of Chemical Technology, and School of Electrical Engineering.

I was the Executive Dean of the School of Science and Technology, then I retired in summer 2011

CR: And before 2008 TKK was not structured in faculties?

MP: No, it was divided in 12 departments, and inside the departments the professorships were all quite independent. We decided to make the faculties and then, inside the faculties, we formed departments. At the end, instead of more than 100 almost independent financial units we reduced it to the third. It also created quite a lot of discussion, but quite soon people got used to it and

most of them said quite politely that it was something you had to do, and then in the Aalto world it became even better.

CR: Would you say that nowadays people feel identified with Aalto University or not yet?

MP: I think they feel identified with Aalto. As far as I know they really say that they belong to Aalto, they are Aalto University.

CR: Most probably thanks to this kind of specific culture policies like the factories or this kind of developments that aimed to create an Aalto brand.

MP: Yes, I think that has been an important part, and also of course the new administrative way of doing things. They create common thinking, common understanding and so. Of course, still my old professors are polite to me, and they say me the times under me were good times. So, the process of becoming an Aalto University member is going on. I think they feel positively with the current organization but they still feel that some things were better with the old one and some others not. But that is, everything cannot be good on an institution.

Results of the merger

CR: On the literature review I have found some results that should appear during a merger, so I would like to have also your opinion about merger results. One of these things is that a merger can create scale economies. Is it true?

MP: It can, but I think that in our case our expectations of scale economies were not very high, because even after the merger Aalto is not very big. We have different fields of education and research, so in a way we have not created a "mass production system of something". So, some scale economies in administrative processes have arisen and also of course in the processes of education and cooperation relations and so. But I don't think that we expected very much of what you call scale economies.

CR: What about with duplicities, do they exist yet or not?

MP: I think we don't have very much duplicities, and we through the renewal of the curriculum we have tried to ensure that same things are not in many places, but I think the university education and even research will always have some overlaps and duplications. In administrative processes, I think there are no duplications. But in that sense, I would say that with the integration of the Business School, both in education and research, have appear some things to be done at that respect, because of its connections with industrial engineering part, which also has management, logistic and those things that are also part of the business curricula. They have a joint platform for example for the IT field of business, so they have platforms to work on that.

CR: And would you say that Aalto has now a stronger academic profile than the one that had the former 3 universities?

MP: That is a good question. Of course, you could argue that each of the universities had a strong academic profile in its own field but, is it now stronger or weaker for the whole institution? I would say that overall Aalto academic profile is stronger than was the profile of the 3 universities. I would say so, but it is not necessary at the moment yet very much stronger. I'm pretty sure that Aalto is better known than any of the 3 universities were. But that is what should come.

CR: And would you also say that there is now a better academic integration and collaboration between the people because of the merger?

MP: I would say it is better

CR: And regardless that you said that it was not about restructuring the university, would you say that Aalto would reach a kind of rationalization of the educational profile of the university?

MP: That process is still going on. The restructuring continues by the nomination of the new professors and by defining the field where we want to be strong. But, that is not yet here, it takes time. It is going on and I'm sure it will also be one of the outcomes in the future. There is also a national process going on so all the technical universities have started discussing how to cooperate and which are the fields of working. Aalto has been very active in that. So in the long run these discussions will hopefully and probably lead to better profiles of the different engineering units in Finland and there will not be too much overlap.

CR: Is this guided by the Government?

MP: No, it is not guided by the government. Government is supporting but it's not guided by them. It is guided by the universities. We want in a way to detect where are we overlapping and assess if that overlap is needed or could be in a way specialized. Of course, for example, us and Tampere University of Technology we both have Mechanical Engineering and we will have Mechanical Engineering in the future as far as I've understand. What is inside Mechanical Engineering can perhaps be discussed: we don't need more than one place where we have aircraft technology because we don't produce very much aircrafts. And then the universities can, if they want, to do changes in the longer run. Mechanical engineering is here as an example, we have other common fields, for example IT is present in almost all engineering universities in Finland, and so on.

CR: Is this being done in a kind of formal structure? Are universities of technologies members of a kind of network of the technical universities?

MP: Yes, their presidents meet in a regular basis. That was already existing earlier. We had this kind of forum of the presidents of engineering universities, they have a couple of meetings a year to discuss common interests.

CR: Here probably, in the case of Aalto, as the 3 former universities were quite complementary in their academic profile, there was no need to rationalize the academic profile

MP: Yes, between those 3 fields, but inside those 3 fields it can be done. I don't know, I'm not involved on that process so I'm not sure about the level of discussions inside and what will come out of there. They have also different profiles already at the moment. I don't know if there will be that kind of development in the long run. Because the Ministry of Education is supporting that universities profile themselves clearly. As I mentioned, it gives prizes for good strategies in a way.

CR: So, there is a good understanding between the Ministry and the universities

MP: I think that the Ministry has not pushed very much so always universities are pleased with that approach. It is a kind of soft approach, because they are limiting resources more and more. Now that universities are autonomous also economically, if they do not well, they they have to take more and more loans and they can get even bankrupt. Universities are more interested on looking at this kind of things than before, because they now are fully responsible of their own economy.

CR: *But you still have State funds.*

MP: Yes, but State aid.

CR: *Is the main income from the university coming from the State?*

MP: Yes, there are no tuition fees, so the same amount of money as earlier comes from the State. The university reform did not change the level of the budget of the Ministry of Education. Now the universities are generating more resources from outside, because they have to take care of the premises and everything else in the economy. There is no guarantee that the State will help if you make deficit year after year. They will probably say “you cannot go like this”. It will probably say to the board of the university that something is wrong and that you cannot go on this way.

9.2.3 Entrevista Centrale-Supélec

Introduction

CR: *How are universities in France. Are they big enough to compete internationally?*

VF: I agree that we have smaller universities. There was a policy of splitting universities towards the regions.

You may also know that there is a new call for the Initiatives d'Excellence (IDEX) given to the authorities at the end of the month and there is a big battle at the moment about the project. Hervé Biauresser, the Director General of Centrale Supélec, has met with Jacques Bittoun, head of University Paris-Sud (Paris 11) to talk about this. They have to give back an answer to the Minister exactly today. I may say that the situation is a little bit complicated at the moment.



Imagen 3. Valérie Ferreboeuf y Carlos Ripoll durante la entrevista

CR: *Do they have to reapply to the IDEX program for Paris-Saclay?*

VF: Yes, because there was a first phase where you set the out layer, like how many members will the IDEX have, how many students, how the federation will work, which subjects will you focus on, and so on. The new call opens a new phase with an additional budget to propose something

new, something that shows that we are going to a new step of integration together. Of course, there are different possibilities.

CR: More integration of course, because University of Paris-Saclay is a very big conglomerate. There are a lot of different institutions.

VF: Exactly. The conglomerate is formed basically by universities and Grandes Écoles. Universities are usually big and mainly strong in research, while Le Grandes Écoles are very good on teaching focused on enterprise with professional goals. It is difficult to mix the two things. Universities are more about research while we are more about teaching, international teaching and professional skills in addition to the scientific skills. It is difficult to have the two sides of this in the same project.

CR: Talking about Centrale-Supélec, why do you think it was necessary to merge?

VF: The first reason is global competition. The process itself started more than 10 years ago. The idea of the merger between Centrale and Supélec comes from 2003. At that time, there was a diagnosis about Centrale, which was the one that made an assessment for this, that pointed out the main challenges we faced and provided some insights about what should be done to address those challenges. First of all, the assessment stated that we were too small to be seen at an international scale. It was true for teaching, but more true for research, where it was very clear that we hadn't the necessary critical size. Even the research was very good it was too small in size to compete internationally. So, we had to be bigger in terms of research, not only in one field but in several fields of science. Though the assessment was done for Centrale, it was also true for Supélec. The assessment also proposed potential solutions to address those weaknesses. The first option to become bigger was to specialize in fundamental sciences, and the second option was to become bigger by covering more disciplines. The first one was considered as the best one, and it was targeting a merge with École Normale Supérieure (ENS). The second one was a merger with Supélec that would widen the disciplines covered by the new institution, specially in terms of Information Technologies (IT), because at that time Centrale was not covering very well the IT and information system disciplines while Supélec yes. Formerly Centrale was good in mechanics, energy, and fields alike.

CR: Yes, I've read that both Centrale and Supélec were ranked as best engineering schools in France

VF: Yes, but it is a local ranking, we were not ranked by international ranking. Since last year, for the first time, we are being ranked by QS, but it is something very new, because as I said, we were not ranked internationally before the merger. Mainly because we didn't try to be ranked, but also because we were too small to be ranked. We had only 2.000 students, all on graduate programs, we don't have undergraduate programs, so it was too small in terms of teaching, and also labs were quite small as well. Basically, we said that if we wanted to succeed on the international competition, we have to be bigger and really good. The idea of merging came from that, and we started to explore the two options I mentioned: École Normale Supérieure and Supélec. With ENS we were not on the right time window, so the best option became a merger with another Grande École like Supélec.

CR: So the point is that the merger was necessary because of the global competition. You needed to have a critical mass of people in terms of students, academics and researchers.

VF: Exactly, at the very beginning it was the main rationale. Afterwards another rationale arises. You may notice that it was a long process, the first idea of the merger with Supélec comes from

2003 and it finally took place 10 years later. In between there were two Government initiatives. First it was the one called Pôle de Recherche et d'Enseignement Supérieur (PRES) then came the Communautés d'Universités et d'Établissements (ComUE). To make it simple, the PRES was replaced by the ComUE. They aim to promote integration between institutions linked with higher education and research, so the more integrated the institution becomes, the more funds the institution get from the Government.

CR: Why did appear later the University of Paris Saclay?

VF: Well, it appeared because there was a moment when the Government claimed that one of the problems in France is that “we have too many little things”, and it was followed by an immediate reasoning that said: “we have to rationalize the situation, we have to have bigger universities, so they will become ranked better at an international scale”. It was, in a way, the same reasoning we did earlier at Centrale, but done at a national scale. The former President, Nicolas Sarkozy, decided to promote the federation of universities, so they would become visible at an international scale. The first solution was called PRES, and it evolved later in ComUE initiatives. In our case, Centrale-Supélec, and all institutions that nowadays take part in Saclay, were asked if they wanted to participate on this federation. If we participated on the federation of course we could have the same brand, but we could also have some credits to do things together. The major incentive was the possibility to rise more funds.

CR: So, in the case of Centrale-Supélec the decision came mainly from the institutions, but in the case of Paris Saclay there was also a very big movement from the government.

VF: It may sound a bit strange, or even weird, to have Centrale-Supélec merging and also participating on a new federation like Paris Saclay. We detected since the beginning, that it was going to be too big, with quite a lot small participants, and all of them being very different among them. Having Centrale-Supélec was a first step, and it is not a contradiction with being at Paris Saclay, because it is something different, it is bigger and it is federation. With Centrale-Supélec we doubled our size, moving from 2.500 each to 5.000 in total. With Paris Saclay we jumped to 40.000 students, but we know that the collaboration inside is very difficult. The Government wants to integrate more and more the institutions inside Paris Saclay, but first of all they want to keep good research and they don't want to break the system of Grande Écoles, because it is very local and very French. It's a problem but it is also a strength at the local market, because we are very skilled people and we move quite fast. For instance, if you see Centrale-Supélec within 10 years, we started in Asia with Centrale Pekin, in India with Centrale Nanda and today with Centrale Morocco in Casa Blanca. We have a very high profile of students, very selective. In French universities, you can't select your students, so if we move everything to Paris Saclay we could not have any option to select our students. By selection I'm not talking about moneys or fees, I'm talking just about selecting the best students. To enter Centrale-Supélec you have to pass an exam, while in the French university system there is no way to do something like that. Also, the two schemes are very different: research vs teaching, selection vs no selection, high skilled students vs low skilled students.

CR: So, you mean that if you move to Paris Saclay you will not be able to select your students. Isn't it?

VF: That will be an issue to be addressed on the next step of Paris Saclay. If we integrate more we will have to address this problem. Of course, one of the subjects of the new IdEX is to deal with the problem of selection. I don't say that we are not going to select the students in Paris Saclay but, at the very beginning it is very clear that we don't have the same criteria for teaching,

selecting and many other things. We can't imagine what a process like this will become. It is a very slow process.

CR: Are both Centrale and Supélec public funded?

VF: That is complicated. In France, you have universities that are public. You also have Grande Écoles. Business, sciences. You have what we call... In France in engineering institutions you have Grand Écoles and you have privates. Privates are not best in class, but we go. You know in Centrale Supélec you have the bachelor. If you go to university you have the bachelor cycle. If you go to Grand École you have preparatory classes for 2 years, and then if you go to Engineering Schools. There is a competition, and then you go in Grand Écoles. Grand Écoles, maybe private or public, in business schools they are private mainly.

In sciences, Grand Écoles Scientific, they are public. The best in class, Grand Écoles, Polytechnic, Centrale. Supélec was private but administrated by the government. It was a kind of association.

CR: In the case of Centrale Supélec was it a kind of merge between a private institution and a public institution?

VF: The status of Supélec was private, but it was controlled by the Minister of Industry, so it's not really private as such. It is private because it was owned by an association, but with most of the money coming from the Government. What makes the situation more complicated is that, in France, Grand Écoles are monitored by different ministries. For instance, Polytechnic is supervised by the Ministry of Defense because, at the very beginning, it was part of the Armée, even their students still do military service, they are paid by the Government and they have to work during 10 years for the state. All engineering schools are monitored by the Ministry of Industry, except Centrale that is supervised by the Ministry of Education. It's a little bit complicated. After II World War, Centrale had to choose between Ministry of Industry or Ministry of Education to be monitored by. Centrale choose Ministry of Education, don't ask why, it's a fact, but it was a very bad choice. Several years ago, the Ministry of Education said "Ok, for each student at the university I will give, let's say, 100\$/year", and then they said "I will give the same for a student at an engineering school", so Centrale became very poor at that time. At the same time the Ministry of Industry was financing on its home basis needs its Grande Écoles, with the goal of developing the industry by providing better professionals through Grand Écoles. Centrale was also working for the industry but was treated as a university, with no consideration to the skills or the number of teaching given to the students. It was really unbalanced, because one week of lessons of teaching for students in Centrale would be 25 hours of teaching while students at the university have just 12 hours. It is not a criticism but it was not very well balanced.

However, the Ministry of Industry, so our monitoring Minister, always let Centrale have an administration at the board from industry, and always let us find financial resources with the industries. I would say, for instance, you say "I will give you 1.000€ per year and student, but you can manage with companies to get some more money and I allow you to have people from the private companies at your board. So, it is a private school managed by very traditional Ministry, but at the same time Centrale has always work with companies and is very linked with the business and the economy.

University merger models

CR: I understand that nowadays Centrale Supélec is an integrated institution. Did you consider some other models like a federation between the two institutions, an alliance or an association? What models did you consider when making the merge between Centrale and Supélec?

VF: Well, to be honest, I'm not sure that we made a very serious study about that. First you always have to consider that we were a very small institution with mainly one major courses, syllabus, the engineer track. We didn't have to federate much things, because for us basically the only one was to integrate together. We wanted to maximize the effect of the size, having one diploma, having unified labs, the same organization, mutualizing non-core business (what I call core business is research and education, non-core business is HR, administration, etc.). We considered it as two little very complementary enterprises. It is also finally mutualizing research to maximize size effects. So, we didn't spend too much on studying a federation because it appeared to us that basically we were doing the same things but on different branches of applied sciences. We were in mechanics and electrical engineering. The issues are now mix mechanics with electronic for instance, specially in the companies and even the research interface in the different areas. Perhaps it was a mistake that we did not spend much on models because we considered that federation was about bigger institutions or more diverse than what we were.

CR: So, you mean that nowadays École Centrale Paris does not exist as such and Supélec does not exist as Supélec so there is only Centrale Supélec. Isn't it?

VF: Yes and no. You know the case of Renault and Nissan. They are today Renault-Nissan but they still sell cars under two different brands: Renault and Nissan. At the moment, we are about to go into a single brand, that is the choice of Centrale Supélec, but we are still not too sure that the brand should be Centrale Supélec or another one. Currently, for instance, we register students as "Centrale engineers", because we have not yet unified the teaching. We are on a process of unifying the teaching. As I told you, the very first thing in Centrale and Supélec is the teaching, and then the research. It is not to say that research is not interesting, but we are well known on our market, and even at an international scale, because of our teaching. That, still, is not the case for research. For the moment, we are on the process of unifying the research. We started with the research. We have common labs made from Centrale and Supélec. We have also started the process of making one single engineering diploma that we will start on 2017. The administrative merge, that means creating one single institution Centrale Supélec, this administration merge, was done on the first of January of this year, 2015, so then the 1st of January 2015 there were no more Centrale or no more Supélec as an institution. One single institution in all non-core activities like the administration of institution. Now we are merging the core activities: teaching and research.

CR: So now you have one single institution, one president and one administration for the two. I assume that the new administration is mainly based on the two previously existing administrations.

VF: Yes, we have one HR Director or one Strategic Director.

CR: And you are still in the process of merging the curricula, but you have started with research because it is smaller and easier to merge. Isn't it?

VF: Yes

CR: So, this is the case of Centrale Supélec, but in the case of Paris Saclay I assume that it is a federation.

VF: Yes, it is a federation, but for the moment, and we are absolutely unwilling, we don't want to merge on a single institution. We don't agree on the terms of the policy, where the money comes from, etc. It is impossible to integrate 18 institutions. There are very different institutions: École Normale Superior, University Paris 11, Polytechnic, several Grand Écoles, Agro... For the moment is a federation but the university Paris 11 would like to be an integrated institution.

CR: *Is it the goal of the government or the goal of the university?*

VF: Well, it is the goal of the university (Paris 11), because the university said that "Ok, it will be fully integrated and because we are the biggest, we will be the leading model". It is like "you will join the university and we will lead the board". Sorry to say that in some kind of really trivial terms but we are not interested on that model.

CR: *Like a kind of absorption.*

VF: Exactly. And we don't want that because if we do that we don't know how are we going to stay excellence in terms of teaching, and also in terms of answering to the needs of the companies, having very skilled students, going abroad and so on. We know, by experience, that universities in France are not proficient at doing all of that. So, it's not saying "we don't want to be with you" it's just we know that there are some parts that we know how to deal with, so if they are not delegated to us, it will be a mess.

CR: *So nowadays your brand is Centrale Supélec but you are also participating in University Saclay, and you are run as University Saclay internationally.*

VF: Ah, that is a very important point. On the beginning, Paris Saclay, one of its goals, the ComUE Paris Saclay, was to be ranked. There were some simulations about the Shanghai Ranking. After the simulation, it was said that if Paris Saclay were ranked, the university would be ranked 20 in the Shanghai Ranking. So, everyone was interested on Paris Saclay as an opportunity to be ranked and to benefit from Shanghai Ranking reputation. Ending June last year, the Shanghai Ranking organization just said that Paris Saclay could not be ranked. The ComUE was not eligible to be ranked in Shanghai. You know why? They said that they have no evidence that we were enough integrated or even enough federated to be ranked as one institution "Saclay". One of the major rationale, if not the major rationale to make Paris Saclay, the 18 institutions to participate in Paris Saclay, was to be ranked let's say 20 in the Shanghai Ranking, but that option just went out. So, since then, since this summer, it became very complicated because of the whole project had lost its goal... so what now? The current target of the federation was not enough for Shanghai Ranking but to some extent the integration of 18 institutions was not an option. It destroys a lot of values from each particular member. About 13 members from 18 didn't want an integrated merge. So, there is a problem.

CR: *And how do you plan to solve it?*

VF: Well, I must say that Centrale Supélec wants to be part of the federation of Paris Saclay, so we pushed an idea. If you have seen Paris Saclay there are different colleges. There is the College of Engineering, the College of Basic Sciences... Well, we would like to make a strong federation with the other École Nationale within the College of Engineering.

CR: *Is Centrale Supélec the College of Engineering in Paris Saclay?*

VF: There are 8 colleges in total, one of them is the College of Engineering, were we take part. We are also taking part on the College of Basic Sciences for math and physics, but Paris 11 are

legitimated to lead this. In Paris Saclay you have 5-6 École Nationales, including Polytechnic. Polytechnic have a problem, because they started saying “engineering science is for the others, we are very good at basic sciences, so we want to lead the College of Basic Sciences”. Unfortunately, they didn’t see that they didn’t meet the criteria to lead that college because they don’t have, for instance, Nobel Prizes. In summary, Polytechnic has not enough research power to be head of the College of Basic Sciences. When the situation turned into this, they said, as a second move, “we want to be the head of the College of Engineering”, but there are others already involved on that college. I’m sorry, but that is some kind of reality, Polytechnic is in the middle of nowhere in Paris Saclay.

CR: Is Centrale Supélec leading the Engineering College?

VF: We are not too much leading but, at the beginning, Polytechnic said “Ok, go there Centrale Supélec and lead that, because you are the biggest one”. Perhaps you know that École Polytechnic is mainly formed by applied schools. You make three years in École Polytechnic and one more year on another school. Anyway today, for sure, Polytechnic does not want to be mixed in University Paris 11, they don’t want to be dissolved in that, but they can’t be the leader of the College of Basic Sciences. There is a little bit of policy on all of that, and tomorrow the Minister of Defense will talk about Polytechnic where he will push a vision that pursues all the Grand Écoles to follow Polytechnic. That is just politics, but the real issue is that no one in the Grand Écoles want to be dissolved at the university, because it is not efficient. On the other hand, the federal colleges have to be a federation that works. Today the issue is how this colleges could work not as fully integrated institutions but as a really efficient middle size federation.

CR: Do you have students graduated from University Paris Saclay?

VF: At the moment, it depends on your diploma, of your course. If it is a PhD it has been all uniformed and today PhDs are given by University Paris Saclay. There has been a unification at the doctoral level. The agreement is that the PhD is from University Paris Saclay, but given by Centrale Supélec, given by Polytechnic, by...

CR: But students are from Centrale Supélec for instance, and they get then the certification from Centrale Supélec, not from University Paris Saclay, isn’t it?

VF: Yes and no, because you have to be part of the Doctoral School of Paris Saclay to give PhDs. If you want to provide the Engineering diploma you don’t have to be student of Paris Saclay. Well, administratively yes because University Paris Saclay provides the student card.

CR: So, it means that in real life students are from Centrale Supélec, and academics also, because they are paid by Centrale Supélec not by Paris Saclay. Paris Saclay is kind of umbrella that tries to put under it different institutions. Paris Saclay also has a president but with more a representation role than an executive role. It is a federation and it is still on the process to see how everybody can benefit from that alliance. Isn’t it?

VF: Exactly, and to find the best model that could be good for research purposes, international development and professional development in relation with company needs. Not only on the side of research but on the side of teaching.

CR: When Centrale and Supélec merged did you follow some other merger processes in the world? Did you have any role model in the process of merge?

VF: Strangely we did not compare to other merger in education, but more in economy, in business. Well I said we did not study other models, it is not true. We studied other models but in the business sector. We got consultancy working with us at the very beginning. The Boston Consulting Group was very close to us. At the beginning 2003, they worked on the design of the strategic plan for Centrale together Hervé Biais. BCG studied the options to address the issues of size and internationalization. They also studied the options for merging and compared it to what could happen on the private sector.

CR: *So, BCG gave you some kind of consultancy in how to merge. Isn't it?*

VF: In terms of what to do, merging or different kind of alliances. With who, who would be the target and how.

CR: *Did you follow the recommendations?*

VF: In deed yes, we discussed with BCG and other firms. It is quite particular from Centrale that former students from Centrale or Supélec are partners at BCG and they often work as alumni pro bono with us. From time to time, every 2 or 3 years, they work with the Director of Centrale and other directors to change the strategy options. The document they produced is private. It is not really a statement from BCG about what should we do. We worked together in some kind of active way about partners, options, and give some benchmark from outside. It is a common process. We often talk of us like "sparring partners", they deal with the Board of Centrale as "sparring partners". It is like a blue team. We want to test some ideas, they work with BCG or with Mc Kinsey to try things.

CR: *There is a lot of literature about mergers in the private sector but not so much about mergers in higher education. Did you find useful that consultancy? Was the private sector model applicable to Centrale?*

VF: I think so. From my experience, well I have worked in the industry sector and I have lived several mergers. At the beginning, I was assistant engineer in the field of automatic trains. After that I went to consultancy business and I did some studies from one sector to another. I think it was very relevant to point out the benefits from the merger experience in other sectors. And yes, it was applicable, because in term of core business, mutilizing functions, is relevant. I think is more relevant, and it is a paradox, than to compare to traditional university, because the model of an engineering school is very different to the one in the university. The size is very different even the monitoring is very different, the activities are more competitive than research, though it is true that research is being more and more competitive.

Maybe it was a mistake not to consider other models in higher education. I don't know, perhaps it was not too clever, because there are some questions about results of the process of a merger that are not really finished. Perhaps we could overcome better the difficulties we are facing today in Centrale Supélec if we had made some research about mergers in universities.

I think that considering the private sector was a really good scheme to address international competition, changing business models and economic models. Today there is a real issue that what the government give us each year is less and less while the expenses of HR are growing. There is a real problem of business model and how we can survive. We can't decide on the tuition fees. With Centrale Supélec they accepted that we increase the tuition fees, but in small amount.

CR: Did you have some kind of external pressure to decide to integrate?

VF: Not really. It is a common trend with Paris Saclay, but if we said we don't move and we will follow the trend of Paris Saclay nobody would have said anything, except that there would be a project coming from the two heads of Centrale and Supélec. The former president of Supélec, Mr. Braso, he is retired now, he had this vision that Supélec could not stay at his own. His last action before retiring was to make this merge happen. It was very difficult for him because he had some sort of internal conflict. From one side he wanted this merge, but at the same time he was also very conservative about what the assets of Supélec were. It was for him some kind of antagonist choice, but in the end, he decided to push the institution to do that. I will caricaturize it he "gave", in a way, Supélec to the President of Centrale. It was not really like that but it has been felt a little bit like that by the people of Supélec. A little bit like if he were giving Supélec to the people of Centrale. Putting aside this kind of "psychological" thing, the reality was that the will of the merge was a common goal of the heads of both schools. It was a decision and they tried to find some sponsors to support that decision, and as it came from the heads of Centrale and Supélec they found some good sponsors. First supporter was the Government, because they were really approving any initiative that goes into more integrated institutions. So, we could say that they were really supporting this idea, but not pushing. And to some extent they facilitated the merge.

CR: How did they facilitate the merge? Did they put some incentives?

VF: They were for sure not against the merger, they facilitated the administrative side of things. For instance, when you merge a public institution with a private one, with two different ministries and the different obligation you have with salaries, it is a nightmare. Just helping to simplify all of this and making it happen in terms of loans is a big support. They also agreed to increase a little bit tuition fees and secondly, they gave us a little amount of money for the process, it was 500.000€. It was very small, nothing comparable to the real cost of the merger.

CR: But nowadays from which ministry Centrale Supélec depends from?

VF: From the two, Ministry of Industry plus Ministry of Education. We have on the board people from both ministries.

CR: And do you still have the private association?

VF: No, their association, well there was some kind of procedure of closing the association. They accepted to solve it in the public status. The private association for Supélec does not exist anymore. We are a public school, a public institution, with two heads, the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Industry, so making the two-status become one it was really complicated and in that term the government was a real support. If they hadn't made a big effort to find the new status everything would have been broken, because the two status could not be managed together.

CR: Can we say that there was consensus between the 2 institutions and also with the government?

VF: Both institutions needed the approval from the ministries to merge. The big picture was agreed. "Let's do our best to make it happen. It makes sense that those 2 institutions become one

so let's help them to have the best compromise in terms of status, tuition fees, works, students, delegate unions, etc.”.

CR: Did you have to present a project for the merger?

VF: Oh yes, several times to the Ministry and our boards. We had to convince the Ministry. Well they supported the idea but they wanted that the way we presented was ok with the Unions, the students, not too much expensive and that we become public. Things like that. We had to present plans to the Ministry. The status, the plans, the new status was discussed with the Ministry but we had to propose and set up something that they could accept. Then we had to propose to the two boards of schools, because there were two boards of administrators and the two boards with many alumni from Supélec at Supélec and many alumni from Centrale at Centrale had to agree about the merge.

CR: So, they had to agree at the level of each institution and also at the level of the Government, isn't it?

VF: Yes.

CR: And how did you proceed, first with the institutions and then with the Government or first the Government and then the institutions?

VF: We did it separately but at the same time. While we were having discussions, we announced the process. The common goal of making one school was accepted by the boards separately and also by the Government. Then we had to deal with each part about the concrete steps of how to do it in practice. In fact, we had 3 parts to convince: the board of Supélec with private companies and alumni from Supélec, the same from Centrale and the Government. The Government was coordinating very well.

CR: Was there a merge team? Who was member of that team?

VF: Mainly it was a team appointed by the two institutions, so it was the 2 presidents and the 2 Secretary General dealing with legal affairs. Because at that time it was not a question of making a vision, it was really a legal question: what to do with the status, mixing public and private and so on. So, as the Secretary General are really skilled on those subjects made sense that they were part of the team and propose something.

CR: So, I assume there was already a clear consensus about the mission, isn't it?

VF: Oh yes, it started in 2004. It was stayed in the board with the two CEO and with big sponsors coming from alumni. Well, basically it was the head of BCG and the 2 CEOs at an executive level. At that time, the 2 schools were separated and nobody in Supélec and Centrale was really considering the subject as such. They went very far when they said “well, we are going to merge” because they had a really small team around them which asses the strategic issues and the feasibility issues. With this team, they convinced most of the people in their boards in each institution. The boards gave their support and they went into the process of making it step by step.

In between 2008 and 2012, during 4 years there were very warm discussions between the two heads of Centrale and Supélec to make things happen. You have to understand that it is a very slow process. It started in 2004 with a kind of kick off and 4 years later they decided “well we are going on a process of real merging”. That is a milestone. Between 2008 and 2012 directors from both Centrale and Supélec appointed an independent project leader to make them agree on the project. It was not BCG, it was not Centrale and it was not Supélec. He was an engineer really

independent. He was not going around the 2 institutions. His only purpose was to make Alan Bravo, the former director of Supélec and Hervé Biais agree on what the merge would be on the headlines of the process. I think that without this project manager leading the process, the merge would have not happened. He was facilitating very well the process. He took the two of them and said “now you have to agree and I will not let you go until you agree”. I don’t know if it is something relevant or something you often see, but it’s the way it worked here.

CR: So, we can say that in the case of Centrale Supélec it was not forced. Not by the government, not by rankings, by anything.

VF: The rankings were part of the rationale but it was not forced. There was no external push.

Context and Government influence

CR: Do you think the Government had a goal in the case of the merge of Centrale and Supélec?

VF: Yes. In fact, as I mentioned, the Government would like that higher education in France become more integrated. We know they tried something with the ComUE but they were not very much satisfied. Today the ComUE, anywhere in France whether in Saclay or Brittany, anywhere, are very new and results are yet to come, but it is difficult to force people to work together. So, for them achieving Centrale Supélec was some kind of an example, a good example of good practice. They approved it and they liked how it was made, not only in cooperation or federation, but on a fully integrated merge.

CR: Do you think mergers are applied as a general answer to the problems of higher education in France?

VF: Yes, and there are two sides behind this. First, of course the rankings and the visibility on an international scale, because it helps on attracting the best students all over the world and becoming more proficient. The other thing is to be more efficient on the productivity side. I mean sometimes you are more efficient because you can achieve scale economies. The fact is that universities are already quite big, so I don’t think that the purpose of the merger is to focus on the size effect. It is more about the rankings, about productivity. The truth is that schools like Grande Écoles and so on are very small and are public funded. When you meet with, for instance, HR department and all support functions, there could be for sure some productivity gains and some scale effects that could help on overcoming the public financial struggle that we are suffering.

Basically, the Government strategy is to integrate more through the ComUEs, that’s what they thought. Big reforms are done on regime base size. The ComUEs are also leading to big institutions, and the government, I don’t know why, is pushing that through mergers. They know that the researchers and people from private sector should work together, and that we don’t have strong governance. In the end the result is that there is a vision that we should concentrate more to become global, and the tool that the Government found is the ComUE. It was like “let’s organize at a regional level, and then if some other institutions want to go further, like Centrale Supélec did, fine”.

CR: So ComUE is not a merger, isn’t it?

VF: No, it is not a merger, it is a kind of association, with a President, it is more a kind of federation, it is not an integration. It is so loose that even Shanghai Ranking said it is not enough integrated to be treated as a single institution, even in terms of federation. I must say that I don’t know if it is

very fair. Frankly speaking, when I consider other models for institutions like in Australia, in Mexico or in other parts of the world, I don't see a big difference. Sometimes I think they are very similar to what we have in Paris Saclay. In China, there are different institutions that are under the same university name, but as you know they work quite separate. I don't know if the assessment from the Shanghai Ranking "we will not rank you" talking about Paris Saclay as a whole, is fair.

Rankings are becoming more like Standard and Poors and indexes like that. There are 3 agencies at the world and they do what they want. Government take too much attention to the rankings and not so much to the institution. Anyway, we could say that mergers are not a kind of general solution, but they are part of the answer, and it is a good signal for the government.

CR: Would you say, in social terms, that there has been a good return of investment? If so, can we measure it?

VF: The answer to the question is "not yet". For the moment, we know that there has been a lot of social problems. The way of solving them is that when you have two institutions or two components merged, the people get very worried about what is going to happen. Questions about how are they going to get the best of the 2. So basically, is more cost. If it is about social terms, about mixing the research too, the efficiency of the institution, I would say not yet, really not yet.

CR: But when I say "social terms" I mean if the society, if the stakeholders, the people that is not really part of the institution, are feeling that something good is happening with the merge

VF: Today I would say not yet. We are in the most difficult part of the process. We have met all the difficulties. The new processes don't work at the moment, they are not very clear and there are many different things to solve. We don't have the common core business in term of training. It is still Centrale engineers, Supélec engineers... We are going to move together, but we are still at separate campuses, so there are huge things to gain benefits, but people don't work together actually. Well, I said we have a common structure, we have common heads, but the teams are split in Supélec and Centrale. I've leaved several mergers in the private sector and I know by experience that when you have two companies that merge and they are in different sites it is very complicated to gain benefits. So really, I'm not trying to avoid the question, but we are still in the process and we need 2 or 3 years to achieve this merger. It is our first year, and it has been a big angle, the status of the people, really you will be paid differently, you cannot see the benefits on the daily work. You see you have two different system to cope with. It is complicated.

CR: Why do you say that now is the most complicated phase of the merge?

VF: Because we have just put things together and we have to make it work. The process has been really... well, we did not prepare the merge to work. The thing is status based it was read on the papers, it was really social.

CR: Did you have any discussion about that?

VF: Yes, but I think that compared to a merger in the private sector it was very light, very small.

CR: Which would be the main differences you would see between a merger of private companies and a merger of higher education institutions?

VF: Dedicated teams to the merge. In most of the private sector mergers, the possibilities, the freedom, is higher. Here we are more or less "public people", so you cannot say 10 less here, 10

more there. You are very much constrained on the human resources side. On the other hand, basically, research and training institutions are a matter of the human resources. You just sell services. You don't have physical factories, neither raw materials. The only asset is people. You can't twist people, so I think the things you can change in a research and training institution, in France, is very small. You also have a very small team in terms of change management, leading the process because we have complexity but, at the same time, we don't have much resources. The whole project of Centrale Supélec is 100 million euro per year. It is very small.

CR: Do you have a part of your budget dedicated specifically to the merger process?

VF: Yes but, as you can guess, is very small. When you have 100 million euro for the whole institution, the amount of money dedicated to the merge is very small. Of course, I mentioned that consultancy firms worked with us, but they do it "probono", for free, because otherwise we could not afford to pay for their services.

CR: In mergers, you need to invest money. Who is investing money in the case of Centrale Supélec?

VF: No one. We have to use our own budget to make it happen. Well, we tried to increase our budget specially throughout donations, fund raising. We do things to increase our budget. Of course, there was a campaign of fund raising among the alumni to sell the project. To raise dedicated firms to the project. It has been done as well. It is incredible because when we said to the Government "ok, you want to support us, but will you give us some more money?", the answer was to give us 500.000€ one time. It is like nothing. We asked them to let us increase more significantly tuition fees, but the answer was no. Sometimes regions pay more than the government, because they are usually pressing to lower the taxes and to cut expenses, but on region side you can have more money, and specially more and more is coming from the regional budget. The Government let the regions manage their universities, so regions can set up their own policy for higher education. It is tricky because in some way, the governments raise as much as taxes as it used to be, so the taxes go up and the responsibilities go down.

CR: Were rankings and globalisation a key topic that highly influenced the decision to create Centrale Supélec?

VF: Absolutely. In the end this is the top one reason. The second one is to be more effective in terms of research programs for industry (mechanical + information system they work together for Renault).

CR: How other universities in France reacted when the Government expressed its interest for the Centrale Supélec merger?

VF: Probably good. Officially the other institutions were neutral or they said "it was a good thing", because nobody could express that it was not the thing to do. They were positive mainly because the Government was in favour of it, so they didn't want to upset the Government. The thing is that when I discuss with my colleagues from other institutions, they usually envy us because they would like to achieve what we did. Most institutions, specially Grande Écoles, they feel and know they are too small, and they would like to be in the same kind of process, but they only see the nice picture, they don't see the drawbacks. At the same time, I think only one institution is not really happy with our merger, and it is Polytechnic, because they see Centrale Supélec, Centrale + Supélec, as a stronger threat than when it was Centrale and Supélec as independent

institutions. They think they are number one, more or less, so Centrale Supélec becoming bigger, becoming more international, becoming engineering disciplinary, we become a threat for them. They see us as a threat specially in Paris Saclay, because it is against the supremacy of the Polytechnic system. Polytechnic would like to be the head of the whole thing, and if there is Centrale Supélec it becomes more difficult to be the head. They are currently half the size of us, so basically it is just like Centrale or Supélec when we were alone. They don't reach 2.000 students.

CR: How was the reaction of Polytechnic to the merger?

VF: Their strategy is in Paris Saclay. In the spring, we had discussions with Polytechnic to try to work together as common leaders of Engineering Schools. We urged everybody that we would be École Polytechnic of Paris Saclay. So, at the moment is a bit complicated.

CR: Do you think that the Government would be interested on a merger between Centrale Supélec and Polytechnic?

VF: We really don't know and that's why, at the moment, the question of Paris Saclay is very complicated. We really don't know if the Government will say "I'm tired of all that mess, I will make a big university and merge everything with Paris 11 under the university model" or if they will say "Ok, I'm tired of that mess so all the schools, all the engineering schools, will go with Polytechnic and there will be one engineering school in Paris Saclay", that's it. Another option is if the Government say "try to do something that works and I will give my support to the most efficient model based on federation". There are basically 3 options. The first one is an integrated university, a classic university with big research. The second one is a university and a merge of all the engineering option. The last one would be one federation, but we will have to cope with a very complicated model, and that I don't think Centrale Supélec will follow the third option. We have to make it clear what will be the advantage to have a federal university rather than having one strong integrated model based on university model or on one big Grande École.

CR: What do you think will be the reaction of the Government to Shanghai Ranking decision of not to rank Paris Saclay?

VF: There has been no reaction yet, but perhaps it will influence the decision among the 3 options I mentioned before. I don't know how far the Government wants to go. The question is how Shanghai Ranking will influence the attraction of Paris Saclay. I think the Government is not sure if the Shanghai Ranking is the must have and will be a key for the competitiveness of Paris Saclay. First of all, you have other rankings, like the QS, TIME... They are really relevant, and we know that, so I think the Government is aware of that. The Government knows Shanghai Ranking is nice but is not the key for competitiveness in the international market. So, the question is "ok, we know that Shanghai Ranking is nice, but which model will be relevant to compete better in a national perspective and become more efficient so we can train highly educated people for the country and the companies". Nobody knows the answer. For sure we know that we must integrate more. The Government have to push more integrated solution, but the question is that the Government has different parties. As I've said to you the Government has Ministry of Defense, which is behind Polytechnic. Ministry of Education, who wants to push an elite, but this elite has to be still leading, so they push Polytechnic. They also say "you must go for the best efficiency, promote higher education among as much students as possible". The Ministry of Industry says "I must get the best adapted trainees and graduates for my companies". All of this is connected, but there are different goals and, in some cases, they look contradictory among themselves.

Sometimes it is so true that when you see the objectives from the different Ministries Hervé Biais said "I must put the different Ministers work together", and it adds an additional complexity to the process.

CR: We also talked about the economic incentives from the Government, and you mentioned there were not enough economic incentives from that side. What would you consider enough incentives to make the merger happen?

VF: Well, first of all the incentives should be proportional to the cost. We have calculated it and presented an estimation to the Government. There was no reaction from the Government to that figure. They only said "Ok, that is your idea we let you the autonomy to do it. We have some administrative that they would say no and] If Centrale agrees on supporting the idea was already, being a public institution, was already a kind of big step from the point of view of the Government. They said "ok rise your money and do it". It has been a constraint not having those additional resources, but I would say not faster, because we have an agenda. For instance, moving to Saclay can't be faster. We have the schedule of Saclay where we have, for instance, to make new buildings, make a new campus, building a new syllabus, a 3 years' program of engineering... It is complicated, it is not building an airplane but is complicated. But I think the social problems, so the problem, the processes failures, for instance, all finance teams had a lot of problems. For instance, in private, when you buy something and you have to put it in your accounts is a different process in public than in private. Those processes are not really studied, tested... The plug in is a mess. I think that with money that would be easier.

Selection of partners for the merger

CR: We were talking at the beginning a little bit about partners but, did you consider other partnership besides Centrale and Supélec? Was Polytechnic an option?

VF: No, because there are legal constrains that has never been addressed and there is also a clear rivalry between the 2 institutions. The other option was mainly École Normale Superior, which is small but really relevant in terms of research.

CR: Who started to look for partners, Centrale or Supélec?

VF: École Centrale.

CR: So, École Centrale was considering to merge, and Supélec, regardless it was not its initiative, became more like the "ideologist of the merger".

VF: I really don't think so. For instance, Centrale has always had a different strategy than Supélec. They, I don't know why, were considering other options to have resources. They don't have functions like development director or strategic director. They have no chance to change a syllabus. They were on their trend with a very hierarchical functioning. The head was Andre and everybody executed what he decided. There weren't things like considering different scenarios, reforms, or things like that. Supélec has not changed in 30 years. It is not a criticism, it is just the truth. In the same time, we had several reforms in Centrale, with many things stopped. It was not the case in Supélec: they were doing the same thing year after year. But I must say also that they are more efficient, more professional in what they do. I do not say that Centrale is better, I say that Centrale make tries, sometimes in a very hectic way, and considers new options regardless

it had the same director for 25 years. It is important to remark that 10 years ago the director wanted to impulse a new dynamic, he was willing to have a strategic plan, a vision.

CR: In the case of Paris Saclay there are different types of partners besides training institutions. In the case of École Centrale did you consider to merge with a research institute?

VF: Basically, for us, École Normale Superior, is a research institute. It also has a teaching activity, but the main stream of their activity, their core activity, is research. It is really particular because they have a high-level profile in research. Their ratio of Nobel Prize per person is very high. They have, from time to time, one Nobel Prize in physics. Marie Curie or Jacques Sacar, for instance, were on École Normale Superior. If they are not in University Paris 11, they are in École National Superior, ENS. So, for us the option to merge with ENS was an option to merge with a research institution. It was our first choice. Honestly, I don't know why it did not happen. Maybe it was because at that moment I think Supélec was more willing to do it and looked more feasible.

So, in summary we had 2 top options. The very first was a merger with a research center. For us a research center is not a big university, in our case it was ENS, the École Normale Superior. It was very important because ENS is really focused in research and has a little training activity. I don't know how much you know about ENS, but they are very good in basic sciences, like physics, technical sciences and engineering sciences. They only take 30 to 70 students per year. It is very small. By merging with École Normale Superior you get the very best of the very best scientist in France. They have top class labs. They are very few people but they are very good. When they recruit students, they are aiming to prepare their own scientists. Basically, when you are entering ENS you are probably doing PhD or high class research.

With Supélec the merger was more focused on being complementary in terms of the curriculum, though it also made the research team bigger.

CR: Would it make sense to have an international merger?

VF: I don't know how to address this question because in theory, as we are public, I don't know if the Government would allow that. Even the Government finance less than half of our budget, they can ban it from a national perspective. From a European perspective maybe, but it has to be relevant to the European policy. I think it would be interesting but, at the same time, it does not look feasible for the Government to put it in practice. To have common programs with other international institutions could also be possible, but a full merge I don't think so. If we were private perhaps it could be possible, but being public we are serving the country because we are paid with citizens' taxes.

CR: Did you notice some kind of hostility between people from École Centrale and Supélec?

VF: Yes, but it depends of the different peoples' profile. Generally speaking, merging two institutions frightens people, and our case was not an exception. Of course, it is different from one community to another. From a research perspective I would say no, because researchers usually work in communities, some of them participate on projects from the Centre National of Research Scientific, that basically is a public research body, some of them work at Supélec but they are employees of CNRS and some of them work at Centrale but they are employees of CNRS too. So, for people being full time researchers there is no big change, the problem is more about how can I distribute budget to a bigger community for different areas. So, there was no problem with researchers. On the training side it is more difficult, because you have two different profiles in the

engineering: engineering at Supélec and engineering at Centrale. The truth is that there is a strong culture about that. We are now in the process of addressing this hostility in the training part. The third community would be people working in the support functions, like Human Resources, Finance, etc. They are afraid of the merger because as a result of gains in efficiency, when you are on a support function you may think you are no more necessary, so you could lose your job. So, hostility in this community came from that. So, you have researchers with no problems in Centrale Supélec but with some issues in Saclay, then the training side where people say that they have very efficient model and with a strong identity of each institution. We are mainly a training institution, in fact we started to deliver PhDs in the 70's, so it is really new. There is a kind of competition in the two models for merging and the people working in support functions that would be frightened. In the end, what is amazing is that, in the paper, from the point of view of a consultant, the complementary perspective of the merge is ok. We select the same students and we send students to the same companies, the companies are happy with students. But it is also true that on the basis, the culture of the two institutions is very different. I mean you have an extrovert culture in Centrale while an introvert culture in Supélec for instance. You have process culture in Supélec and trial and fail culture in Centrale, so you need to do big efforts to put people working together, know each other, share spaces, building a new culture. The cultures are very different, and if you don't take that into consideration these cultural differences, you will fail.

CR: Are those differences taken into consideration in the case of the merger between Centrale and Supélec?

VF: It is happening but it has not been anticipated. It has some complications that you don't face in companies. In companies when you have an international merger, for instance you have Siemens from German buying a part of TRA, a transportation system subsidiary making the same things as Siemens transportation systems. First of all, you have national cultural gaps. Those are German, those are French... That can be difficult. You know intercultural management can be difficult. You have a cultural gap, but in the end, you have the culture of the company if you take all stands Alstom transportation and Antra, they are on the same business, they are French but they were two very different companies and the merger were very complicated between the two. Sometimes you have less synergies in the paper but if the culture really fits everything is easier. The learning from the merger between Centrale and Supélec is that we did not forecast, we did not anticipate, how different were the cultures of both institutions. I think is great to overcome these difficulties, but it will take some time.

CR: Was there a role for companies and private sector in the merger of Centrale and Supélec or it was something just between the two institutions?

VF: It was from the two institutions but, on the other hand, if major sponsors had been opposed to the merger, it would have not happened. So, first of all as I mentioned to you there are company leaders, executives, at the board from both Centrale and Supélec. Supélec itself was owned by an association which belong half to the public electricity company of France, EDF. So, if EDF had been totally opposed to the merger it would have been very complicated. It was the same in the case of Centrale, because the majority of the board of Centrale is composed by executives that are alumni from the school, so we had to be credible enough about the project. It was a sum project, it is project that make sense.

CR: But did they have a special role at the merger?

VF: Just at the board, but they were not part of the merger team.

About the merger process

CR: And what about the team in charge of the merger negotiation process? Which characteristics would you remark from that process?

VF: First, as I've said to you, it is very slow. It is just a question of giving enough time to let a process based on individuals mature. There is no business push, there is no real business proposition. There is nothing like "we want to take this position" or "we want to be bigger". We cannot force the independence of the two directors at the two schools. So, first of all it was very slow because there was no pressure coming from any place. Secondly, the core team together with the facilitator kept the target, and it was certainly the key success factor. It was difficult to keep the objective of this process, mainly because when there is a new difficulty on the process it stops and nothing happens. It is necessary that somebody move forward the process to make things happen.

CR: Do you think there was a negotiation team?

VF: I think the base of the negotiation was before Andre retired. At that moment, when even the merger had not already happened, he suggested to the board of Supélec that Herve, the Director of Centrale, became the director of Supélec. We had a common head but there were still two different institutions. It is not quite common in mergers to have this situation. This is certainly the opposite, it is quite uncommon to have the two institutions working separately but only one CEO. There was also a negotiator, a facilitator, that made the project feasible. The facilitator worked on the process even before the CEO of Supélec said "yes I want to merge and I will support Centrale to lead this". It is not so much a team, it is more about a kind of project manager.

CR: So, if there were a team, it would be the two directors and the project manager, isn't it?

VF: Before the effective merger it was the team, and after the effective merger it was also included the Secretary Generals. We entered on a process where each director took part in their own side of the project.

CR: Do you think that somebody should be on the team and wasn't?

VF: The operative people was the facilitator plus the team of Secretary Generals. Honestly if the team would have not included the two directors it would not happened.

CR: And nowadays is somebody taking care of the process? Is it good or bad?

VF: No, and I don't think it is bad because we monitor transformation programs. Each director, as part of their hierarchical role, is responsible of one or two transformations programs. For instance, you have the transformation of training, transformation of research, transformation of the business model, transformation of the operational processes and so on. I think it was not necessary to have people in charge of the daily operations in order to have a transformation role but it was a big work. In terms of governance it is pretty sound. Personally, I did that during, I had my hierarchical role in entrance and I had to build the new platform in products, I was leading different people in different business. I had a colleague that was in charge of the distribution channels, doing something new. So, I think that not having a dedicated team is not necessarily a bad thing but you have to have enough resources, and I mean in quantitative terms. In quality, you have to know basically what is a merge and what is a transformation process. The problem is not about having a dedicated team, the problem is that collectively, in an institution of research and training, we don't have the knowledge and practice to lead a merge.

CR: When you say “transformation processes”, do you mean that you have formal processes to make the merge happen?

VF: Yes and no. In fact, a research and training institution is not a company, so it is not dealing on the same basis as a company with key performance indicators. Process design, managing performance, managing transformation and change, is not very common in higher education institutions. In private companies, in service companies or industrial, you have KPIs, design processes, transformation processes, change management and all of this. So, when it is about merging we do it with no problem. When you are dealing with a higher education institution, all of this is not part of its core business, so it is difficult to manage the process of merging because you have to deal with these KPIs, processes, change management and all of this.

CR: And what do you mean by “not having the right people for a merge”?

VF: I mean that in the case of Centrale, it was not question of not having a dedicated team, it was a question of identifying the skills that would be needed in terms of change management teams to be efficient for the merge. But anyway, I know that we don't have the skills for change management, so I don't know if we need to have a dedicated team but, at least we should have some skills, from the institution or from outside the institution, to get change management resources.

CR: What are the main signs that identify a kind of “pre-merger” phase?

VF: Making the decision to go into the process of deciding “we are going to merge”, it was from 2004 till 2008. From 2008 till 2012 we went to another phase pushed by the decision “we are going to really do it”. It was about 10 years, and it was absolutely too slow. For me the learning is that, thinking on the issues that higher education has to face, it is not possible to wait for 10 years since the moment you see the opportunity until the moment when you decide to do it. It is too long, so for us in France and most probably elsewhere for higher education, is to make the necessary conditions that makes things happen faster. Perhaps Centrale Supélec is a very bad example. I mean somewhere else it would have been much faster, I don't know. For me the learning is that yes there is a pre-merger phase, I see it, but as we talked it lasted more than 4 years. This is definitely too long.

CR: So, the process to create Centrale Supélec took about 10 years, isn't it?

VF: Yes, 10 years.

CR: So, the merger was part of a strategic plan coming from the discussion of Centrale with BCG, isn't it?

VF: Yes, the merger was a strategic option, a strategic project. But at the same time, we had another strategic option about setting new campuses abroad, and when I say abroad is in Asia. we started in parallel the process to open Centrale at Beijing and the project of merging with Supélec. The consulting from BCG was only for Centrale, they were not part of the process, they participated only at the beginning. Centrale decided its strategic plan partly based on the discussion with BCG and then it made its own plan, presented to the board and decided the merger as part of the strategic plan. The strategic plan remarked the problem of the critical size and the merger was the solution together with going abroad with international expansion not only at an European scale. I think that, for instance, finally there was not anyone supporting the merger, it was coming from inside. Perhaps we did not leverage enough the necessary support

from our side. Probably it would have been faster and easier if we would have said “ok, we don't have enough resources from our side to push this project so we have to leverage that”.

CR: Would you identify some phases on the merger process?

VF: Honestly, I think it is very difficult to generalize, but talking about Centrale Supélec the first thing would be looking for the opportunity, like the necessity of being bigger, so a merge would be a nice option to deal with that issue. Then looking for the target, making the decision to merge and then do it. Those are the phases, it is very basic. If I compare Centrale Supélec merger with the different mergers I have lived in the private sector, I think that the big question is about time: how long for each phase is necessary? For higher education, for Centrale Supélec, it was 10 years long. It is too long, but perhaps it is an appropriate duration for higher education.

CR: When you say “go for it” what happens there?

VF: There is a phase of “designing the merge” so there are the milestones to be set up. You also establish teams and finally you really merge. For me it is the period of designing the actual merge and answering questions like how long it will take each phase, will you have one or two programs and so on. All of this is a design phase. It is the moment when you decide to merge but you don't know exactly what will be the final scheme. That decision normally in most industries would take from 6 months to one year. For us it was between 2 or 3 years.

CR: But now do you think there is a real merging or you find both institutions still in the process of design? In which part you are?

VF: We are absolutely in the process of doing the full merger. The merger starts first with the support teams, then with the research teams until finally you reach the training teams. Starting with the support team, and not only considering Centrale Supélec, makes sense because it is maybe easier. Support functions are not related with the core business. It may be difficult in terms of social sensitivity but at the same time you don't affect the core business. Merging, I mean a fully merge of the product lines, is different on each case. I wouldn't say that you integrate all the functions or activities but at least when you start with something it is better to start with the support activities. The support activities make the other things possible and in addition you can find easier scale economies.

CR: Would you say that economies of scale is one of the reasons to merge?

VF: Yes

CR: When would you say that the “real merge” phase has concluded?

VF: If we succeed we will have a common training program with one diploma in September 2017. For us our achievement will be to have Engineer Centrale Supélec, not Engineer Centrale or Engineer Supélec. Although a suitable choice would be also to keep two brands, we have decided to have one common diploma Engineer Centrale Supélec. One important milestones will be when we are on the same campus.

CR: So, you think that sharing the same space is important, isn't it?

VF: Absolutely. Though sometimes you can have distance campuses, you can have some campuses in the regions like ENS with one campus in Britani, it is important to have one campus next to the other. For us an important milestone is to move to one single campus.

Rankings and specialization

CR: Have you detected changes in ranking positions of the new institution compared with the former one?

VF: We knew that before the merger we couldn't even try to get ranked because we were too small. Having merged has allowed us to be ranked in the top 200 for QS or THE. We could not achieve that before, so we really have a proof of this result.

Culture

CR: Have the cultural shocks constrained in a way the process?

VF: Yes, in many aspects. Thinking on the organization itself, for instance, accounting people from one institution to another vary very much the culture. It is very different, so the whole organization is influenced not only by the skills and competences of the people but by the necessity to cope with the two cultures. You have Supélec and Centrale so the organization is less efficient. People have difficulties to communicate still nowadays, so the organization is less efficient in general. You must understand that some processes are very difficult to adjust. I think that everywhere, and even more in higher education, the business is very different although people seem to do the same. The culture is always an issue and you can't, before studying the culture itself, imagine what culture will emerge when the new institution is created. The culture is something living, it is not something that you can imagine from the description of the business, never.

CR: And what about the top positions, you mentioned that the Director of Supélec was retiring at that time, so there was no transition for him, but what happened with the director of Centrale that also became the director of Supélec?

VF: The President decided to work with two General Managers, so one is from Centrale and another one is from Supélec. It was formed a kind of trio, three people, president with a CEO and a deputy CEO, deputy director. After that, it was very complicated, it tried to have as many director from Centrale as from Supélec and it's a little bit heavy, because the structure is bigger than necessary. Nevertheless, it was also a good mechanism to balance the power between the two former institutions. I have seen as well again several mergers and I think you may find shortcuts, simpler things.

CR: Even considering that Centrale Supélec is in its first year of operation, do you think that is there a kind of Centrale Supélec reputation or is still seen as Centrale reputation and Supélec reputation?

VF: I think that, for the employers, for the companies, is still Centrale and Supélec. In the research community is the same. The only thing that changed was the rankings, but it is not about reputation. Reputation comes from in the long run and it is not visible, specially with the brand that is not still powerful. The former brands are still stronger than the new one.

CR: Do you think that people feel identified with the new institution?

VF: One that is very focused in research, is rarely really willing the top fight on the institution. If it is focused on training than if it is more focused on the institution, but then, as I told you, one is identified to Centrale and the others identified to Supélec. For the people, the benefit of being from Centrale Supélec has not occurred yet. It is still a challenge that needs to be addressed.

CR: Do you have specific plans to reduce cultural shocks, or specific transition processes for this issue?

VF: We have practices, like internal communication, the different meetings with mixed teams in one direction, all together the managers, all together, they try to address problems. Basically, is team building at different levels and communication.

CR: But do you have, for instance, a common ceremony for graduated people? Perhaps it can help to create that common culture.

VF: I agree and I have criticized that, for instance we have problems with budget and financial difficulties in higher education is a reality for us as well. Supélec still graduate students on each campus while Centrale we graduate students in a nice space like a theater so it is expensive. But I think that is a failure because you don't see good examples how everybody is committed to address the financial difficulties in the same way on each institution. I was opposed that Centrale has its own graduation, but at the same time I think that graduating everybody at the same time could be nice. Centrale and Supélec could mix the students at the same place. Not only is a Centrale culture, but the two different ways of graduating, one cheap at the campus while the other expensive on a theater, it's shocking.

CR: While looking on internet about Centrale Supélec I found a web page for Centrale, another site for Supélec and another one for Centrale Supélec. Why is this happening?

VF: This is because of the different diplomas of engineering, but the website is absolutely something important to consider. Honestly when I look at our internet site for something, even for us, it is difficult because we still have different sites. I have to go to google because I never remember the correct. So if it is hard for us, imagine what image that we give to the people around us is also confusing. I have to say that I work better with some teams than other, and the communication team is more complicated. We have one single team and they are really having big conflicts between the former communication teams of Centrale and Supélec. That happens, but that is a real issue to deal with.

Expected results

CR: What do you think are the expected results of the merger?

VF: Scale economies, yes and no. I would say of course in the support functions but I would say more efficiency doing more things with less money on HR, finance, and communication. I would say for training there are no much scale economies because you multiply by 2 the number of students but at least the education engineering we could have some. At the same time, we have to move fast in the syllabus, implement new pedagogies, etc. Duplication has been tackily but we are on the part to put the teams together we are redesigning still the processes. For instance, we are on a process in the IT teams, in the financial teams, we are on the process of doing that, and it is very slow. For the moment that is still, specially in the training core team, the two syllabuses are running separately, so really not yet.

CR: *In terms of human resources, how do you deal with balancing the number of people or negotiations with trade unions?*

VF: Yes, we have civil servants so we cannot fire people. We have trade unions and we have a culture in management that is not used to deal with reducing the number of people. We don't know and we are not used to this, so it is a difficulty. And the other thing, as I told you, as far as we don't move to a single campus, it will be very difficult to avoid duplications.

CR: *Stronger academic profile?*

VF: We hope so, that is the goal.

CR: *Better academic collaboration?*

VF: For sure in the research, because labs, the research dealing with health problems. We have some researchers working on mechanics and robotic things. There are many examples I could give you.

CR: *Rationalization of the academic profile?*

VF: We are complementary institutions so there is no need to rationalize the academic profile. Honestly, we don't have issues about that. When we see the different specializations of students we have different departments of math, because there is math in Supélec and math in Centrale. One is more applied than the other. Anyway, we need other people, because tomorrow the basic of training and research is increasing, so we need to keep everybody both for research and training purposes. The training specialization, for the moment, Supélec is about computer sciences, information system, electronics, mathematics. Centrale is more about industrial engineering, mechanical engineering, physics, so it is pretty different.

9.2.4 Entrevista Universidad de Lisboa

Introducción

CR: *¿Por qué es necesaria la fusión?*

AS: Conseguimos hacer las cosas mejor porque alcanzamos una masa crítica suficiente. Las dos universidades que había en Lisboa no tenían el tamaño suficiente para cubrir de manera adecuada las principales áreas científicas. En la Universidad de Lisboa teníamos Educación, Derecho, Letras, Psicología, Instituto de la Educación, Geografía y Ordenación del Territorio y Bellas Artes y nada más. Además, teníamos una universidad técnica con Ingeniería, Veterinaria, Agronomía, Arquitectura, Deporte, Economía y Gestión. Teníamos una escuela en la universidad técnica que hacía ciencias sociales y políticas. Ahí tienes un poco de intersección con la clásica, pero nada más. Y como ves son dos universidades muy complementarias. Lo que parecía era que, desde el punto de vista de impacto internacional de la universidad, de trabajo de la investigación en áreas de frontera entre, por ejemplo, la medicina y la ingeniería, o el proceso de señal y la lengua... En muchas áreas que no vamos a explicitar ahora, se podría hacer mucho mejor trabajo si tienes una sola universidad. La gran ventaja, en mi opinión, es esa. Desde el punto de vista de los recursos no hemos conseguido más presupuesto. Lo que hemos conseguido es regularizar un conjunto de situaciones que venían del pasado que tenían que ver

con los edificios, con el patrimonio inmobiliario del conjunto de la universidad. Lo que yo espero de la universidad más relevancia desde el punto nacional e internacional. Ahora es la mayor universidad portuguesa con un gran impacto desde el punto de vista nacional pero también desde el punto de vista internacional. Si consultas los rankings verás que la universidad está mucho mejor situada. En los 200 en Shanghai, en el 100 en Scimago. Si miras a Europa verás que estamos en el lugar 20. Si miras a las universidades iberoamericanas en Scimago comprobarás que esta Sao Paulo, después Lisboa y después creo que Barcelona. ¿Por qué? Porque juntas en la misma universidad un conjunto muy grande de áreas científicas. La Universidad de Lisboa es una universidad de investigación con una tradición muy larga en muchas áreas científicas. Donde ha nacido en muchas ramas la investigación en Portugal. Entonces, cuando mezclas todo esto, cuando contabilizas toda la producción en conjunto, pues te salta una universidad que cuenta desde el punto de vista europeo. Yo creo que la principal ventaja de la fusión es esta.



Imagen 4. Prof. António Manuel da Cruz Serra y Carlos Ripoll Soler durante la entrevista

CR: ¿Pero ese es el motivo por el que era necesario fusionarse?

AS: Yo creo que lo que es raro es que, en Lisboa, desde hace 100 años, las universidades estuvieran separadas. Han estado separadas por diversas razones. Primero por razones sobre cómo se miraban algunas áreas de conocimiento hace 100 años. Lo que en Lisboa pasó es que, en 1911, después de la República, se crea la universidad que estaba sólo en Coimbra, con una historia muy interesante desde el siglo XIII. La universidad, aunque estaba en Coimbra, se creó inicialmente en Lisboa, pero después se fue a Coimbra por razones políticas con la corte. Después volvió a Lisboa.

Ha estado aquí por muchos siglos hasta que después vuelve a Coimbra hacia el final del siglo XV donde se queda de manera permanente. Había escuelas autónomas en Lisboa y Oporto que dan origen a las universidades en 1911. En esos tiempos en Lisboa no se coloca dentro de la universidad un conjunto de saberes por razones que... bueno, no hace falta mirar atrás ahora, pero algunas ramas del conocimiento no se veían tan científicas como otras. Entonces quedan fuera de la universidad la ingeniería, la economía y la gestión, la veterinaria y la agronomía. En los años 30 el gobierno entiende que debe federar todas las escuelas que existían y crea la Universidad Técnica de Lisboa. Bueno, y después de tener las dos universidades todo es muy difícil de hacerlo, porque siempre tienes dos rectores, y como se hace y tal. Se ha intentado hacerlo varias veces, pero no se ha pasado de las primeras conversaciones en mi opinión. Y por tanto la motivación para hacerlo es también una reacción de la universidad, de la academia, a los tiempos muy deprimentes en los que vivimos. Se había entendido que era un proyecto para hacerlo algún día y se entendió que ese día había llegado. Yo creo que, desde el punto de vista,

cuando me preguntas qué es lo que nos motivó, es esto. Si yo miro atrás lo que hemos conseguido de la escala de la universidad por una nueva manera de gestionar los recursos principalmente en el rectorado te sobran recursos que son equivalentes, si quieres te lo digo en becas de doctorado. Nosotros hemos abierto un concurso para 160 becas de doctorado que te cuestan unos 5 millones de euros en 3 años, eso viene de la fusión, de los recursos que no necesitas ya porque tienes una estructura central que consigue hacer el trabajo de gestión del concurso de la universidad con 25.000 estudiantes como con 50.000. Entonces la dimensión, que ya era suficiente en una de las universidades es suficiente para hacerlo. Hemos liberado muchos recursos, principalmente en personas, trabajadores y administrativos y técnicos, que estaban en el centro y han ido a las facultades donde son más necesarios. Eso es una ganancia muy importante del proyecto. Principalmente se verifica que es cierto que el impacto de la universidad a nivel internacional y nacional es mucho mayor. Eso para mí es claro. Nosotros estamos teniendo mucho éxito en Horizon 2020 y el conjunto de escuelas de la universidad, de centros de investigación han conseguido una financiación muy importante, hasta agosto pasado teníamos ya 30 millones de euros de proyectos. Yo creo que todo esto resulta del trabajo realizado en los últimos 100 años, no de la fusión. Del prestigio de los grupos de investigación y demás. Si tienes una universidad con el impacto que tiene esta junto con el prestigio de los grupos de la investigación, te potencia las posibles ganancias que se derivan de poder trabajar con otros, etc.

CR: ¿Y todo esto se debe fundamentalmente a que ahora sois más grandes?

AS: Sí, es así, porque cuando te miden algo a nivel internacional, cuando te miden el impacto de la universidad, los recursos que tienes, cuál es tu presupuesto de investigación, etc. Todo eso lo que hace es integrar. No te miden el rendimiento per cápita. Si, por ejemplo, tenías 3.000 publicaciones por año, ahora tienes 6.000. Eso en los rankings tiene un impacto muy grande. Hay un problema, aunque aquí no es un problema, y es que la universidad se convirtiese demasiado grande para gestionarla de manera eficiente. Yo no creo que sea posible dirigir una universidad de esta dimensión desde el centro, desde el rectorado, sin autonomía de las escuelas. No se podría hacer. Por otro lado, nosotros teníamos una cultura, especialmente en la Universidad Técnica más que en la antigua Universidad de Lisboa, una cultura muy fuerte de autonomía. Una de las condiciones que ha estado sobre la mesa desde el primer instante es que la forma de hacer la gestión de esta universidad es con una gran autonomía de las escuelas. Eso es absolutamente fundamental en el proceso de fusión de la Universidad de Lisboa. Después la fusión de estas dos universidades no ha tenido un problema que, por otro lado, es muy común en las fusiones universitarias. Nosotros no tenemos prácticamente duplicidades de cursos, facultades, de áreas científicas entre las dos universidades. Tenemos un pequeño problema, que no es problema, que había ingeniería informática en Técnica y en la Universidad Clásica pero no hay nada que hacer en cuanto a eso porque hay mucha demanda de estas carreras por parte de los estudiantes, además el país y Europa necesita muchos estudiantes de ingeniería informática que los que hay ahora. En todo caso la dimensión de los cursos en ambas escuelas era más que suficiente para hacerla sostenible, con lo que no ha sido necesario realizar ninguna acción especial con ese tema. No ha sido necesario fusionarlos en un único departamento. Sí tendríamos un problema grande si tuviésemos dos facultades, por ejemplo, de Derecho. Eso sería un problema mayor si tienes que fusionar dos facultades en una. Ahí los problemas serían mayores. Aquí el problema desde el punto de vista de organización ha sido hacer la fusión del rectorado y de los servicios centrales, lo que era el centro de la universidad.

CR: Y cuando eras rector de la Universidad Técnica de Lisboa, ¿por qué pensabas que era necesario fusionarse?

AS: Yo fui rector de la Universidad Técnica durante un año, y cuando me presenté a las elecciones de rector de la Universidad Técnica fue con el objetivo de promover la fusión de la Universidad Técnica con la Clásica. Ya lo llevaba en el programa como candidato. Eso de hecho fue lo que me convenció a presentarme a Rector. Yo era el Presidente de la Escuela de Ingeniería del Instituto Superior Técnico. En esos tiempos hemos pensado en este problema, el asunto estaba encima de la mesa hace algún tiempo y bueno, la gente ha hablado conmigo y yo he decidido que para hacer la fusión merecía la pena presentar mi candidatura, y yo presenté mi candidatura para hacer la fusión y lo hemos hecho en un año, en un año y pico.

CR: La verdad es que es un tiempo récord para hacer la fusión. ¿Había ya un trabajo previo? ¿Había mucha relación entre las dos universidades?

AS: Trabajo previo no. Lo hemos hecho rápido y sí había mucha relación entre las dos instituciones. La cuestión clave es que no teníamos los problemas grandes. Mira, el hecho de tener dos universidades que son complementarias lo hace muy fácil, porque no has tenido ningún, y desde el principio ha sido un proyecto de dentro de las universidades. El gobierno aquí no ha tenido ningún papel. Sí te imponen una fusión de fuera. Si te dicen “vosotros tenéis que fusionar, ahora hay un departamento duplicado sin estudiantes, no tiene relevancia” y cosas así entonces os fundís y despedís a la mitad de la gente. Ahí tienes los problemas. Aquí no ha sucedido nada de eso porque había dos cosas muy claras. Primero no había superposición entre las universidades, probablemente tendríamos más conflictos internos dentro de cada una de las instituciones, por ejemplo, en la universidad técnica ya había dos cursos de arquitectura, uno en la Escuela de Ingeniería y otro en la Facultad de Arquitectura. En la propia universidad técnica y en la misma escuela, había en dos campus distintos cursos de ingeniería informática, por ejemplo. Esto no era un problema de la fusión. Por otro lado, tenemos una cantidad de gente trabajando en la universidad que es menor de la necesaria. Mucha gente se ha jubilado en los últimos años y por la crisis no ha sido sustituida y entonces la fusión ha sido también una oportunidad de porque efectivamente cuando haces una fusión en el centro, en el rectorado te sobra gente (staff de administración) ha sido una oportunidad de hacer que en las facultades, donde hay una gran falta de gente, de staff administrativo, recibieran gente del Rectorado. ¿Qué hemos hecho? Hemos hecho, abierto posibilidad de trabajo en las diferentes facultades, la gente por voluntad propia ha decidido si se iba a no se iba y abrimos un proceso, nadie ha sido obligado, y eso resulta también de las circunstancias. Lo que no hemos tenido y deberíamos haber tenido es un refuerzo de presupuesto para esto.

CR: Aquí decidisteis crear una única universidad, pero también es cierto que existen otros modelos de fusión como podría ser una federación. ¿Valorasteis otros modelos?

AS: Sí, pero eso no es una fusión. Eso es distinto. Eso es una cooperación entre instituciones distintas. Yo no creo, desde el punto de vista del trabajo permanente, que eso tenga buenos resultados, porque tienes dos cabezas, dos personas o dos consejos decidiendo y entonces esperas un año, dos, tres, cinco, lo que fuera y las cosas no funcionan. Yo no creo en eso. Creo que esa es su forma de no resolver los problemas. Probablemente lo que consigues con eso es lo mismo que conseguirás con un acuerdo, con protocolo de trabajo entre una universidad portuguesa y una española para organizar un curso con cotitulación o lo que sea. Yo no creo que con eso resuelvas un problema como los que tienes que resolver. ¿Cómo resuelves? Mira desde el punto de vista de los recursos financieros nosotros hemos tenido una ganancia que representa más del 25% del presupuesto del Rectorado. Lo que ganamos fusionando los servicios centrales de las dos universidades corresponde en este caso concreto a algo que está por encima del 25% del presupuesto de rectorado, que queda libre para otras cosas. Y esto es importante, porque desde el punto de vista del conjunto de la universidad yo diría que esto corresponde a un 5% del presupuesto de la financiación pública de la universidad, no del presupuesto total de la

universidad. Esto sólo lo haces si haces la fusión de los servicios centrales. Si mantienes los dos servicios centrales como están, de lo que se trata es de mantener un proyecto conjunto entre diferentes universidades.

CR: ¿No pensasteis en un sistema federado como el que hay en la Universidad de California?

AS: No tiene sentido. Yo no creo que tuviese sentido. Yo puedo, después de la fusión, trabajar en conjunto y hacer eso con cualquier universidad de Lisboa, de Oporto, de España, de cualquier país del mundo. Ahora, lo que estaba aquí encima de la mesa era la posibilidad de tener una marca que valiese mucho más. Por ejemplo, desde el punto de vista del patrocinio, nosotros tenemos un gran patrocinio que en el pasado valía por año 1,5 millones de euros. Después de la fusión vale 2,5 millones de euros porque la universidad tiene un impacto, una relevancia que no tenía antes. Desde el punto de vista de los rankings Si haces eso también tienes una ganancia. Mira el ranking de Shanghái. Las dos universidades en el ranking de Shanghái, las dos universidades estaban en la posición 400-500. Yo diría que más por en medio de eso. Ahora tienes la universidad en la posición 201. Yo creo que sólo no ha entrado entre las primeras 200 por razones del ciclo económico. Esto no lo consigues con ningún otro tipo de colaboración como un consorcio o lo que sea. Y lo que creo que es el gran, lo que impide que lo hagas, es el poder. El poder del rector, el poder de los consejos generales, etc. En algunos casos no hay razón para no hacerlo. EN otros hay claro. Mira, estás hablando de una universidad, de dos universidades que están en Lisboa. Desde el punto de vista. Yo creo que es una buena cosa tener competencia en Lisboa. Yo no creo que sea una buena idea fusionar con la Universidad Nova, por ejemplo, porque creo que hace bueno a todo que haya competencia, que haya oferta distinta. Nos hace bien a todos, a nosotros y a ellos. Entonces lo que ocurría aquí es que me parecía irracional la situación que existía. El gran problema que podría haber es si la universidad es demasiado grande. Yo creo que tenemos una dimensión que es manejable. Yo creo también que haciendo la gestión de la universidad con una filosofía autonómica relativamente a las escuelas donde hay masa crítica y competencia para hacerlo es positivo porque para tener más iniciativa, para participar en proyectos. La gente tiene que sentir que tiene capacidad de decisión. También es cierto que no hay "superhombres", con lo que no tiene sentido tomar todas las decisiones desde un conjunto muy restringido de personas. Si no hay autonomía en las escuelas el trabajo no saldría adelante.

CR: Hay procesos de fusión en otras partes del mundo. ¿Tuvisteis en cuenta algún otro proceso de fusión?

AS: Sí, sí. Hemos hecho talleres y encuentros, hemos invitado a gente de fuera que ha trabajado en fusiones en otros países. Hemos discutido los problemas. Hemos intentado anticipar lo que venía, como se debería hacer.

CR: ¿Y algún caso te llamó especialmente la atención?

AS: No tanto, aunque estaba acordándome de Aalto, de Dinamarca, fundamentalmente de países nórdicos. También hablamos con unos franceses, pero fundamentalmente fueron países nórdicos. Mira, yo creo que quien lo puede hacer es quien conozca muy bien el sector: la universidad, la cultura local y todo eso. Lo que aprendí más en esas reuniones es algo que yo creo que hemos hecho bien que es la necesidad absoluta de comunicar desde el primer instante. Tener a toda la comunidad universitaria involucrada. Explicar lo que se iba a hacer, cómo se iba a hacer, discutir con ellos las propuestas. Yo he hecho más de 50 sesiones de trabajo con mucha gente. Yo y el rector Antonio Nova, hemos hecho todos esos encuentros por todas las facultades, tenemos 18. Me acuerdo que hemos hecho más de 50 iniciativas, lo que quiere decir que al menos dos veces hemos ido a todos los sitios. Hemos hablado con redes temáticas dentro de

las universidades. Hemos hablado mucho. Hemos decidido de forma muy consensuada. Nosotros estábamos muy alineados desde el punto de vista organizativo de cómo se debía hacer. Hemos, yo creo que las poquísimas divergencias que podíamos tener sobre cómo hacerlo lo hemos resuelto entre la primera reunión entre rectores. Hemos acordado los términos fundamentales, hemos hablado con mucha gente y bueno, por ahí. Yo creo que debes percibir cuáles han sido los problemas de las otras fusiones, pero yo creo que o encuentras algo muy similar. Yo creo que ninguna de las fusiones ha sido muy similar a la nuestra, porque teníamos dos universidades en la misma ciudad, con campus muy próximos, con áreas científicas distintas, sin superposiciones. Lo que tenías que hacer, el desafío desde el punto de vista organizativo era el rectorado. Era reorganizar el rectorado, los servicios centrales, ese es el problema aquí. Lo más importante que hemos aprendido es la importancia de la comunicación. Tienes que estar permanentemente hablando con la gente. La fusión aquí, yo valoro el proceso como muy positivo. Si hablas con la gente yo creo que o están siendo simpáticos conmigo o están muy contentos. Yo llevo 2 años y medio aquí y no tengo noticia de queja de nadie. No tengo una única, algo imposible para mí. Si me lo preguntas antes yo no me lo creo. No ha habido ninguna cuestión política. Nada. Cero. Y entonces yo creo que ha sido muy importante hablar con la gente. Todo tiene que ser transparente. No puede haber golpes escondidos. Las promesas han sido todas cumplidas. Mismo si no corresponde a lo que yo pienso, lo que acuerdas el primer día lo tienes que hacer. Lo que no sabía y me habría gustado saber es que una parte enorme de mi trabajo en los primeros dos años iba a ser trabajo puramente burocrático: hacer reglamentos de todo. La burocracia nacional, con toda esta cultura que tenemos en la Europa del sur. Porque tú has tenido 100 años para hacer los reglamentos de las universidades anteriores y después tienes unos meses para ponerlo todo en marcha, los reglamentos son distintos, basados en las mismas leyes, pero distintos en los detalles y como decimos aquí “el diablo está en los detalles”, y esto parece broma, pero lo dice también la gente que dirige las facultades y lo digo de verdad la cantidad de trabajo. Yo debería haberlo anticipado porque hacía gestión también en la universidad a un nivel donde trabajaba con mucho dinero con mucha gente, con todo hace 12 o 13 años y no he anticipado el impacto brutal que tiene el trabajo burocrático de encontrar el cuadro normativo para funcionar la universidad, y más mismo si tienes un gabinete jurídico muy bueno, esto no lo puedes dejar a los técnicos. El rector, el equipo rectoral, alguien que tenga el feeling, que viene de una escuela, que ha estado en los consejos científicos, pedagógicos, que sabe los problemas que hay con la gestión de los cursos, con la organización de los doctorados, con la gestión de proyectos, es absolutamente fundamental que hay sensibilidad cuando haces los reglamentos, porque si lo haces desde el punto de vista estrictamente técnico sin ese aporte, vas a tener problemas políticos porque la gente se va a sentir mal, “nosotros y los otros”.

CR: ¿Crees entonces que en esas otras universidades que se han fusionado han sido demasiado técnicos?

AS: No, lo que yo digo es que no he tenido ningún input sobre este tema. Lo que me gustaría haber sabido antes de iniciar el proceso era eso.

CR: ¿En qué momento tuvisteis que hacer todos esos reglamentos: antes de la fusión o después?

AS: Antes no, después. En la ley hemos puesto que teníamos un plazo alargado para hacerlo y hemos puesto también eso terminará el próximo día 1 de marzo de 2016. Hemos tenido también que poner en los estatutos que hasta que se hicieran reglamentos nuevos, en cada mitad de la universidad seguiría el reglamento antiguo. Era fundamental políticamente hacerlo deprisa. Entonces hemos sustituido todo lo que se podía hacer lo más rápido posible. Pues eso es algo que a mí nadie me habló de esto, y esto hace que no te puedas dedicar a otras cosas que son importantes. Tenemos un reglamento de evaluación del trabajo de los docentes. Esto es fuego.

Entonces tienes que consultar con la gente y decidirlo. Nosotros lo que hemos hecho es unas propuestas iniciales. Ahí es fundamental el trabajo de quien está aquí, quien tiene la sensibilidad de cómo eso nos afectará a todos hacerlo técnicamente bien y eso yo tengo quien lo haga. Ponerlo a discusión, escuchar las facultades y después decidir. Y todo esto, algunos de estos reglamentos te llevan meses.

CR: He leído que la fusión tuvo lugar el 25 de julio de 2013. A partir de ahí empezasteis a realizar reglamentos y normativas. Antes de eso, ¿cómo tuvo lugar la fusión de manera efectiva?

AS: Con un decreto que ha sido propuesto por nosotros con decisiones de los Consejos Generales de las dos universidades. Se elevó al Ministerio y hubo una negociación larga con el Gobierno en el medio de la crisis. Hemos tenido reuniones con el ministro, con el primer ministro con el ministro de finanzas. El problema principal aquí es el ministerio de finanzas, que es quien manda, aunque realmente no pone dinero.

CR: ¿Tuvisteis algún tipo de presión por parte del Gobierno o, más concretamente, por parte del Ministerio de Finanzas?

AS: Hemos tenido muchas discusiones para muchas veces negociar los términos del decreto ley. Por ejemplo, una de las cosas que salieron es que, como no tenían dinero para darnos, nosotros no hemos tenido un presupuesto especial para la fusión. La contrapartida que hemos tenido por eso ha sido que el decreto que hace la fusión de las universidades transfiere para la Universidad de Lisboa todo lo que son los edificios y demás, que en muchos casos utilizábamos hace decenas de años y que es un problema para el futuro de la universidad. Nunca sabes lo que sucederá con eso si no son tuyos. Te podrían alquilar los edificios y tener que pagar por ellos, como ha sucedido en Austria. Ahora son propiedad de la universidad.

CR: Entonces podemos decir que no ha habido una presión externa para que la fusión suceda.

AS: No, más bien al contrario. La presión ha sido de dentro a fuera. Si no hubiera presión lo que ocurriría es que nosotros decidiríamos la fusión y el gobierno publicaría el decreto ley.

CR: Y has comentado que todas las promesas se han cumplido.

AS: Sí, pero todas las promesas que hemos hecho nosotros, no las promesas del Gobierno. Había una promesa del Gobierno, que está escrita en el decreto ley de la fusión, que es un aumento de la agilidad administrativa con una promesa de cambio de la ley general que estipula la autonomía de las universidades portuguesas. Esto el Gobierno no lo ha cumplido. Esto es muy importante, porque la universidad, más que los problemas de financiación que tiene un problema de autonomía de su gestión. Hay muchas cosas que no se pueden hacer y que sí se deberían hacer. Tienes problemas de gestión administrativa y financiera. Tienes un cuadro legal que cuando lo comparas con países del norte de Europa refleja una situación de mucha debilidad a lo que se refiere a la agilidad, toma de decisiones, cómo haces las compras, cómo haces esto o aquello, muchos procedimientos que no son desde el punto de vista económico los más adecuados.

CR: ¿Y cuáles son las promesas vuestras que se han cumplido en la fusión?

AS: Bueno, las promesas que tienen que ver con que todos los trabajadores tendrían sus puestos de trabajo. La fusión no resultaría en una disminución de los puestos de trabajo. Eso se ha cumplido. Se ha también cumplido todas las promesas relativas a la organización de la universidad, la autonomía de las escuelas, a la forma como trabajamos en conjunto. Y no ha

habido ninguna tentativa de darle un nuevo ropaje para hacerlo de otra forma. Todo eso ha ido bien. Tienes los problemas de la reorganización de los servicios centrales en particular era un tema. Yo diría que hoy, cuando miro a los servicios, a los departamentos y tal no hay ningún departamento con una dimensión mayor que lo normal. A lo mejor ya veo falta de personas en los departamentos, porque con las salidas a las facultades, las jubilaciones y todo eso ha caído el número de personas. Porque ahí había recelo por parte de los sindicatos en un determinado momento transmitieron una inestabilidad a las personas. Yo creo que hemos conseguido convencer. Nosotros hemos hablado con todas las personas: con los sindicatos, con el Gobierno, con los partidos de la oposición, con todos los partidos que están en el parlamento. Ha habido momentos donde el tema era ese: cómo vais a hacer la fusión, cómo vais a tener más recursos para la universidad si no hay despidos. Pues no, no ha habido. No hemos tenido que despedir a nadie, aunque hay instrumentos para hacerlo. Hay una figura legal en la administración pública mediante la que puedes mandar un determinado número de personas a una figura llamada "movilidad" y eso permite al Ministerio de Finanzas mandarlo a otro lugar o incluso disminuir su salario hasta un valor que deriva en una pérdida salarial de hasta un tercio.

CR: La fusión no ha sido forzada por nadie y tampoco por la crisis económica, aunque parece que esto último haya tenido algún papel.

AS: Sí, yo creo que ha tenido al menos el papel de decirnos que en un momento de tanta depresión desde el punto de vista de nuestra vida colectiva ha sido un movimiento de esperanza y provocador para hacer algo nuevo y mejor. Ese ha sido el papel.

CR: ¿Qué trabajo previo a la fusión se hizo?

AS: Se habló con toda la gente dentro de las escuelas y las facultades...

CR: Pero desde que fuiste Rector de la Universidad Técnica de Lisboa hasta que pasaste a ser Rector de la Universidad de Lisboa, ¿cuánto tiempo transcurrió?

AS: Pues un año y medio más o menos. Pero el decreto ley de la fusión es muy anterior al 25 de julio de 2013 porque antes de eso has tenido que organizar primero las elecciones al Consejo General que es quien elige al Rector, después las elecciones a Rector, que necesitan como mínimo uno o dos meses. Las del Consejo General otros dos meses. Entonces yo diría que ha pasado casi medio año desde que

CR: ¿Y qué sucedió en ese tiempo previo?

AS: Hemos negociado mucho. Hemos hablado con la Universidad de Lisboa, dentro de la Universidad Técnica, con los diferentes grupos, con los diferentes protagonistas, con gente e las diferentes áreas científicas donde la fusión era algo importante o peligroso.

CR: ¿Y qué relación tenías con el Rector de la anterior Universidad de Lisboa?

AS: Pues no nos conocíamos desde hacía mucho tiempo. Nos conocíamos hace un año o algo así, pero tenía una buena relación.

CR: ¿Y crees que esto es importante, es decir, fue un proyecto de los Rectores?

AS: Mira, yo creo que si tú tienes, si es un proceso organizado internamente, sólo puede ser organizado internamente si los rectores están de acuerdo con el proceso. Y también con el proyecto de cada uno de ellos para futuro. Entonces si es algo impuesto de fuera, del Ministerio, del Gobierno, de lo que fuera, entonces yo creo que aquí ya no sería tan importante el papel de

los Rectores. Se podría hacer por decreto. La diferencia aquí es que ha sido hecho por propuesta nuestra. Yo creo que un gobierno tiene los mecanismos para hacerlo de arriba abajo. Aquí era raro que eso pudiera hacerse, porque ninguna de las dos universidades se encontraba en una situación de dificultad. Ni dificultad de atracción de estudiantes, ni de gestión financiero, no había este tipo de problemas. Si quieres habría debilidades por no ser universidades con todas las áreas del saber, pero ese es otro problema. Eso último es alguno de los motivos que ha provocado la fusión. Desde el punto de vista, por ejemplo, alguien que viene de la Escuela de Ingeniería, es importante tener en la universidad la medicina, por ejemplo, porque el trabajo con ellos es algo que hoy es importante desde el punto de vista de la frontera del saber y demás. Ahora tienes problemas políticos sí, de hacer. Yo diría que difícilmente haces una fusión de dos universidades desde dentro si los rectores no aceptan.

CR: Respecto al Gobierno, tuvisteis conversaciones con el Ministerio de Finanzas, Ministerio de Educación y otros. ¿Sobre qué fueron esas conversaciones?

AS: Sobre los términos de la fusión, sobre lo que tenía que quedar escrito en el decreto ley, lo que queríamos, qué es lo que queríamos de contrapartida por no haber presupuesto para la fusión. Qué ventajas tendríamos. Para nosotros era claro que para el Gobierno era importante que se hiciera una fusión. Cualquiera que fuese el gobierno en aquel momento sería importante que sucediese, porque eso de algún modo significaría una reorganización de la maquinaria administrativa del Estado que no se ha hecho. Se ha hablado mucho desde el inicio de la crisis, pero, si algo donde yo creo que se ha fallado desde el punto de vista del ajuste económico es que no se ha reorganizado el Estado en nada. Porque es difícil, porque hay muchos intereses, porque no se quieren enfrentar los intereses y tal. Entonces para nosotros era claro que esto era una oportunidad para conseguir algunas cosas que nos parecen justas y que se abría la posibilidad de que aun no habiendo dinero podría haber otras cosas. De verdad al Gobierno, al Estado, no le ha costado nada la entrega del patrimonio que nos ha hecho porque ya lo estábamos usando. Ese patrimonio hemos hecho el pedido en el último mes para vender alguno de los edificios que ya no necesitamos, porque los servicios centrales están en un solo lugar. Estamos intentando vender alguna otra cosa para hacer residencias universitarias, recuperar instalaciones que algunos casos tienen siglos y necesitan de reformas y mantenimiento. Hemos hecho mucha fuerza para resolver muchos de los problemas administrativos. Nosotros tenemos en Portugal una buena ley de la gestión universitaria, pero es una ley creo del 2007 aproximadamente. Lo que ocurrió desde ahí hasta ahora es muchísimo, porque el mundo ha cambiado. Hemos tenido a la troika ahí, hemos tenido imposiciones de medidas sobre toda la Administración Pública y las leyes del presupuesto del estado todos los años han impuesto condiciones superiores a las que aparecen en la ley de la función pública. Entonces hemos perdido mucha de nuestra autonomía. Lo que hemos pedido son cosas que estaban ya ahí y habíamos perdido junto con otras que pensábamos que eran una buena idea. Cosas como poder contratar a alguien mucho más rápido de lo que hacemos con toda la burocracia esquizofrénica que tenemos de plazos infinitos. Desde que tú decides contratar un técnico superior porque necesitas a alguien en gabinete de proyectos, en la secretaría de graduación, en el gabinete jurídico, donde sea, te lleva al menos 6 meses terminar el proceso. Yo creo que un banco de los grandes, si decide que es absolutamente necesario contratar a alguien en una semana lo ha resuelto. Bueno, tiene que haber transparencia y todo esto, pero entre 6 meses y una semana hay una diferencia infinita. En uno de nuestros bancos donde tienes una dispersión del capital, donde no tienes el dueño, por qué yo tengo que tener reglas de gestión mucho más penalizadoras que la persona que dirige un banco. No lo entiendo. Porque no está el patrón o el dueño, pues en un banco tampoco. Cosas con más agilidad. Por ejemplo, tienes reglas para las compras públicas. Hay cosas que tienes que comprar a nivel nacional. Algunos contratos son muy buenos, como el aprovisionamiento de energía eléctrica, la limpieza, la seguridad, pero no

me gusta comprar computadores con unas reglas que es imposible de estar adecuado a la universidad. Hay muchos ejemplos, te doy dos porque no creo que sea importante ir por ahí.

CR: ¿Crees que las fusiones pueden ser una respuesta a los retos de la educación superior en Portugal?

AS: Bueno, ese es un tema que el Rector de la Universidad de Lisboa no debe hablar mucho. Nosotros tenemos 14 universidades públicas, eso da un número de universidades per cápita muy grande y yo creo que ese no es un problema nuestro. Nosotros hemos hecho el trabajo en Lisboa, el Gobierno debe mirar al sistema nacional y los protagonistas del sistema se deben pronunciar sobre el resto. Yo creo que la fusión de las universidades en Lisboa es distinta de todo lo que pueda ocurrir en el resto del país por la dimensión de las universidades, por el prestigio y la capacidad instalada en las mismas, porque están en la misma ciudad, cosa que no ocurre en ninguna otra ciudad de Portugal. En Lisboa había 4 universidades públicas y ahora hay 3.

CR: Entonces dirías que es una situación muy particular de Lisboa

AS: El proceso sí. Si hay necesidad de hacerlo en otros lugares es algo de lo que yo no voy a hablar

CR: Me refiero a retos como especialización, posicionamiento en los rankings, internacionalización, sí que habéis visto que en el caso de Lisboa, además de conseguir economías de escala, os ha servido para todo esto, aunque imagino que dependerá del contexto de cada sitio

AS: Claro, depende del contexto local, de muchas cosas. Cada caso es un caso. Lo que está aquí de conquistas que han resultado de la fusión las personas las conocen. Van a conocerlas mejor porque en breve haremos un informe de lo que se ha conseguido.

CR: ¿Y crees que, respecto a lo que habéis conseguido, hay un retorno positivo en términos sociales? ¿De qué manera lo medirías?

AS: Sí, de eso no tengo duda. Lo puedo medir en becas de doctorado, en posición en los rankings, en liberación de recursos para poder hacer un nuevo edificio. Te lo podría medir en euros, pero no lo quiero hacer. Desde el punto de vista de influencia en la sociedad también, aunque en este caso yo diría que es un tema muy particular de estas universidades y de Lisboa, con el país, con estar en la capital, tener una universidad que tiene una dimensión importante desde el punto de vista nacional. Eso hace que el Rector pueda tener algún protagonismo desde el punto de vista de la comunicación social, en hacer escuchar nuestra voz afuera. Esto también. Una cosa que hemos conseguido, que yo ya había visto en el pasado, el impacto mediático que tenemos, la facilidad con que salen noticias de la universidad, los periodistas que intentan hablar contigo es mucho mejor ahora. Hay que saber gestionarlo, no hablar de más y estar siempre diciendo las cosas.

CR: ¿Qué reacción han tenido las otras universidades de Portugal respecto a la fusión?

AS: No, eso es mejor que se lo preguntes a ellos.

CR: Ya me has comentado que no habéis tenido incentivos económicos para hacer la fusión, pero imagino que habréis tenido algún coste por hacer la fusión.

AS: Sí, hemos tenido costes por hacer la fusión, pero en mi opinión el coste es inferior a las ventajas financieras en un año. Mira, nosotros teníamos necesidad de tener. Yo creo que los

costes están vinculados al software, pero ninguna de las dos universidades estaba bien servida desde el punto de vista de un software central que aglutinase a todas las escuelas desde el punto de vista académico, financiero, de recursos humanos, etc.

CR: Cuando eras Rector de la Universidad Técnica parece que lo natural era fusionarse con la Universidad de Lisboa. ¿Pensaste en fusionarte con alguna otra universidad?

AS: No, porque era natural, porque ninguna otra universidad tendría la ventaja que venía de una universidad con áreas científicas distintas, con el prestigio que tenía cada una de esas facultades. Las nuevas universidades se han creado en un contexto en el que las dos más antiguas, que eran las nuestras ya existían. Entonces, por ejemplo, si miras a la Universidad Nova ves que tienen ingeniería, derecho, economía, medicina y tal. Entonces una fusión con la Universidad Nova, que jamás la he pensado, hasta porque yo pienso que es bueno que haya competencia, y entonces por ahí nada. Además, lo que había con impacto eran estas dos universidades. Era el socio natural.

CR: ¿Teníais algún tipo de hostilidad entre las dos universidades?

AS: No, aunque yo creo que este tipo de cosas las tienes siempre dentro de una misma universidad entre las escuelas. Pero entre las universidades nada distinto a lo que habría entre cualquier universidad del mundo. A veces más bromas que otra cosa.

CR: ¿Las empresas y el sector privado han tenido algún rol en esta fusión?

AS: No, nada.

CR: Pero, ¿pensasteis en mejorar la relación con las empresas?

AS: No, eso lo hacemos. Eso es parte de nuestro trabajo. Todo lo que hacemos en la universidad es para tener mejor educación, más investigación y más transferencia de conocimiento hacia la sociedad. La Universidad de Lisboa es una institución en la que la mitad del presupuesto viene de proyectos en ambiente competitivo, no viene del presupuesto del Estado. Esto quiere decir que tienes que trabajar con las empresas, pero no trabajas con las empresas en todas las ramas del conocimiento. No puedes pedir a una escuela de humanidades que trabaje con las empresas como trabaja una escuela de ingeniería. Eso no ha sido un tema. Hay que hacerlo, hay que potenciarlo, nosotros hacemos ese trabajo. Yo hablo con toda la gente de las empresas para darles a conocer la universidad.

CR: ¿Qué le ha parecido a la gente de las empresas la fusión?

AS: Sí, les ha parecido interesante. En las empresas y en la sociedad portuguesa en general la fusión ha sido muy bien vista. Ha sido vista como un ejemplo a seguir, algo que no es fácil de hacer, que a lo mejor en otros sectores de actividad no ocurriría. En las empresas ocurre, pero en el sector público no. Lo que me hubiera gustado, pero no he conseguido, es lo que hicieron en Aalto con el fondo. Las empresas han colaborado, tenemos gente de las empresas en el Consejo General y siempre hemos tenido el apoyo por parte de las empresas a que se hiciese la fusión.

CR: Pensando en el proceso de la fusión, ¿qué características destacarías del proceso de fusión, de la negociación? ¿Qué elementos clave hay en ese proceso? ¿Había un equipo a cargo de la fusión?

AS: Sí, estábamos los rectores algunos vicerrectores y otra persona escogida por nosotros.

CR: ¿Cuáles serían los procesos críticos de éxito de este proceso de fusión?

AS: El alineamiento respecto al objetivo. Todos evaluamos que era algo de gran valor que ocurriera. Teníamos reuniones diarias, preparación de documentos... Primero hicimos un documento que presentamos a la comunidad, después discusión durante mucho tiempo, un documento estratégico.

CR: ¿Había un equipo de fusión como tal? ¿Echabas en falta a alguien?

AS: Sí, los rectores, dos vicerrectores de cada lado y creo que una persona más. No echaba en falta a nadie porque hablábamos con muchísima gente. Esto era el núcleo. Después hemos nombrado comisiones que trabajaban en el plan estratégico, muchas cosas. Pero yo creo que te referías a un equipo de fusión. De verdad tenía la gente que te he dicho y tenía también cinco comisiones distintas donde estaba gente que estaba en este equipo y que trabajaba en algunos casos con hasta 10 personas. Los equipos estaban relacionados con temas como la oferta formativa, con la organización de la investigación, con el plan estratégico, etc.

CR: ¿Tuvisteis apoyo de alguna consultora?

AS: No, nada. Bueno, hemos hablado durante un día, creo que unas horas con alguien que tenía relación con alguno de los vicerrectores, pero nada más. Para liquidar el proceso era contratar una consultora, porque no conocen la cultura de la universidad y entonces nadie en ninguna consultora tiene experiencia en fusiones de universidades. Eso es un error que no se debe cometer. Crearía anticuerpos en la universidad si lo hicieras. En la universidad tienes que tener quien conoce el sistema, la gestión, el sector, el negocio.

CR: ¿Cuáles son las características de la etapa previa a la fusión?

AS: Para correr bien tienes que tener una gran empatía entre la gente con la que estás trabajando. Tienes que identificar todos los problemas potenciales. Hay que percibir lo que es crítico. No puedes tomar ninguna decisión desde el punto de vista organizativo. Eso lo tienes que dejar para después de la fusión. Si empiezas a tomar decisiones organizativas antes de la fusión crearás anticuerpos contra la fusión. No porque algo pueda ser hecho mejor o peor, porque nunca tienes a toda la gente de acuerdo. Alguien se sentirá amenazado. Un ejemplo, tienes un departamento de recursos humanos en una universidad y otro departamento de recursos humanos en otra universidad. Cuando empiezas a discutir en la fase previa de la fusión cómo lo vas a organizar, qué núcleos tendrás, quién es el dirigente pues en menos de nada tendrás un lío. Lo que yo creo que hay que discutir son cuestiones estratégicas, la organización general, como es el centro de poder, cómo serán los estatutos, eso es fundamental. Qué es lo que vamos a aprobar en los estatutos. Eso ha sido aprobado exactamente como estaba acordado y eso es lo que hay que hacer antes de la fusión. Yo no he discutido con nadie ni el equipo después de la fusión, ni la organización de los servicios centrales. Sí que he discutido la organización de las facultades. Sí, es verdad, porque hemos acordado desde el inicio que no íbamos a introducir ninguna discontinuidad sobre la organización de las facultades ni cambiaríamos la autonomía que ya existía en algunas de ellas y se ampliaría en otros casos.

CR: Porque vosotros no habéis tenido fusiones de departamentos ni de facultades.

AS: No ha habido fusiones de departamentos ni de facultades, porque nosotros no tenemos ningún departamento donde puedas decir que hay gente de más. Eso sería un problema. Lo que ocurrió aquí es que hay un potencial para que las cosas marchen bien que resulta del hecho de que tienes mucha gente que se jubiló en los últimos años y no ha sido sustituida. Entonces la

capacidad instalada en los departamentos de enseñanza no es suficiente. Entonces es una oportunidad también de tener una ganancia en la fusión que resulta de ahí. Si me dices, bueno yo tengo un departamento duplicado que no tenía alumnos y que había que fusionar, en un caso de esos sí que la gente hubiese querido saber cómo iba a quedar la situación.

CR: ¿Necesitasteis mucho tiempo para esa fase previa?

AS: Un año, incluso algo menos, desde que entré como Rector.

CR: ¿Y qué opinaba el Rector de la antigua Universidad de Lisboa? ¿También tenía un interés por fusionarse?

AS: Sí, él era un gran promotor de la fusión. Tenía una convicción muy fuerte de la necesidad de fusionarse. Esto me lo había comunicado a mi antes de presentarme como Rector en la Universidad Técnica y habíamos acordado que esto debía suceder. Aquello que hablé en ese tiempo es que me presentaba para fusionar las universidades y todos sabíamos que Antonio Sanapaio Nova era alguien que tenía una convicción fuerte de que tenía que hacer la fusión, era un sueño que él tenía.

CR: ¿Hubo algún otro candidato a Rector cuando tú te presentaste?

AS: En la Universidad de Lisboa no hubo otro candidato. En la Universidad Técnica sí hubo un candidato en contra, pero era alguien que no estaba contra la fusión y que incluso colaboró en el proceso de fusión, creía que el plan que teníamos era muy corto en el tiempo.

CR: Realmente es una fusión realizada en un tiempo récord.

AS: Era el tiempo que teníamos. Son las circunstancias. Tienes que ser capaz de analizar las circunstancias y ver qué se puede hacer.

CR: Imagino que tendríais algún tipo de colaboración previa entre las dos universidades

AS: No, todo lo que tenía que ver con la fusión estaba por hacer. Ya se hablaba un poco. Había una comisión que estudiaba la posibilidad de fusionarse antes de yo ser Rector, pero el trabajo estaba muy en el inicio. Eso sí, había un clima de colaboración. Teníamos programas conjuntos importantes, por ejemplo, una licenciatura del primer ciclo de formación en Ingeniería Biomédica que de hecho es un master integrado, pero más que entre las universidades entre dos facultades. Son muy autónomas y ellas deciden ahí.

CR: Y respecto a la cultura, ¿habéis tenido algún tipo de choque? Normalmente una universidad técnica es más ejecutiva que una universidad más generalista. ¿Ha ocurrido algo en este respecto?

AS: Yo no lo he percibido, aunque es verdad lo que dices, pero yo creo que tienes culturas distintas entre las universidades, pero más que entre las universidades la cultura es distinta entre las diferentes escuelas y facultades. Especialmente en la Técnica, porque las escuelas existían mucho antes que la propia universidad. La Escuela de Ingeniería, el Instituto Superior Técnico tenía 100 años, y ya tenía 30 años cuando se creó la Universidad Técnica. La facultad de veterinaria y la de agrónomos tenía, en el momento de la creación de la Universidad Técnica tenía ya 100 años. Entonces el problema de la cultura yo no creo que haya existido.

CR: Y a nivel tuyo, ¿cuál ha sido el cambio de ser Rector de la Universidad Técnica a Rector de la Universidad de Lisboa?

AS: Nada, sólo más trabajo.

CR: Ahora os llamáis "Universidad de Lisboa", y habéis asumido el nombre de una de las universidades que se fusionaron.

AS: Las dos universidades anteriores tenían exactamente la misma dimensión, en alumnos, en todo. La Universidad Técnica, por tener la Escuela de Ingeniería fundamentalmente, tenía un presupuesto más alto, porque la Escuela de Ingeniería atrae muchos más contratos con la industria, con investigación, etc. Esa era la caracterización de las universidades. Hemos discutido durante un período muy corto el nombre de la nueva universidad. La gente de la antigua Universidad de Lisboa casi ni hablaba y nos dejó a la voluntad para escoger el nombre de la universidad. Lo que ocurre es que la marca "Universidad de Lisboa" tiene un valor incalculable. Entonces era obvio que, a lo mejor en el momento de la fusión, o en el año que pasas después de la fusión, te puede hacer algún mal a la gente que viene de la Universidad Técnica, que ahora está en una universidad que tiene el nombre de la otra universidad, pero en 10 o 50 años nadie se acordará. Desde el punto de vista externo, piensa en un polaco, en un sueco, en un español, ¿cuándo le dicen Universidad de Lisboa qué piensa? En la principal universidad de Lisboa. Es un problema de valor de la marca, nada más. Hemos cambiado el logotipo, el acrónimo, la dirección del sitio web. Ya no se dice UL, ahora es Ulisboa. Pero el valor de la marca es clave, es una cuestión de racionalidad. Y no puedes tener discusiones sobre esto. Tiene un valor para todos: para los estudiantes, para los profesores, para los que vienen a estudiar, para los que vienen a hacer su investigación con nosotros. En Finlandia tuvieron que buscar otro nombre porque no tenían a la Universidad de Helsinki dentro de la fusión.

CR: ¿Y las personas se siguen sintiendo identificadas con las universidades originales?

AS: No, aunque pensándolo bien puede que la gente de derecho todavía siga respondiendo "en la clásica" a la pregunta "¿dónde estudias?". Con eso quieren decir en la Facultad de Derecho. Nada más. Entonces a lo mejor lo pueden decir, "en la clásica", pero con eso no quieren decir "de la antigua Universidad de Lisboa". Jamás lo han dicho de esa forma.

CR: Entonces no ha sido necesario implementar alguna política para reducir choques culturales.

AS: No, en absoluto. Eso no ha sido necesario. No ha sido un problema porque en la universidad técnica no había una cultura de universidad muy fuerte. Más en la antigua Universidad de Lisboa.

CR: ¿Y algo en cuestión de comunicación?

AS: Una campaña de publicidad no, pero sí algo parecido a lo que se hace en un referéndum, explicando en las escuelas lo que se ha hecho. Con seminarios de entre 50 y 100 personas.

CR: ¿Cuáles son los principales retos a los que se enfrenta la Universidad de Lisboa y que antes no podías afrontar por ser dos universidades diferentes?

AS: Tenemos la obligación de hacer más y mejor en lo que respecta a la captación de fondos de Bruselas en las diferentes convocatorias. Entonces desde el punto de vista del rectorado hay que organizar redes temáticas, redes interdisciplinares. Lo necesario para potenciar todo esto. Desde el punto de vista nacional la obligación es más amplia. Tienes la obligación de traer a la discusión pública aquello que son los problemas de la universidad portuguesa, más que de la propia Universidad de Lisboa. Desde el punto de vista de la enseñanza yo creo que no hay gran diferencia. Hay que probablemente que organizar, es un problema más que otra cosa. Tenemos la obligación de reorganizar parte de la oferta formativa, especialmente la de tercer ciclo, en el

doctorado tienes muchas ofertas de doctorado del conjunto de las facultades y puedes ofrecer mejores programas de doctorado si fusionas los cursos o, al menos, haces aquello que me decías de hacer unos consorcios entre la gente de diferentes facultades. Lo que a mí me gustaría es hacer cursos que fueran únicos en una rama del saber. Bueno. Desde el punto de vista de la oferta formativa, la Universidad de Lisboa no tiene mucho que hacer porque hay una capacidad de atracción de estudiantes muy grande y entonces donde veo problemas, donde no hay soluciones. Por ejemplo, no hay mucha gente que quiera estudiar griego clásico. De todas formas, desde el punto de vista nacional tenemos la obligación de mantener competencia en alguna de esas áreas. Tenemos competencia en eso aquí y en Coimbra. Del resto yo no creo que haya muchos problemas. Hay oportunidades, oportunidades de poner gente trabajando en conjunto. Probablemente en un año tendremos un edificio nuevo que se está terminando donde tendremos investigación en imagiología y estará la gente de ingeniería y medicina. Yo diría que, desde el punto de vista de la fusión, la obligación de la nueva universidad es más potenciar. Yo creo que el partido más grande que puedes tener de esta fusión es hacer mejor trabajo en la investigación y promocionar mejor la universidad. Con esto último atraerás más y mejores estudiantes de fuera y conseguir más participación en proyectos internacionales. Eso lo vemos, cuando creas en conjunto una red en el área de lo agroalimentario donde pones gente de agronomía, de ingeniería, de ciencias, la gente de biología, farmacia. Ahí eso son oportunidades que te vienen de la fusión. Como Rector yo creo que tengo la obligación de organizar mejor esto, porque en la Universidad Técnica de donde yo vengo no había el potencial para tener redes de investigación que pudieran movilizar la gente de diferentes orígenes para hacer el trabajo como aquí. Ahora se te abre el mundo a un conjunto de saberes que antes no tenías. Y se te abre con facultades e investigadores de prestigio. No es lo mismo que posicionarte con una universidad que acaba de ser creada donde no hay un prestigio grande de las escuelas o los equipos. Mismo aquellos como nosotros que tenemos un gran ego, todos reconocen que del otro lado ha venido gente muy interesante, muy buena con quien es muy interesante trabajar. Y es eso. Desde el punto de vista de la proyección de la universidad lo que te he comentado. La oportunidad es muy grande. Lo puedes hacer. Para tener impacto hay que dosificarlo.

9.2.5 Entrevista University of Manchester

Introduction

CR: Why do you think that the merger was necessary?

RM: The reason I think was that both universities were successful in their own ways. They are directly adjacent, they already had one shared department, they shared a lot of services. For example, although we owned separate residences they were managed collectively. Basically, in many ways, we had to cooperate rather than compete already. The result of that was that we were in one's another way. Well, in the sense that, for example, I came from the Chemistry Department, there was another Chemistry Department a kilometer away, both of us had teaching laboratories that needed refurbishing. But if we were going to get money from the Government, which at that time was a possibility, they were not going to give money to one and not give money to the other, basically, so they gave money to neither. There was also a sense outside that people didn't understand "why don't we merge, it is too difficult for us to understand", and although we were very patient with that argument, nevertheless that is a fact, that people don't understand that you are not as well treated perhaps as you might do. I think the other driving force was the idea that was talked about of, the obvious thing as you say is that you want a win-win, that you want

the whole to be more than the sum of the parts. I think there was a feeling that we were developing our own ways on collaboration, but we wouldn't like set, that was the idea. This merger would achieve something that would make a real difference, not just a smooth change but a step change. I think in various ways. Obviously putting together departments that had competed you may hope they will then be able to combine their strengths more successfully, to some extent be more efficient. I mean it was mostly in science and engineering and management that there was overlap, but already there was a collaboration between management activities, again because business said it would support it and we would like to see that. And there was a degree of complementarity, because that is how we found our 'ecological niche'. And so, yes, we are in one's another way. If we want to find land to expand, well, each of us were getting close to the edges of the land we owned, so that was going to be a clash. And I suppose therefore the story before the merger, or surround the merger, not before, the one that was definite was the aim to be whatever a top world-class university means. Though all universities, nearly all, claim to be world-class it is important to ask what they mean by that, we said. Well actually that was one of the interesting discussions we had, what do we mean by that, but in a suitable league table we were looking for top 25, and we haven't achieved that, we are certainly well into the top 50. In some of those league tables, which matter for funding and for such other things, there are aspects of the scoring that just depend on the size of the institution. So, for some of this we are just able to say "by being bigger we will do better the first year after the merger". Now we went from the Victoria University of Manchester, which was approximately 80 in the rankings; the year after the merger by just putting together what we had we became 58.



Imagen 5. Prof. Robert Munn y Carlos Ripoll Soler durante la entrevista

So that was because some of the measures just count. And I think the other thing was, the other factor, Manchester was a good place to do this. It is a very entrepreneurial city although it has always been, the Council has always been run by the Labour Party, unlike Liverpool some 30 years ago, it's been a more pragmatic council. They said quite a long time ago "What do the people who vote for us want? Actually, what they want is jobs, so how do we get jobs for them? Actually, well one thing we can do, we will make the city better, we will have nicer roads, nicer waste bins and things, they have to be made and they have to be installed, but actually by doing that we can attract business, because actually we know, we agree that business makes jobs and so we want to attract business here to make jobs for our people." Whereas from a hard Labour point of view they might say "No, we are against business, it is always bad". So there is a spirit

there of enterprise. I think of the development agencies for the regions, there is a Northwest Development Agency, because it is quite a lot different from the others. It is more active and they were more interested in what we were doing and they ended up by giving 10 million pounds towards the project. I think there was also a sense of the time, that the Government was, a Labor government at that time, they were actually quite interesting in having somewhere, that was a counter-attraction to the Southeast of England, not only in terms of universities, just in terms of policy. To have a strong region, and Manchester was the best candidate for it. It would also be politically attractive. It just also helped to make a better deal, so I think the reasons for it were that, people were fed up with arguing with outsiders that it wasn't a good idea. Well outsiders kept saying it was a good idea, we kept defending saying "no, no, we are OK with each other, we understand each other and so on". There was a logic too. And the feeling that we needed to do something different. If we did not, neither institution would not change. I think within the university, within the Victoria University, the 'old' University of Manchester, some of the people were just in favor of the change, because they thought they needed a shock. It was too successful to change voluntarily but it needed to become more versatile, more agile because UMIST is a smaller place and being seen as doing something distinct. So, it is a much more "can do" attitude in some respect, and it was great shock when we started to do the Research Assessment Exercise, I think it was the first or the second, when UMIST came above Manchester and that really shocked them. They thought "We are big and successful and old, how can this small specialized place doing so well?" So, there were certainly people from inside the university, senior but not the top people, saying "yes we wanted the place to be shaken up because there were a lot of things that needed to be done in a different way". It was too successful to change, too hard to change from inside because it was successful, but it was not as successful as it could be.

CR: And what do you mean by doing things differently?

RM: My view about Victoria University was, they were, they followed rules and conventions. I mean we were dominated by scientists, engineers and managers (UMIST) so the point then was that all of those are professions to do with getting things done, whereas sociologists for instance want to argue about the principles of things, and that's their job. I remember someone in the School of Management saying, which had a sociology section, he said "some of these people disagree with everything as a matter of principle, they are arguing because that is their profession, to argue". So, it was hard to move. Medical Schools are always to some extent a law unto themselves, so anyhow the Medical School, you can't tell a medical School so easily what to do, and then it's harder to tell everybody else what to do. We were a much more cohesive and compact institution, more of one mind I guess on the whole, so it made it easier when we agreed on a thing to just do it. They saw this is one attraction that we had, that "can-do experience" and I think they thought they could benefit from it.

CR: So, you think this is the way of doing the things differently

RM: Once it was agreed that there was something, the process by which it first was a very secret group of people made to decide "was this something worth exploring?". Then there was the process of exploring publicly and then the decision, and then there was the process of getting ready. So, a 3-stage process. But I think it was after the secret stage, you know meetings away from here and so on, which I wasn't involved with, after that then the idea of step change came. This wasn't just making everything bigger, it was making things step up, moving to a different league, and I mean, I've said about having been able to compete with the Southeast of England one of the aims was that it shouldn't be possible to talk about four major research institutions, Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial College and University College London, there should be a fifth, and that merger achieved that. Manchester moved into group of five away from the kind of "chasing

group", on the whole. So that's the kind of thing, that's a step change. It is partly created by size rather than quality, though the quality is already there.

CR: So, you think that there was a kind of conditions that made the merger possible, external and internal in a way.

RM: Well I've said we talked about some of the conditions, the feeling that the local government and national government would find this attractive. I think there was a sense in the funding council (HEFCE) that they wanted to show that mergers could work. There have been some mergers done, not mergers that fail but mergers to pick up a failing institution, which is not the same as a successful institution. And I think the thought was that "if any merger could work well this was one", because as I said the campuses are literally adjacent and already shared a lot of experience and both institutions are pretty highly esteemed so it wasn't a takeover and I think frankly that really was so – except for few cynical people, very few people saw that as a takeover of the smaller partner university by another university that was 3 times in size of the other. Victoria University was 18.000 students compared with UMIST 6.000. We were very good at what we did and some things we did separately. So that was one factor. I think internally you have to have leaders who are willing to contemplate this, willing to start to thinking about the possibility positively. The Vice Chancellor from UMIST in 1995 didn't get on with the Vice Chancellor of Victoria University. So, they weren't going to talk about how they could merge, though they had reasonable relationship, I know both of them reasonably well but they weren't going to talk about merging, particularly I think the new Vice Chancellor here (UMIST), he hadn't come here to close down the university. Unfortunately, I don't think they got along, but when he came from Sheffield and then was, surprisingly, unexpectedly to him, asked to go back to Sheffield to be Vice Chancellor. He'd actually kept on his house, I mean, it's easily commute with Sheffield. It been a long time. He had a lot of social groups there and the opportunity to go back. He phoned me up almost immediately after he had the offer to go back and talked it over to because he needed to talk to somebody (at that time I was the Dean at UMIST). When he left the question was "what about now?". I don't know all of the things that went on behind the scenes because they went on far behind the scenes where I was but one of the Pro Vice-Chancellors was appointed Vice-chancellor, John Garside, in 2002 that also Martin Harris was Vice-Chancellor of the Victoria University, he'd come to the end of a ten-year contract or two five year contracts and he and everyone assumed that there would be something to move on to, some national post. He was a Labour supporter so he was well in with the Government. The expectation was that would be some nice job he would move to as Vice Chancellors do, but nothing turned up so he was going to be appointed for another two years. Now how far this was an accident I don't know, but that meant both of them were appointed for a two years' period ending at the same time. So, it was with that in prospect I think that the secret discussions started to take place about, what do we think we ought to do. There was a meeting for the senior staff and the Heads of Departments in UMIST, we went away for a couple of days at short notice to discuss "how would we actually move forward" and it was clear at that stage more collaboration, with the corresponding departments there, would be welcomed in a suitable way. So, I think that was clearly exploring the ground and that was John Garside one of his earliest actions as Vice-Chancellor. But there was nothing on there like "by the way this is previous to merger", but that set the ground, because there were a lot of people that said "we could do more with our partners across at the Victoria University" so basically that is what happened. Then the Vice-chancellors, who got on better with one another, who were both looking towards their legacy if you like, "what people is going to say about me". If you are like the previous one (UMIST Vice-Chancellor), he didn't want to have a legacy of shutting down the university, but if John Garside who had been there many years and who had been an internal appointment could say "I put the university onto a new path", that would be a nice thing. (I don't mean he said that, but that's my interpretation of how he might have felt. The result is, they didn't necessary see that at that time, but looking back we, the new University

of Manchester looking at its foundation, they would be regarded as two of the founders, and that is nice: "We founded a new university between us, we set aside our differences and we made a new great university". You can imagine that's a nice personal motive, having removed the personal disagreements you can find something to agree. And as I say, whether it was engineered or taking advantage of it, they were both stopping at the same time in 2004.

CR: Why do you think those kinds of preliminary meetings needed to be secret?

RM: It's a good question. I've never heard anyone talk about that. My guess is the concern about merger, or merger versus takeover. There were, UMIST had a tradition of, people who served it for a long time. Once people came they tended not to leave, not because there was nowhere else they could go, but on the whole, they were loyal to the place, because if you could stay here and do your work it is a good place to stay. And there were people, and I can think of particular examples, one of my predecessors as Dean, who still really hasn't accepted the world has changed to move on, and there were quite a lot of senior influential people like that who needed to have a hearing, who could have disrupted the process I suppose, and the process needed to be far run and carefully studied before getting everybody worried, and I assume there were also private talks with the funding council and so if we were to do this kind of thing how would you regard that. Obviously, that was not settled, so I think that was making sure that the circumstances would be favorable if we decided to go. There was still a vote at the end in both universities whether or not to go ahead, but you don't want a few people with strong opinions and negative opinions to be able to divert the discussion from, you want to control de agenda. So, I think that's why, because it involved not just the Vice-chancellors agreeing, but the governing bodies, the councils of the two universities, so they were the people also involved in this discussion about what the shape of any merger might be. It's a funny business but I think it was a secret because it was such a big deal, people could have derailed it or else, if there was a politician who would say "that is bad". Once in UMIST history there were bad things going on here, and one politician was able to take it outside, and he was right because there were bad things going on (this is about 40 years now), but the principle then it was doing bad things, and the politician heard members of the university, of UMIST, who were upset and annoyed by what was going on and he was able to build on that to make a political case, and in that case, he was right. With that story in the background you can imagine people might say we have to be careful not to let false rumors arise. But to be fair the 2 Vice-chancellors started discussing in 2002 I suppose, they were able to discuss, but it was clear the major things they discussed, because 2 or 3 years later there we were, yes, quite a big business.

Merger models

CR: What do you think about the merger models? There are different models to make a merger, like a federation or a simple agreement. Which models did you consider?

RM: I think clearly, they looked around so what models are there, and this was going a be a large university, it was going to be the biggest university in the country in terms of undergraduate students apart from the Open University, so you ask how best you manage such organization and the answer is "you have a diseconomy of scale if you keep the power at the center, because you can't know what's going on so far away". I think fairly soon we got to the point where we did discuss models, although those perhaps after we decided we needed a number from, perhaps 3 to 7 of colleges or faculties that would be significantly independent, they would have power of spending basically. That was the key decision, that you would devolve spending powers to those groups because those groups, even you have 7 of them, they would be the size of a small

university anyway and it wasn't going to be possible to run them. I don't think we looked at a lot of other models of merger, because we could see if you like the Victoria University example, that was a big university in those terms and still they all understood it was difficult to run everything at a distance, that the medical school already did have full executive powers, it had a lot of freedom and actually did quite well, that was hard to argue with them, medical schools are like that, so I think there were we should try if we are going to do something different that's something we really ought to try, and there were other places that were starting having Executive Deans or faculties or whatever with spending power. Looking around the world you find this has become a more common idea, certainly more freedom of spending. I think it is one sort of factor that might become more important, it was national, not just with us, the degree of control, detailed control exercised by the funding council was reducing on universities. I mean, once upon a time for example, there used to be a limit on how many promotions you could make, or how many senior staff you could have. That number was 40%, only 40% of the faculty could be above the grade of lecturer. So that was a very direct control. And all of those removed. When you have more freedom, for example in staff which is the principal cost, and the one where once you hire someone, unless you can fire them, you are going to have them for a long time, so that's why you could be most worried about giving power to lower down, but I think that was the kind of sense about what makes a modern institution work well. These institutions work well, so they needn't more control they needed the potential to be freed to an extent. Sometimes it is hard to tell where those ideas come from before the decision to take ahead during the discussion, the decision to explore, the decision to actually do it or the decision about to how to do it, but I think, the idea that we should devolve things as far as close as possible, decisions should be made as close as possible to the place where they nature, so that obviously, the head of the university should not be determining what you teach on an individual department, that's never been the case, but should faculties be determining what departments teach, they should have some control over that. So that kind of principle of putting the power closest to where it is needed, with checks and balances obviously.

CR: So, for you, how would you define the model that is behind the new University of Manchester

RM: Well, I am not an expert on models for these things but I think that it was that we should have large, we discussed whether to call it colleges or faculties and we ended up with faculties, that were had a substantial degree of autonomy in the decision, in the academic decisions they made, plus, but then the question is what is the university and how that does work. One of the other things we then got was what then does constitute the university. In particular, we had the administrative, the professional support functions would be centrally controlled, so that, for example, the university would decide how finances are managed, now the finances also have to be managed in the faculties, because they have a lot of financial responsibilities too, so they would have their own finance managers too, but they will have two jobs to do. One is to manage the finances for the Dean of the Faculty, but they will also have to be answerable to the Director of Finances of the university for doing things the right way, so that kind of principles arose so there would be heads of administration, heads of finances in the faculties who would be answerable to the central function, so they would be embedded in the faculties, helping the faculties. The day to day discussions would be within the faculties, but how they did things was determined centrally. So, I think that was the model that we evolved. I'm not sure there is a name for it.

CR: Would you say that there is now a single institution called University of Manchester compared to a kind of federation of institutions under the name of University of Manchester?

RM: Yes, it's definitely not federal, that's right. I think that's clear. One of the things – but again some that is fine tuning by Alan Gilbert when he came as the first President, because of course he had several months before the university proper started, so that some of my thinking is not

actually involved with that period – but one of the things he did was to say "well, these people are going to be Deans of the faculties, everyone knows what a Dean of a faculty is, but to make the changes, it's been already decided that we would have a President, not a Vice-Chancellor. The Deans would also be Vice-Presidents, so that together the Deans, and we had then, at that time we had 3 Vice Presidents, for Teaching and Learning, Research, and External Affairs, who were sort of overarching the whole thing. So, these Vice Presidents with the President were the senior management team, so that say, they were all together and you are Vice President, you are not just the Dean of a faculty. And in particular, one of the things, I think this sort of little story that illustrates how that changes happen, that when the division of funding between the faculties is agreed, the Dean of the Faculty is a Vice President and he is involved in that discussion. So, when he goes back to the faculty and says "we've got this money", he can't say "they wouldn't give us any more money", the best he can say is "I couldn't argue for any more money". So, he is on the inside of the institution. So, it restricted structured them on that, and perhaps that sort of thing makes it less of a federation, because the Dean is also a Vice President, so he is "us" in the Faculty but he is also "them" as a Vice President, so I think that was astute and works well. Well I think similar models have now emerged elsewhere, I don't say it was invented here, but it works well.

CR: And do you have differences between faculties and schools or are the same thing?

RM: University is organised into faculties and the only subunits are schools, the only unit below. So, schools are the disciplinary groups below faculties. One of the other things in terms of trying to have a flat structure with the devolution, was to say the university of course recognizes the faculties and it recognizes schools, but no other organisation. You can organise within the schools as you like, departments or divisions, but those have no standing outside the school. The university does not recognize divisions or departments. Well, the number changes but there are about 20 schools and the larger schools can have 3000 students in the biggest ones. So, they all have divisions, they all have ways of organizing themselves but the university doesn't tell them how to organize things and equally it doesn't deal with individual divisions, because it is up to the school to say how to do it. And I had experiences where if you don't do that, you get to, say, at least in the simplest case, divisions were apt to say "we'd like to start a new degree program". And it is not clear whether the School has approved that. So, you say "no, everything is funneled through the School", because that is the responsible body, so no official departments". So, there was a part of lot of trying to, as I said, flatten structures, remove committees; the other example in that sort of area was, and is kind of, depending on your background, either trivial or very important was the pressure of branding. Clearly a new university has to have a new strong brand. It was an important day when all the new signs went up around both campuses, but the consultants we engaged discovered there were 174 different little logos being used by different groups within the university. And again, it was said "we can't do that, that's not allowed, you can't have 174 different letter headings" and so on. We produced a standard which you can use in a certain way and only a very small number of organisations, that were important and needed this, were actually to be allowed to use even a variant of the university heading. So, the Manchester Museum, the Whitworth Art Gallery, Jodrell Bank, and the John Rylands Library are all cultural assets, and Manchester Business School can do that because some of the rankings depend on how independent you are, so if you haven't got your own heading maybe you are not ranked, so that area of signage actually stopped people confusing matters, so we had to have simplifications that everyone can understand.

CR: All people accepted well this change in the identity?

RM: Well, reluctantly. You are within your profession but you cannot represent yourself as University of Manchester in that way. I mean, there were other things like, we discovered that

people from the Business School and the Medical School were not putting University of Manchester on their addresses in publications, so when it comes to citations and so on, they didn't count, so we said them "you have to do that, sorry, you are part of the university. Medical Schools and Business Schools are often semi-autonomous, and we know how you feel, and you are mostly able to behave like that, but still, when it comes to publications, the University of Manchester goes with that, and without that you wouldn't actually exist as you are doing now".

CR: Was it thanks to the merger?

RM: Yes, oh certainly, because there were separate identities and clearly you needed a new identity – having new thinking and starting to sweep away the complications of just years of things building up without anyone taking an overview. And I think having a President from outside helps, you know it was obvious to him, but clearly when you come into an institution that you are responsible for then you look at it and you ask questions. And one of the things he did, just to mention in the same context, he said "I don't want any committees". Well, he actually said "I do have to have some committees by law because the Council has to have a finance committee and there has to be a Senate and so on". But he said "if you want any more committees, at university level, you are going to have to persuade me that it is necessary, and I'll tell you now I'm going to be hard to persuade". So for example, most universities would have a teaching and learning committee, I didn't have a teaching and learning committee to chair, because if the committee doesn't work you can't sack it, you can't dismiss it, you are only going to get another one. If you want to have things done you have to have people who are responsible and if things aren't working you go to them and you say "this isn't working". So, again taking the example from my own case, when it came to program approvals, they were approved within the faculties, who had their own committees if they chose, which they did, but what we agreed was that a summary of the proposal, we had a teaching and learning support office, would go through the office, they would check it and then they would present it to me, and if I was satisfied I would sign it on behalf of the Senate, so Senate did not re-discuss things, and that was one of the things that the President was very strongly against, he was very strongly against rework, against doing the same thing twice in different ways which didn't really add value. So, going back to long ago, to things that the people in the University of Manchester didn't like, in the old one, they said "well, it can take 18 months to get a new program approved, how long is it going to take in the new university?" and I said "a few weeks if everything is right", because if you produce a program proposal that's not contentious, that no-one is going to argue with, and it goes straight forward, within your department agrees, once it leaves the department, what's going to happen? There is an Associate Dean for teaching and learning in the faculty and if he says "no one is going to object to this", he has the power to just sign it and report it. If it is not he has the Faculty teaching and learning committee, but he would report there. If there is going to be an argument, then he would put it there. Otherwise if he says "no, that's fine", it would come to me immediately. So, it could come to me and if everything is fine I could sign, so it could be actually agreed within weeks. So, you spend time where it is necessary rather than putting perfectly good degree proposals through multiple committees just to say "yes that's fine". So, I think that was good, I mean I think there have been some changes since then but not to the basic principle of having people who took decisions rather than relying on committees for everything, but on the other hand I did have a group of advisors, so I took their advice, and I would be stupid not to take their advice, but in the end it was understood that I was making decisions guided by their advice not that we were all deciding together.

CR: So, power has been concentrated since the merger, isn't it?

RM: I think it's been clarified. So, what is the power of a committee? A committee can approve something or not, and that's true, but, I mean leaders can be impatient of committees that take a long time to do things well. So, I think you could say, to some extent, a distinct move away from

the idea of the idea of a university as a community of scholars, you could argue that. But on the other hand, when the communities of scholars become too large then they become less functional, and I think that was the problem, particularly again once you've got these big faculties, you can't spend all your time, well there are more important things to discuss, there's still plenty to discuss at university level about university policy and strategy for a senate that are not about "should this module in this course follow this module..."

CR: I have detected that fragmentation of power is very common in universities and make universities less effective, so this concentration of power could be considered a positive side effect from the merger, isn't it?

RM: We don't like to tell people what to do, but things have to be decided, and sometimes in order to avoid telling people to do something we go around and around and not decide. Yes, because people are frustrated if things take a long time. As I've said this is what I've heard from the people from the Victoria University, it takes 18 months to get anything agreed because it's still an old-fashioned structure and again with some old fashioned people if you like. And the modern age, I think: there is probably how you match the way things are outside as well. So yes, there was a concentration, it became clear where the power was and that made easier to identify whether you like it or not. And equally whether the people from the level above were satisfied with that.

CR: Would you say that this is because of the merger?

RM: Yes, I mean, without the merger it wouldn't have happened. Clearly the merger was not based on the principle that we would do that, but in working out how would it operate, I think that was probably the President's view when coming in. Once you know what's going to happen, because we had to agree early on. Once we'd agreed to start, we had to explore how to do it. And that meant all the academic arrangements because all degree programs had to continue so when the new university starts, you have to be able to take students in and they have to know where they are coming into, so you have to do a lot of academic arrangements, so early on we were discussing how many faculties, how many schools, because people need to know "where do I belong" or "who am I joining with", so those were the things we were concentrating on as well as the academic regulations because we needed those the instant we merge, and we couldn't spend a long time doing it. There is one thing, a small story, we started the new university on the 1st of October 2004. The university term started in the middle of September. Now we took advice, I didn't get this but the advice was, that's the way to do it, because what happens is that the new university starts just after, but you still need a whole year of the old university to run before you admit new students and you start your new programs. So you actually gain a year to do things by officially starting. You could be recruiting students into the new university for the next year rather than saying "what's going to happen", so the recruitment was delayed while you've been deciding. The old departments will guarantee those new students: whatever you were recruited to do you are guarantee to get at the end. But we knew because we had to have a prospectus ourselves. That drove some of the urgency, if we had this target late for merger, we have to have the prospectus for the new university ready before the merger completed so we can recruit students. That means we have to know what degrees we are going to have. So, if we have overlapping degree programs, what are we going to do? So, all the academic things, actually, had to go in front. And in fact, as a result of that was, we didn't give a lot of attention to the administrative, to the professional support things and that took a lot longer to sort out, and we realized we needed, we actually needed to do the same with those, but didn't. We needed to be as urgent in our discussion of the administrative arrangements as of the academic ones, but we didn't do that, and so we spent a lot of time catching up. So, on the merger, the new arrangements for administration had not been finalized. Some people had been appointed to new jobs. Other people were still in the same office but not quite sure who they were working with, and of course in any institution

you tend to rely quite a lot on people who've been there for a lot and know what to do so you would say "John knows how to do this, I'll talk to John". But if John has moved to a different job and you don't necessary know how to contact him, that is no good; in any case, he was busy doing something else. So, as I said, we were driven by, we had to get the academic stuff right for the new prospectus basically, but looking back we should have spent more time in getting the administrative structure. It showed how much we depend on it actually, so we had to make up our rules as we went to launch. And people made up different rules to an extent and then they had to be all brought together. So, there's no doubt with the merger forced us to say we have to think about how we do these things and, again, going back to Allan Gilbert, he said his principle was, as soon he was appointed "we are not going to do anything in this university just because we did it in one of the two precursor universities. We are only going a do it if we believe that's the best thing to do. So, we are going to do everything the best way possible. If we discover we used to do it the best way possible, that's fine, but you will have to persuade me that's the best way". So again, that was part of the "we really will be a new university" as far as possible if now we have a lot of the same people together.

CR: And all of these things were discovered by the people at the university or did you explore some other mergers processes throughout the world?

RM: My belief is, and I wasn't involved at the early stages, that they certainly looked at what have happened elsewhere and how these things happened. And they would have looked I guess outside the country because there was sort of mergers but they were not of the same nature, more a number of colleges coming together to form a university or a polytechnic absorbing a college where it is quite clear that that is more of a takeover than a merger, so I think they would have had to look abroad. I think there was a certain amount of that done. And I think, more particularly, again when Alan Gilbert was appointed as President, the best part of the year before the actual merger took place, he for sure would have done a great deal, he was a very scholarly person, he was a historian by background – he knew what was going around the world for sure, so I'm sure he did a lot of looking at what worked and what didn't work.

CR: Did you have any kind of special relation with other university in the world because of the merger?

RM: Not that I'm aware of. Maybe but I don't know. I don't remember any comments about that.

CR: So, it was more an internal discovery in a way

RM: Yes, within this country we all thought that was where our future, a better future lay and we thought the circumstances were good for it so we decided we would go for that. I mean, there used to be a saying that "what Manchester thinks today London thinks tomorrow", that goes back to the time of Industrial Revolution but nevertheless there was a feeling this was a place, as I've said before, that could do this. Manchester could live with that.

CR: Did you suffer any kind of external pressure in order to be one single university, one federation, or an agreement... Did you have any kind of external pressure?

RM: Not really. There have been pressures earlier on, going a long way back. I remember, there was a story about a business men that said "I can't understand why there is a Business School and a School of Management in the same place. I can't understand why there shouldn't just be one". That was 30 years ago maybe. At the time of Margaret Thatcher, the story goes, Howard Harold Hankins was vice chancellor before Bob Boucher, so from 1976. He told the story that someone phoned up and said "Mrs. Thatcher thinks it would be a good idea actually if you would

merge with Salford University", it's a more technical university here in Manchester, actually half an hour walk away. It was also one of the technological universities. It could be seen as more similar in general philosophy to UMIST but it was much lower down in all ranking tables. So, the phone call came saying "Mrs. Thatcher thinks it could be a good idea if you and the University of Salford merge". And according to him, and of course stories are polished as you tell them, he told this person "well, I'm very grateful to Mrs. Thatcher for her advice but the university has a charter from Her Majesty the Queen and if Her Majesty the Queen says we should merge then I will consider it seriously", and he said "at that time I thought I'm never going to get a knighthood now" which he didn't.

CR: So, the suggestion came directly from Margaret Thatcher's government?

RM: That is the view in Margaret Thatcher's time, you know they thought it was untidy and she liked things tidy so there was that suggestion, but the autonomy we had was sufficient that no one could force us. And no doubt, we wouldn't have been helped because there were these external voices. It was Margaret Thatcher's listening industry. I mean the story was, in government, she would go to a dinner and sit next to somebody who had a good story to tell and the next day she came into the office and said "right, this businessman says it is too complicated having all these universities of Manchester, we need to cut the number ". That was the kind of story she was very easily affected by. I don't have direct knowledge but that pressure went back a long time. People didn't understand why we needed 2 universities. The other thing which I should say, perhaps, is that, by way of history, UMIST has the University of Manchester in its name, so some people didn't realize it was ever separate. The Manchester College of Science and Technology was founded long ago, but in 1903-1905 it came to an agreement with the Victoria University of Manchester that it would award Manchester degrees, and as part of that the College of Science and Technology became the Faculty of Technology in the university. So, we counted as a faculty of technology and the Principal of the college was the Dean of technology. Now, that was for academic matters, so we had a concordat, like the Vatican with the Italian state. So, an agreement. That ran for very many years, so that for example if you want, when I was appointed here, I got one letter from UMIST where I was employed but another letter from the University of Manchester saying you are also appointed as a member of the Faculty of Technology. Now, it happened later on that they separated the role of Dean and Principal (the Head of the College). When it was originally done, the Principle had time to be Dean as well. But later on, particularly one of the subsequent Principals became a Minister in the Labor government in the 1960's and so he needed someone to look after things for him. The Principal was more the executive and the Dean was the academic. So, the Dean, when I became Dean we had decided, I go back into explain how this happened, but it was decided we had Pro Vice-Chancellors, but we wouldn't have a pro vice chancellor of teaching and learning, but keep the office of Dean which was basically the same kind of things, because we had it for 90 years. As I said UMIST was the faculty of technology, it meant among other things, when you wanted to make promotions they had to pass through the University of Manchester Senate because they were going to be University of Manchester appointments as well as UMIST appointments. And, there came a time when they couldn't afford as many promotions as we could, so what happened was these cases were coming to senate, and UMIST people would get promoted who scored less highly than Victoria University people. But that was because of money. They couldn't promote more, they just didn't have enough places. And everybody was uncomfortable with that "why are we promoting these people that wouldn't be promoted in our system". That's true, but they were also very miserable. I mean we had one of my colleges in chemistry was elected a fellow of the Royal Society and he wasn't a professor. Now most people, their achievements have been recognized by being made a professor before they get to be a Fellow of the Royal Society, but he wasn't, so we made a case to the University of Manchester to make him professor. At that time UMIST didn't have our charter so we had to make the case, and some of them we said "we should send this case out to referees",

and others of them said "it's been through the Royal Society, they are the referees, who else would you choose but the people from the Royal Society". So, it was ok, but illustrates the kind of sense of, you know, "we have to do things our way, we don't trust anybody else". But yes, we didn't at that time have our own degree awarding powers, but because of these things, because we gained a feeling that university should be sufficiently independent, there was a feeling it was restraint of trade if you like. If they could stop us doing what we wanted to do, then it was not a fair competition, so we applied for degree awarding powers which we achieved in 1994 and that's when the Principal became also Vice-chancellor. I mean just because of this background you'll find across Britain there are places someone who is Principal and Vice-chancellor or Vice-chancellor and Principal. That person is always the Principal of some college. So, the old Scottish universities all have a Vice-chancellor and Principal, so University of Edinburgh has that, and the deputies to the Vice-chancellor are Vice-principals as well. So, it became Principal and Vice-chancellor, with the principal representing the executive and the Vice-chancellor representing the academic. And, as I say, a Dean plus Pro Vice-Chancellors. So, then we could award our own degrees so we were definitely independently and I think that also enabled us to rejoin. We were definitely an independent university with our own separate charter, degree awarding powers, deciding to merge with the University of Manchester. If we had not had that it would have been a takeover, it would have been seen very much a takeover.

CR: And what about the consensus? Did you have good consensus in each institution about becoming a single one or not?

RM: Yes, I mean, there were strong voices against, but when it came to votes they were by large majorities, I mean, I can't really remember but there were certainly 80% or more. So, it was quite clear that by that stage all the arguments had been sufficiently rehearsed and opportunities to discuss had made viable the yes. So actually, we had, in this same building we had a meeting for the UMIST senate to decide what to do, because there was a big meeting room more convenient than anywhere else.

CR: So, there was no kind of hostility in terms of people really against that.

RM: Yes, I mean there were all sorts of people who thought, I mean, I suppose, I know more about the UMIST side of course because I was at UMIST at that stage. There were those who thought we would lose our identity and we should not go on. Well we would lose the separate identity, that's clear, but it hadn't been understood for a long time. I mean I should say I was very strong always using the UMIST name, not the long name but UMIST because you didn't have to ask what it meant it's like when companies they become their initials rather than what they initially do and so we used that. I was very much in favor of that, but I changed. Not everyone thought it was a good idea and found it difficult because they had always worked for one institution and they didn't want to change. That was, it wasn't just all the people neither fairly a lot. I mean at the very youngest end I said that we assure students that they could graduate with degree that they signed up for, that was absolute necessity. In every department but one, the students said, "no, we will have it, but we will give you the choice if you want to earn your degree from the new university. You can choose whether you have a degree from UMIST or from Victoria University or from the new university". And the advice was "well, the old ones are going to get out of fashion, the new one is the one that is going to last so you don't want to have to explain for the next 40 or 50 years which institution it was you graduated from. But in computer science the students said "no, we signed up for UMIST computation". There were two departments, computer science and computation. Computation was less interested in hardware and more interested in software engineering and things like that. The computer science was much more into hardware and things like that. But those students unanimously agreed they all were going to go for the UMIST degree. So, there were young people as well who wanted to retain that identity as well as old professors

that made their careers here. So, there was a significant minority; there were some I suppose who were just quietly against it, someone noisily against it, and some who when the merger came there was an opportunity for people who wanted to retire early to go and clearly there were some who said to me "well, you know, I've only got 2 or 3 years to go and they are offering good terms to leave now and I don't want 2 or 3 years of disruption so I'll go now". And so those who went were perhaps not so keen, certainly not so keen on the benefits that would rise from the disruption that would be inevitable.

CR: But nobody lost his or her position because of the merger?

RM: There was a guarantee, and that was one of the important things, it was expensive but important to get people onside, that no one would lose their jobs as a result of the merger. That there wouldn't be any forced redundancies for 2 years. So, for 2 years was, and I think it was very smart. Once you do the merger you need everybody onside and actually because of the diseconomies of getting everything going and the duplications you need more people and with everything going you need more people just to run things, in particular for the first 2 years we were running 3 academic systems. We had the old UMIST ones, the old Victoria University ones and the new university ones, because I know, because I was helping to run them. So, we had to run 3 things in parallel, although of course everyone was trying to make the convergence as soon as possible. Again, in Chemistry we rearranged, both of us rearranged the second year of our degree program so we could merge the third year and that kind of thing. And that's why we needed those academic discussions very early, so that it would be possible to run a single program that we could still badge but we have the final year options, we still kept it for that kind of thing, so that we could say "you've got the degree you've signed up for". But for two years the promise was there would be no structural redundancies: everyone would be kept on, they will be found something to do, and in fact it took us a year before someone said "we really must think about structural redundancies for another year because we are only after the 2 years", and someone said "we said we were going to do this, we really ought to do this" because we've got more people hired than we actually need and there have to be some economies of scale now but, as I said, initially you don't get those from day one, and there should be, because you still have to run 2 financial systems that have to be merged and 2 student systems have to be merged, we started a new one but whatever it is all of that has to be run, so it takes time to do those things. I've said early on that when the pressure is on, "where are all of this people who used to help do stuff?". Some of them got new jobs, because we know we need a new head of faculty administration, well, ok, "so that means I've lost the senior administrator from wherever", but equally some people never found a suitable job, although they said "up to two years there would be no structural redundancies, and even after that attempts will be made to find people alternative placements" but, certainly some people did a series of jobs and they couldn't really be found a new place, so some of them left not very happy after 2 or 3 years but that was unfortunately inevitable. Someone who I worked closely with here, her position was duplicated by someone more senior who got the post when they both applied for it and there really wasn't room for two of them and she couldn't find another suitable location. There were unfortunate things like that. But anyway, that guarantee of no redundancies for structural reasons for 2 years I think was important in saying "yes, I'll be ok for the time being and I can see what is like and there will still be a redundancies scheme that I can take any time within a couple of years", but then the rule was "and after this, any early retirement scheme will be less generous", we guarantee that the extra money we put into your pension will be less and less year on year. It's never going to be as good as it is now and you have to say that, you have to mean it and you have to stick to it, which I think the university did. You will get a better deal. I mean, there is a calculation been made, but basically you can make the calculation based on "it's never going to be better than this". So, I mean the usual way this is done for the academics was to say "we will credit you as well as you've done so many more years' service, with an additional number of years' service" so the limit is "we will reduce the number of

that years we rely on" so that increases your pension entitlement because it increases how many years is done. That is how it works for the academics.

CR: Thinking on merger models, some are voluntary and some others are forced. What is the case of Manchester?

RM: Well I think it is voluntary, although there were people outside who said "why don't you do it?". There is no doubt of it. There was I believe an encouraging environment. I don't know how far the encouragement was spoken to the leaders at the time. We could perfectly well have not done it. In particular, we had a vote, and if it that had gone the wrong way we would have not done it. We would not have done it if the vote had gone the wrong way, so we were not forced to do it, we voted and we voted in favor. We might not be too stupid like turkeys voting for Christmas. I think that shows that it wasn't imposed from the management of the both institutions. There was a vote from the senate of both institutions, they were independent, and the understanding was "unless both of them vote in favor, it doesn't go ahead". You have to win the vote in the separate universities for the whole thing to go ahead. I don't think it could be regarded as forced in any realistic sense.

CR: So, the management in both institutions was in favor of the merger

RM: Yes, so that would be the Heads of the institutions and the Heads of the Councils plus some other people, and there were, after all sorts of discussions and opportunities for people to rise questions.

CR: But was the Head of each institution receiving some kind of external pressure to move this forward by convincing the Senate?

RM: No, I don't believe so. I mean, looking back, there was certainly one forced merger, in Cardiff, a long time ago, there was a University Wales Institute of Science and Technology (UWIST). There was some financial misconduct at Cardiff University, so the head of UWIST took over both places and basically merged them into a new one so UWIST disappeared in the process. That was forced because basically you cannot afford it. Now I suppose, to be fair, I was just thinking back on other models. There were other attempts to look at merger, but I am just trying to think about the timing. We had the London Metropolitan University merger and I think it must have been before, and there were also suggestions about Imperial College and University College but, I know we were members of a committee at the time when the Imperial and University College management announced they were thinking on merging and immediately the senate said "no, we are not going to do it", and that was because they hadn't been involved. I remember saying "if the first thing you hear is management saying 'we are going to do it' rather than 'we are reporting' or 'exploring' it, that's a bad sign". London Metropolitan, they had a problem that they had 2 Vice-chancellors who were not retiring and they said "one will be chief executive and one will be Vice-chancellor", and they sorted out those roles, but that really didn't work. It is hard to do that. Again, you can see models that eventually worked, but London Metropolitan University had other problems, financial problems and management problems since the merger, but I don't think they are part of it, though they had a rocky start because of that. There are some other examples, UCL/ Imperial, that would be from a position of strength but they were a long way apart, so again, what the institution looks like. That's why, you can see we have the advantage geographically. Even so the 10 minutes' walk between the places is still demanding. I mean we organized a shuttle bus to take people back and forth even though it is an easy walking distance, but not when it is raining. Especially before the merger was fully completed so while we were doing a lot of work and spending a lot of time. I mean I bought a whole new briefcase just to carry things back and forth between the institution because of this work on the academic regulations so I just had

to keep going meetings with a lot of papers and catching the little bus to go up, but only when it rained. I walked for the good of my health.

Context and the role of Government

CR: And what about the Government? Did they have any kind of role?

RM: No, I think, my sense is they didn't have any direct role. I mean, the way they organize it is hands off, arm's length, they send letters to the Funding Council saying what the funding council should do in broad terms and I'm sure the ministers would have been, the Funding Council would have discussed it with the ministers to say "we have powers to do this and support it in many different ways, is that ok?". So, I'm sure they could have had a veto. I'm not aware of anything that said "you should or you shouldn't do it". But again, the sense that "maybe it would be nice". The government at the time having more ministers from outside of London than Southeast, perhaps than the present government, feeling that the North could do with a bit of cash this could be a good thing. Politically I think there was a sense that it was ok but I don't think I got a sense there were any direct pressures.

CR: But do you think they had a goal like "they are doing what we want, keep them going"

RM: Yes, what I mean, I think I've said that there was a feeling that the government was quite keen to see a successful merger to show that it could work and I don't think they were... I think they were looking out for any opportunities that might occur so they could have an example. But I don't think they went to the extent of going around and saying "why don't you merge?" or whatever. So, I think they were pleased to have this one and my view was that if this one couldn't work then nothing could work, so they needed this to work. I think that was the principal political imperative "if this is going to be done it had to work because then we can say this could work". But everything was favorable. Couple strength, being adjacent, a long tradition of working together, it would be hard to think of any more positive things. The only possible difference was that we did have some overlapping departments, there were some but not so much.

CR: Thinking more in the UK Higher Education System, do you think mergers could be a global answer to the challenges UK system faces?

RM: It answers some questions but it poses others. I think one of the things we've seen is that some universities are actually demerged.

CR: Like a kind of divorce

RM: Oh yes, I mean, to be fair yes that was because, to follow up your metaphor, because they were living separately anyway. You know, the university once was the University of Bedford which was De Montfort University, it had a campus in Lincoln and it was just at the time when gathering colleges around seemed a good idea. It has now floated off Lincoln and that's doing very well, it also had a Humberside campus, that wasn't working so they got rid of that. I think there's been a more fluid period. So, I think mergers can work but you have to know what it is you want. I think you have to have a story, a simple story, I mean it is a bit like you have in business, the "elevator pitch", so that in the elevator, the step change I think it was for us, that we are not just merging but we want to make a step change, so that we are be bigger and better and I think without that story, very short story the "elevator pitch", if you can't do that then it is not clear mergers are a solution. Clearly there are different problems you may want to solve, and equally you get diseconomies of scale. Here we are all adjacent to one another and so on, but, for example, this Manchester Metropolitan University, literally, just over there, literally adjacent to us and I don't

think anyone would dream of merging there, that was Manchester Polytechnic, not just snobbery, just it is because they are setup to do part time studies, evening work and we are not. We are occupying different ecological niches. It maybe that one day that could become a super university but at present there is not such a motivation. They are both big enough, there are any economies of scale already there. And equally there is the Royal Northern College of Music which is again adjacent to the university. They acquired their own degree awarding powers for taught degrees having previously awarded Manchester degrees. That's in part because our music is included within the Arts faculty, they want stay as a conservatoire and be friends and work together as necessary. I think merger is, you have to know what you are doing for, so I don't think it can't be a solution to some problems, but you can also end up with an institution that isn't manageable. Separate campuses don't have to be wrong, but you have to know what they are for and how to manage them. I mean, the University of Derby acquired a campus in Buxton, that's quite a long way away, it's not an easy journey but there's no higher education provision in the area, so there's a good reason to have higher education there, and it's probably too small to exist independently, so it makes sense. Actually, I did a trial review at the University of Derby and I asked "while you've got this new campus how often do the senior people go there", and the Deputy Vice Chancellor said "I go there two days a week", that's what you have to do to make it work as a university rather than just a separate institution that happens to share things, in my opinion. So, I think it worked, it wasn't fully successful as it might be here, we haven't got up to 25 in the rankings because there are some persistent difficulties in getting more money and getting research strength. Top 50 is good, top 25 was certainly what we are aiming for, but there is a lot of competition as everyone says. While you are trying to improve so is everybody else. But going into the top 50 and staying there is perhaps Ok. It also depends who's ranking you take. We, and that's one of the questions we had to decide early on, we want Top 50 in the world, Top 25 according to who, so we ended up with the Shanghai Jiao Tong index and guided by, well for a research-intensive university that makes some sense, and also the President's feeling that all the other rankings underestimated the strength of the United States universities. When you looked in practice what was important, where people went and what people envy was always in the United States. The United States universities were not just a handful of very good universities and then a lot, they are a lot of very good universities and he felt the Shanghai Jiao Tong recognizes that better and it fitted us well. The other rankings underestimate the American universities, and one of the reasons is that they overweight the importance of foreign faculty. The United States is big enough and important enough, although there is quite a lot of foreign faculty, it doesn't need to hire, there's always plenty of good people to hire from within the United States. They may have come to country as postdoctoral or PhD students, but there is plenty there, whereas, we at the University of Manchester in its first couple of years 40% of the new appointments were from outside the country, and we were saying that's fine. Yes, that we regarded that as showing that we recruit the best people from everywhere, but in the United States is a large fraction of everywhere for the purposes of academic excellence, so if they get ranked down because they have not so many overseas staff, then that is underweighted, so, as I said, they are all judgements. Also, I think, the Shanghai Jiao Tong index doesn't change the weightings so rapidly from year to year as the others, so it is a more consistent indicator, so we felt that way. And it is willing to discuss with people how it does openly.

CR: And the good thing of the Shanghai Ranking is that you can make some sort of reverse engineering to see how they calculate things, not like the others that are based more on opinions.

RM: That's right, so I am asked to say what I think of universities around the world by one of the ranking bodies and I don't think I know enough anymore to say. As a matter of principle I don't respond because it would be out of date and prejudiced but there are plenty of out of dated and prejudiced people are probably out there too

CR: And what about, because we've talked about mergers about potential solution of problems and challenges in higher education, but do you think it is a question of size, or do you think it is an optimal size? Is it a question of being as big as possible?

RM: Yes, I'm sure that you noticed, although I've said within the university we are going to have three layers, you know there is enough going on underneath on the School layer. There are 3.000 students in the biggest school, there is a lot of stuff going on that you can't get a grip on. So that, it's hard to do, I mean I think, yes becoming bigger clearly there can be some economies of scale, you still only need one director of finance, but on the other hand you need 4 heads of finance in faculties or whatever it is, and I think in a small institution, the opportunities to develop your staff are a minority. And I think we saw some of that in UMIST, I'm talking particularly not much on the academic side, but actually the professional support staff on whom modern universities do depend a lot and we need to understand all the things they can do for us but, I realized as the head of Chemistry at UMIST, our technical staff, there was nowhere for them to go. If they were very good, well other departments have taken our staff, but if you are already head of the technical staff here where else could you go, and if you are junior member you couldn't get a general training so we actually did some work (at UMIST) on developing a general training scheme and apprentices, so that we would you train people generally. But, I think the idea of training people for general support roles and then having more of a progression I think in a larger institution does help, so that you can go from being head of something in a Faculty to be the head of the something for the whole University, whereas UMIST was too small to have these subsets, so we recognized that we were small, in UMIST, we were, to some extent a monoculture – science, technology, engineering and management. We had already decided we wanted to develop we were going to develop to more biological things but we didn't have the core biology so that was going to be quite difficult. And more in the sort of applied social sciences building on that, so those were the only things we'd identified where we thought there was a demand that we wouldn't be banging up against well-established demands as well. So, you could argue the virtues for, the advantages of merger if you are a small place and you see the disadvantages, you lack scale, greatness for larger places, because always it is trouble. You get new people coming in and disrupting your old comfortable ways, but then the disruption maybe is what you decide your institution needs. Disruption maybe one way of meeting your needs. If you are head of an institution it is hard to say "I think that place needs shaking up" but if you are actually shaken up by doing things, you might achieve certain things that come down in a different way, not by the chaos theory of management but still things are loosened that then can be rearranged.

CR: So, there is a kind of optimal size, would you say that? In terms of students of academics for instance? You may say this place is big enough?

RM: Well, I don't think, I mean it just continues to grow as student numbers across the country continue to grow. Recently some of the older universities are "selecting universities" rather than "recruiting universities", so they decided that maybe they should not go all out for every growth in student numbers they possibly can. So, my guess is that there could be other universities this size that are able to push up in size but it gets more difficult after that. I mean, in this case, I had to know where we fit in, just in terms of the physical restraints of space but, and again, Manchester Metropolitan University they acquired have some teacher training colleges, now they've already closed two of those campuses in order to concentrate locally causing much distress. The Catering College, again, that is about 3 km down the road, that has been closed because there is no longer enough space for that so 1960 buildings in there, some of these buildings are rather tired. So, I think that the honest answer is "I don't know". I have a sense that universities elsewhere can be enormous in other countries, but it has, I mean, trying to help you to understand after the merger here, this is the size of a small town. The population here is a small town, and managing a small town is a big job. Going to a big town is whole different job and you need a lot more independent

bodies. To organize something much bigger as a whole institution I think would be difficult but I haven't tried to run this one of my own, and I don't have a lot of detailed experience of the ones twice the size. But around the world I think things tends to stick around under 100.000, don't they?

CR: Yes, usually the ones that are in the Top 100 in the Shanghai Ranking are under 40.000 students.

RM: And there we have some very small specialist ones as well.

CR: And do you think there is a kind of "Return of Investment", in social terms? If so, has as been positive in the case of University of Manchester?

RM: Yes, I think it has supported the city's ambitions for growth, I think, and it has helped to focus some of the inward investment in region, which is one of the reasons why the city was investing in favor, why the Northwest Development Agency gave us 10 million pounds. I'm sure one of the banks, an American bank, decided have its headquarters here rather in London, and that was a factor, I mean the city could get them a good location and so on, communication helps so that's one of the other advantages of being in Manchester rather than elsewhere. The airport that flies to other significant cities. But I think all the research here about universities are economically beneficial for their regions, and bigger and more powerful one is better if you have more research funding there tend to be more people spending in the region. So, I think one of the things that happens is that there's been an enormous amount of buildings, just new buildings for the university. That has been a great influence on the building trades and still going on, and it is still not finished. We had an initial master plan and now a new master plan. And I mean the turnover is now, it's about a billion pounds, a year, and again people outside don't understand universities, you tell them they are the size of a small town and it has turnover of a billion of pound a year. And they certainly start to realize what's the scale of enterprise a university is. And that has gone up, I guess it may have doubled with time because it was more like half a billion I think. And all the indications are there is a multiplier factor of about 2 or 3 or something in between to that so I think that helps (i.e. the university turnover yields 2 or 3 times as much economic activity in the region for staff and student spend etc.). And as I said outside, there's still a large number of people who are very fond of the institution, they like it. Now of course, when you are a student you don't necessary know any better than where you are going and you don't know what other places are like, but still you know, I've been in Saudi Arabia a couple of times this year, some of the people came to me and said "I did my PhD in your department" and someone else came and said "I graduated with an MBA last year and we are really delighted to see someone from Manchester". So, it clearly has that kind of effect that hasn't been lost in merger. It would be hard to say that separately the institutions would be as successful as they are jointly today, but it is hard to imagine how they would be like, certainly, but I don't think the investment would have come. The investment would not have come in the same way if we've been separated. I think people like to invest in new things.

CR: We have already talked about rankings, but were rankings and globalization a key topic in the merger?

RM: Yes, I think so, I mean, first of all within the country we have to get out of the idea that there are four major universities in the country and only four. We have to be the fifth. Secondly yes, a university that is going to succeed has to have an internationally outlook and we already are but there has to be a strong press. A lot of that was recognizing what was already going on. As the world is becoming more international, although we never had anyone with a sort of internationalization post and I don't think we've ever had an internationalization strategy in my time, although we talked about it, basically because I think the President drove that, but yes we

had policies in support of that, like a clear view of who we would have cooperative agreements with and so universities in other countries where, when we said we had an agreement, would then people say "who", would not say who they say "Oh yes, quite so", or else one that fits in some part of our mission. One of the strong things of the mission again driven powerfully by the first President that carries on now is the social responsibility mission, that is one of the three things and, to say well, why are you validating a master degree for teachers in Bangladesh, that's not a big and important country, rather that it is big and important in its way, but this is a World Bank funded project and they need more teachers and we are providing the expertise to help them to train the teachers. So that's what a big ugly university should be doing. It should be making the world a better place. That's not just by collaborating with similar universities but, on the other hand, for the really cutting edge things, we have to be able to collaborate with the best universities in the world or universities that bring something that is essential from what we see. Again, there would be a better result. So, internationalization has been certainly strong.

CR: What do you think about how the others universities in the UK reacted to the Manchester merger?

RM: They thought we've done a clever thing, but again it wouldn't be necessarily being easy for them to do the same thing, because they weren't in the same position. If UMIST had merged with Manchester Metropolitan University then a lot more universities would have said "yes, we've got 2 universities here, one is the old polytechnic, one is the old university perhaps we ought to see about merging, maybe this is something for us" so they would have seen it after the event perhaps more than inevitable than for themselves but they were very envious for the fact that we got money given to us and loan to us in order to do it. I've mentioned the Northwest Development Agency, other people said "our regional Development Agency has never given us a penny and I don't think they would, whatever we did". So there was a sense that we were fortunate but yes, I think there was admiration mixed with envy. So I think there was a general feeling like "yes this was good and they would have to watch us". We are still on their radar because, I suppose it is partly because Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial and University College, none of those is a conventional city university. This is a city university so in other cities you always have an excuse for why you are not like Oxford or Cambridge or Imperial or University College, but it's hard to have an excuse why you are not like Manchester.

CR: And what do you mean by "a typical city university"?

RM: Well, I just mean that there are not the powerful two colleges in London and there are other colleges that are powerful in London, so it's a different circumstance. Oxford and Cambridge being so old, it's easy to just grumble "we can't be like that" as we said here. We tried to be in some ways, but we can't suddenly become 800 years old. There are some things that take time, but if you are the big traditional university in a city, Sheffield, Birmingham, Leeds, Southampton, then who are your competitors, they are each other, so Manchester is one of those. The feeling was "yes, they've now perhaps done something like a step change, perhaps we should compare ourselves with Manchester. We can discount Oxford and Cambridge perhaps, but we can't discount Manchester in the same way". So, the landscape was changed in which they were operating. And you know they compete effectively in various ways. The league tables show how good they are in different things but, nevertheless, it was harder for them because there was a step change and some of the indicators were going to be better and we had some money to put in. New buildings mean it is more attractive for faculty, for new staff and for new students.

CR: So, economic incentives were an important factor to have a successful merger or not?

RM: I think they probably helped through the first few years, because, I mean some of the money was a loan. Loans are good because you do things and then pay it back, so I think economic factors helped to start off successfully, yes and then there was credibility and then it was possible to get loan finance for buildings and things like that. They did help, I am sure. If you are talking about a merger of universities your region has to want it and if your region wants it, it should show they want it and it should invest, it's going to get some benefits out of having a more successful university. There is a return on investment that you can see. Here that happened and we felt good about it and I think it did make it easier to get through. We had to eventually, actually: I suppose it was part of the big business. I talked about staff and no compulsory redundancies that helped us go through that period. And then we realized we really did have to get a grip on the finances, but it was easier to just adopt that strong principle all through, of no compulsory redundancies in 2 years, and the money, although it was not for that purpose, we were able to do it I think. Looking back, I think that's probably how it works, but then we did obviously have to live with our own means by whatever we could do, and that's working well, there's no doubt.

Selection of partners for the merger

CR: Thinking about selecting the partners for a merger, would you consider other partners like a research center to build the new institution?

RM: No, I mean, I've told you about Salford and the feeling was always they were too far away. That's a cold hard assessment, but actually in 1981, something like that, the government suddenly imposed fees on overseas students for the first time and they cut drastically the amount of money they gave to universities and UMIST was in the bottom, four or five, with the most severe cuts, along with Salford, Aston and two others. UMIST bounced back and Salford didn't, so we've always thought, you know, we are separated from Salford. And as I say it is a long way away. The polytechnic, as I say, was different because we come from those roots. We were, the college that UMIST came from, was the evening class providing technical training so there wouldn't been a benefit we would have seen on going back there. So, I think there was only one show in town, and there weren't any other institutions. In terms of pure research centers there were not much around. I mean there was already, the only center, the Cancer Research Center, at the Cancer Hospital, but that was associated with the university already, so there weren't any partners. There was Daresbury Laboratory that is about 50 km away and which is run by the Research Council with a synchrotron, but again that was a Research Council institution and they closed the thing down there eventually. So not particularly, I mean we went and looked at some laboratories that Shell were closing. They had headquarters around Chester. We did go and looked whether in some way we could use that because they were stopping having these laboratories and they wanted a way to keep it going. They were very nice but we really had to either have buses all the time or build residences for postgraduate students. We did look one or two things but there wasn't really anything that was going to enhance our capabilities near enough to make sense.

CR: Do you think it makes sense to have an international merger?

RM: Yes, it is interesting. We were part of a, Manchester was part of one international grouping, and UMIST had been part of another grouping, and there are now some new groupings. My experience says it's difficult to see what tangible benefits to get out of it. I mean I think an agreement that makes it easier to exchange students and so on it's fine, that's helpful, but the ones that I was involved in were always pressured to trying "why don't we have a joint degree program?" and the answer was "because it's difficult, we have different systems and how are we going to do this and who's going to pay for all this mobility and so on". So, I think it seems to me

that, I'm not against international things, I think it's good to see how other people do it, and what things people assume have to be done in different systems. Because your assumptions are different from my assumptions, so it is good for me to think "actually maybe it doesn't have to be that way". Sometimes it may be because of the government. I think there's a lot in having informal groups but the danger is that, perhaps the other thing I saw was, you end up having people who you have to pay to manage this grouping and their interest is about doing more and more and having things out on behalf of the merger, and actually that's hard work to do. I'm familiar, involved with Erasmus collaborations and so on and you can see how that works, and that is difficult, coping with the different systems so I think is good to have an opportunity for different institutions to talk frankly about what is like in their countries, the problems they face and have the opportunity just to make it easier to exchange students and staff. But if you go further I can't see how a merger could be beneficial frankly, because I can see the problems of running two institutions under different jurisdictions seem to me almost will become the story instead of what the story should be the academic collaboration. So, I am finding hard to imagine how that could be. You know, if you can see some of the commercial higher education institutions, you set up a big office and you run things more like training institutions, then maybe it is possible. So, from my experience I can't see anything other than, I can see further advantages but I can see what I think killer disadvantages to try to merge into two jurisdictions.

CR: Did companies, or the private sector, did have any kind of role in the merger?

RM: Not directly that I can think of. The governing bodies of the two institutions have representation from all sorts of bodies so there would have been people with that mindset involved. I don't think we had particularly any industrial advice. We took advice from anyone who would talk to us. I don't think they had a formal role but all the people, but all the people concerned with technology transfer and so on will certainly consult them. They were advising, but they were certainly not having any official role.

CR: Did you have companies that were willing to have the new University of Manchester instead of the two former?

RM: I don't think so. I think they were more outcome focused than that, well "what difference would it make to me? Well I have easier, one front door to access more resources, if you say yes then we do it, so then I'm in favor". That's all, making everything easier and that's perfectly fine, that's understandable.

CR: They were not really pushing to have a merger then.

RM: No, I don't think so. As I said the idea of simplicity was the one which came back long before the merger. It would be nicer to have one place to go, "but please don't lose the good parts of each one". Because UMIST was regarded as "The university for industry", because industry came here a lot, because it was small and focused. You didn't have to dig your way through a large institution and quite the same way elsewhere. So, they wanted to make sure that kind of thing carried on and in fact the predominant industry facing activity that was developed continued be run by the operation we had at UMIST. We had more proportion. Again, this wasn't a takeover in that sense because some of, quite a number of things that were done at UMIST were taken in and done there, they could see. "This was the best show in town, this was the best way of doing it". We had a good track record in terms of relations with industry that was based on the UMIST model basically.

Merger process

CR: I would like to know a little bit more about the team in charge of the merger process. Would you remark some characteristics of that team?

RM: Ok, once it was agreed that we were going ahead, then one of the Pro Vice Chancellors was told “your job is now to lead the merger”, all the details obviously. He in particular was the front person and dealt with the Funding Council which was always going to be a very important factor. They affected what we did in a great degree in terms of determining how we went forward. So, and then, basically a number of teams were set up, so I was responsible for the academic regulations, I and another person from Victoria University who was Pro Vice Chancellor for teaching and learning we jointly chaired these activities. Our job was to go ahead with that. There was an overall management group that had reports from various working groups. I mean, it is a model that is fairly obvious. It was important that we had one person who was where we were all coming together plus one committee of the senior people where we reported and discussed. And he after the merger actually became pro vice chancellor, vice president for external relations, partly just been carrying on. But he eventually went and became Deputy Vice Chancellor at Sussex and now Vice Chancellor at the Royal Holloway College. It is interesting he said “a lot of people asked me to tell the story all about how the merger went” and he thought “well you can make a lot of money being a consultant for people”. Now he’s got his own university to run. He was very solid and independent and reliable with a computational background. He was conducting the process for the two institutions. As I said plenty of meetings, there were different groups at different times and involving the heads of the institutions and the heads of the councils. So, there was a fair amount of that as well, taking high level decisions. For example, I was in one team, they had two senior academics, one from each university and I was the one from UMIST because I stopped being Dean by that so I was senior with no particular post. And that was the one where we decided after much discussion how many faculties and how many schools. That was, as I said, a very early and important decision that had to be taken at the top level and you couldn’t do it just by voting. Information had been sought and various models had been tried. So that was again a small group but at a highest level. But basically, for the hard detailed work this one person chaired the main committee and then ran committees for specific purposes like “what are we going to do about the state of the buildings, policies, who’s going where”.

CR: And this person you mention was an internal person?

RM: Yes, he was from UMIST, he was the Pro Vice Chancellor, he had the lead role. If we had meetings with the Funding Council, through a big meeting he would be there and we’d be going through progress on these various matters. So, I attended some of these too and we had to do things like major risk analysis and all this kind of thing.

CR: So there was a person that was leading and conducting the process, there was a team in charge that was also reporting to that person although that person was also part of that team...

RM: That’s right, and there was a senior body on top, from both institutions obviously.

CR: And down to that team, not the senior body, there were working groups. I assume there were people from both institutions.

RM: Yes, great care was taken with that.

CR: And no external people or advisor like that, isn’t it?

RM: No, obviously, we had advisors on some of the things like financial matters but in terms of academic things we had no one from outside.

CR: And do you miss somebody in those teams?

RM: No, I don't think so. All of these teams were just spread, they were all from across both institutions. And I think they had, basically I suppose because there was a weekly meeting I wasn't involved with running things. There was a budget and you could always say "I need somebody to help me with this". I think in practice the group I was involved with the academic ones it wasn't necessary so it didn't occur really.

CR: So, there was the people you expected there.

RM: Yes, but particularly on the one I was involved because it was the academic and we had two of us jointly leading that, one from UMIST and one from Victoria University, then he could say "she's very good, she's up and coming so if you want a view from a smart young academic she is the right person", and I could say "this person has the right characteristics". So, we put the team together. There was no way I was going to know all the people so it was a learning experience, yes.

CR: Which are the main characteristics of the phase before the merger? Would you call it pre-merger?

RM: Yes, we had, I can characterize it. It ended up called "Project Unity". You have to call it something so we called it "Project Unity" which is fairly clear. I think the first phase was known as the Dalton Project, was secret. When it became public that we were exploring the possibility then what I called it was "Project Unity?" with a question mark. Shall we go ahead with this project? Once we'd agreed then we had the next stage was "Project Unity!" with an exclamation mark. Yes, we are really all going ahead with this. So, we had those, one thing to distinguish between those 2 phases, although as I said some of the work in the "question mark phase" was about the academic joining together, what we had to do if we are going to meet any sense with a timetable. There was an investment. We were saying "this has to be, we have to assume as a possible outcome that it will happen" and then we had a plan for that. As well not happening is easy. Just carry on. If you say you are going to do it and then you spend years you take much longer to do it and perhaps some of the enthusiasm disappears.

CR: How long the conversations before the creation of University of Manchester started?

RM: It was probably four years all together. The two years was when we really got going I suppose and we appointed the president right at the end of 2003 I think. I mean in terms of pre-merger phase, most of 2004 was a pre-merger, when we had a President, when we had a sort of shadow senior leadership, but the old universities still had to run, and they had the money. It's quite interesting that there needed to be some, that's why it couldn't be merged if it was hostile or a kind of takeover because, for example, I was designated as the Vice President for Teaching and Learning, I don't know in January or February. And UMIST had to agree to pay me, and I stayed on the payroll of UMIST until the new university arose. The new university consisted of a small charity basically in order to have money and to make grants but it basically did nothing except, probably hired the President. But otherwise, for the other people we stayed hired by the separate universities. So, the old universities had to agree that we would do that. And they still had to carry on running their ordinary functions of course, alongside with all these extra ones. That was the thing that was most difficult for the merger I think. Well, most complicated, and you needed good will then, because we all know where we are going but, these Vice Chancellors agreed that the

universities they headed would disappear and when they disappeared (the new one) also had to start, it wasn't just like walk away and things would change. They are changing now in a big way and I have to agree to that, and they lost quite a lot of power over what's going on. In fact, there was an interesting comment, I said I was in on this committee, one of the highest-level committees early on to look at the academic structure that had the 2 chairs of the councils of the two universities. Now I remember one of them coming into a meeting and said "the council voted in favor", because not only do the Senates had to vote in favor but the Councils had to vote in favor. And he said they had voted it through but they just realized, as I said, "they are like turkeys voting for Christmas". They are just voting themselves out of existence. And they are not all going to be members of the new Council. And both of the Councils found that very difficult after each meeting. They were all involved and engaged nevertheless it was a new Council, a new composition, some of them were involved but most of them weren't and, you know, they felt quite they've been at the heart of running this place. Say the people I've known and worked with for 10 or 15 years and all of sudden they were just people that no one much knew and they felt they lost a lot. As I said they began to realize that, so it was when the losses set in for people that it needed sensitive handling. You had to have arrangements and that was when the losses became apparent.

CR: What sort of arrangements?

RM: Yes, how are we going run down the old universities at the same time we are running the new university. So, it was, I think it was really mostly a "gentlemen's agreement". It was a legal agreement, I don't know what would happen otherwise. That's why you have to have that goodwill at the very top level. Vice-chancellors and the Chairman of Councils, the governing bodies, had to agree absolutely they were going to do this. Even if they hadn't thought about what the consequences where they couldn't back out.

CR: They were in a way closing their own institutions.

RM: You can call them as "founders" that is much nicer. They are founding a new university but occasionally you realize you are closing your own university.

CR: From your experience, which would be the phases of a merger?

RM: Yes, I think of it is a merger I think when I described it, there is a period of discussion about whether a merger is or could be a desirable outcome. That's a new defining period because that involves, as I said, suggestions that it would be a good idea and whether it wouldn't work because of the personalities or the timing or whatever or it was seen to be politically imposed. So that could be an awfully long period of informal discussions I suppose until some people say, as it really merges into the culture when you got to a stage where we are able to discuss "is this something that needs dealing with?". So, I think there is that phase that has to happen privately I think. That's a concept, you need something like that where the people with the power to do something discuss "are we going to go along this pathway?". I think in any big enterprise that sort of thing happens, things off the record and so on. Then I think you have to go into a stage with where you are saying "Ok, what's the shape of this thing going to be?" and "What are our ambitions? How they are going to work out before we decide". And then you have to have a "go or no go". Then you have the real, the final phase, when the question is not "whether is going to happen" perhaps not even "when it's going to happen" but "how is it going to happen". And that's when you need to start having parallel arrangements for the new institutions and the merged one. As I say you have to have a fixed day when everything is transferred. There has to be a legal date for this thing to happen. That's the stage, but how it does work depends on the jurisdiction you are operating. I mean I reviewed one of the universities in South Africa, after I retired actually. There the Government said "right, we are rearranging higher education", I mean South Africa is a

complicated situation, “we are rearranging all the universities and higher education, this is what will happen, these universities will merge. Do it”. And so, this was with the University of KwaZulu-Natal I worked with. And I’ve also seen some of that by reviewing Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University in Port Elizabeth. They just said “well, you know you take this teaching college which is a historically black college so you take that over, and here is a white college on another campus up the road so that will be part of it, so just do it”. They gave them a bit of time to say how to respond to that, but basically, they were told what to do and so that was how we were going to do and not whether they were going to do or when they were going to do and they had to. The result was, I went back to the University of KwaZulu-Natal and they invited me partly because I had experience on mergers here, because they knew, when they set it up, they didn’t have, or they had a different pattern with big colleges, faculties, but they didn’t have fully devolved powers and they said, in order to get something agreed, they agreed something that was less than satisfactory. They knew and they said “we will review it in 5 years’ time. So, I was part of the group that came back to review it. So, I was there doing an internal review at their own arrangements because they had to do everything in a hurry and getting the agreement to work and do what the government said. So, we were able to discover that they had an extra tier of government. They had colleges and faculties and departments, they had a lot of duplications. One department of social work, one of social studies and one of sociology or something like that. So, there were some obvious things, but at the time merging those maybe is actually much too hard when you are merging whole universities. Whereas we did both together but we had less duplications. So, I think, looking back at that experience now, there is a stage of “Ok, it’s now definite, how are we going to do it?”, and that’s when the real details had to be sorted out.

CR: And that is the merger process itself

RM: I think that is actually before you actually set the date on which you are now the new merged institution. Here you know it’s going to happen, here is when it’s got to happen and now you sort it out. My suspicion is that if you don’t have a definite date when you are going to the real pre-merger process, then that could go on forever, whereas having a date focuses people’s minds. You have to know it is going to occur and when, and you have to have a good reason. So, I think, my guess is, from experience here talking to the people in the University of KwaZulu-Natal, which going, they wanted people not only from places with mergers or with the same models they had, but they were also research active. I mean there were the fifth in South Africa with quite significant research. So, they spent quite a lot of money, their own money on having this review done, finding out what models were. Going back to that business of having somebody in charge, one of the other people on the panel I was on, was the Vice-chancellor of the university of Nairobi, which is a large university with several colleges. They were asking “what do you think you meant to devolve power to colleges?”. And he said “Of course, do you think I can come and spend all my time talking to you if I didn’t have people running my colleges for me”, and he said “and if I don’t like it, within a week we can get rid of a college head we don’t want”, so he had a very powerful hand. Anyway, that’s getting away, but having looked at that merger I think because there will always be resistance of some sort and it is easier to slow down than to stop something. If there is any benefit going you are going to get reasonably promptly and you have to know “this is when the end is” because, for one thing that is when legal processes have to take place. So, and again, if you are going to be driven by the Government, maybe the government just makes a law and says “this has to be done”. Here it didn’t have to happen.

CR: Yes, and the Government may think that just for signing a declaration things will happen, and that is not true.

RM: Of course, that’s right.

Culture

CR: So, well, we have already talked about the rankings and the influence on the merger. Regard the culture, do you think there were some sort of cultural shocks? Culture in terms of the culture of the organization, between the people from UMIST and the people from Victoria University.

RM: Yes, there was a sense of “are the people still holding on to the old things?”. I think between the two places it was more, there was fear around, fear that this was not going to be good. I can illustrate that from within Chemistry, we were merging two departments and we were the two closest departments. Of all the departments that had to merge we were the closest in size. So Victoria University had a very big Physics department, very powerful. Here we had a small one, it was specialized, it did atmospheric physics and actually the atmospheric physics moved into Earth Sciences. They were quite happy, that was fine. That was obvious and they know we are not going to get around it. We were smaller than (the other chemistry department) but not much smaller than and we had very different views about how things should be run. In particular, when you are making these decisions, about what you are going to do academically, we had depended of course on recruiting students and we were recruiting to two adjacent universities, we’ve been ok. How many staff you can afford is going to depend on continuing to recruit students. And it is not obvious that we would recruit as many (in a merged department as we had in two separate ones), therefore the head of the Department down there was very concerned that we would have, that we would not be able to maintain our recruitment. You know the new university would be negative rather positive. Therefore, when it came to working out the size of the department he, and given there were research inactive people on both sides, he wanted to go for a much smaller department, much smaller intake, which of course, because he was afraid that we would drive them down because we were not so successful in research and, I don’t know about recruiting, but we were smaller, so he could see he had these not very productive in research people taking on more and not many students. He was afraid that was going down. In the end his pessimism was not justified. I’m delighted, you know we got through that so I think that was a very specific thing. It wasn’t much about the culture, it was a fear that this was going to go wrong. Going to the broader question of culture I think, there were probably 3 cultures, it’s not enough perhaps to call it 3 cultures, but there were 3 strands of opinion. There were the people on either side that were not really very sure or not really very happy. Then there were those who were saying “well this is a new opportunity, let’s go for it”. And I think the “new opportunity, let’s go for it because there has to be something better”, was the sort that were carrying things forward. But that depends on the leader showing that there was something different. And so, I certainly remember having to say “no, that was then, this is now, we do things differently”. And I think one of the phrases that I got most annoyed with, was people saying whenever we try to do something “it’s just”. And they meant they had some model they’ve got from somewhere else. And it’s not “just”. If you say “it’s just” you are almost by definition oversimplifying. That is to say “it’s only”. They were trying to oversimplify. They were trying to understand something new by a very simple imported thing, comparing with something old and saying “this is that”. It is just dressed up, a different version of that, even when it wasn’t, but it was very easy to say, particularly “not what we did” it’s “what they did”. The job of those in the middle is very much to try to understand both sides and interpret into each other, and that I think actually is one of the more important things, to interpret each to the other. I remember one example I was involved with. We agreed a simplification, in the Faculty of Humanities, there were 8 different ways to calculate final degree results depending on each. And we said “we can’t do this”, so one of the things we had to agree in our regulation is we tried to simplify things. And we ended up we couldn’t reduce it one but we ended up at two ways. And we had some other things, which were the kind of things that within the European Higher Education Area would be commonplace. And one of the things we wanted to do say “we want to mark some

percentage scale to be equivalent". Wherever you get marked should represent the same kind of thing. In sociology, social department, they said "we can't do it, we only have a mark between 30 and 80, we can't use the whole scale and your rule says we have to use the whole scale", because they interpreted that as being an engineering approach. So, the Vice-chancellor being from History we had a meeting with them and said "no, what you are saying, this is a convention that you have", he was able to say that to them, that these are conventional numbers that you attach to the thinking. And clearly it is going to be possible for some of them not to get any marks. If it is not possible for someone to write "nothing worthwhile", then something is not ok. People have got to be able to score nothing. Hundred per cent is a bit harder, but you don't score 100% in anything probably even in that. There would be some variation. So that is kind of saying it's a difference. And what they did was, the younger ones, not the older ones, but the younger ones took a pragmatic view and said "Ok, we are going to do this, if we are going to do this, what we do? If we use your scale and we do things the same way as before, if things have changed but we marked the same as before, the results should be different". So intellectually the content of that is really very small, but what the pragmatic younger people do was "yes, let's mark as before, let's do scaling from our scale to your scale, we'll make sure" because some of the students were getting the same degree "we can't tell you what constitutes a first class degree, you have to know what that means in social sciences, but we can tell you that if they haven't got an average of 70% we are not going to give them a first class degree, so your job is to give it a 70%; then they can have a first class degree. So that's your 65, really strong 65%. Quite noticeably it was the younger ones, quite pragmatically did it. So, it's that kind of understanding of what's inevitable, so that was a culture they couldn't accept. We could say, as a university, we want to do everything the same, because actually it is not defensible, and that was the argument we knew from the center. He can't defend it, and there are much more urgent things. So those were some of the cultures of independent academics, which wherever you are from, trying to be independent and not say actually this is something we have to submerge for the greater good, was harder, and that was always true in between just one culture or the other, but between all the disciplines. Just between the disciplines is going to be worst, you can imagine. And that was basically, that's the sort of thing that they more, what I would regard as the most thoroughly people of the University of Manchester, the old University of Manchester, that's what they wanted to break down, because they had these people who had their own faculties and their own departments who wouldn't agree with anything. They had their own rules and they defended them as if they got different laws, they were just what they've been used to do. Look, culture may work in different cultures it's true, but 'the way we do things around here', and that was the way they did things around there and they were about to change the way they did things. And we all got rid of that culture but the whole point is the institution needs a culture, and our culture is "things we can defend so two different students in two different places are treated equally". It even got to a stage where if you did, something really indefensible, if you did French with German as opposed to German with French, you got a different degree or something (with the same marks), because it just depended how they interpreted it. We knew that the spirit outside was changing a lot and this was not going to be defensible. Once you have a President that says "we are not going to do this" then we have to be sharp trying to persuade people as far as possible. The sociologists were the hardest to persuade. We even had a meeting with them, and one of them run out after we left, grabbing the President to try to explain why, how important it was, which did not really go down very well with the President.

CR: Do you have any kind of special policies to reduce that kind of cultural shocks?

RM: I mean, we understood there was a lot of need for communication all the time with regular bulletins. I think what we did for most of these things was we did a lot of talking, a lot of visiting. When I introduced the new quality scheme, the regulations and how you monitor quality and so on, we wanted to do new things and not the old ones. And actually, I got a grant from the

Leadership Foundation as part of that and we went also to the Change Academy for higher education institutions, thinking about how we made a change. I took a team there, as well, and we basically went around every school, so 20 schools, I had some funding to have someone to help me with that, talking to them about what we had to do in the new quality arrangements. And in that case what I picked up, the title I used for this project was “conversational not confrontational”. Because the people were saying, again more in the Victoria University than in UMIST, that they may feel like a criminal. They are just trying to check they are doing your job but they make you feel like a criminal. Their people at the time, the system from Victoria University before merger of reviewing quality made academics feel like a criminal. And I said “we want to make it more a conversation than a confrontation, not accusation, not like a court of law”. As I said, to facilitate that, I went to every department and talked to people. And that sort of thing was emphasized, you have to go and talk because otherwise you can distrust people obviously, but it makes a difference if they come to you. And also, I was made to a point guarantee, we recognized communication was necessary. The President expected to visit every school every year, so all the Vice-presidents basically visited every school. Clearly that was much more build up but nevertheless the argument was to do it every year so you could talk.

CR: So, it was a way of reducing those cultural shocks.

RM: Exactly, and also, you know, the strange person from outside that you don't know, even by repute because it is not part of your university, you can actually see what they look like and sound like. You can be cynical afterwards but at least you know what you've been cynical about. So, as I said, lots of communication bulletins, which is always a good thing – you can never communicate too much in a merger, so that's probably one of the first things. I wasn't involved in the communication particularly, because we had someone good on communication.

CR: You mean mainly internal communication, isn't it?

RM: Internal, yes.

CR: Regardless quite a long time has happened since the merger, do you think there is a reputation of the new University of Manchester?

RM: I think so, I think a lot of people. I mean there's still a few people I guess which can be classified in three groups. Those who worked for UMIST who remember and think it is better and it has been lost. Those who haven't noticed the difference because they just think it is still the University of Manchester. You know that's one of the issues incidentally, the name. In the end, we thought of various names, silly or less silly, but at the end we felt that “The University of Manchester” was so powerful that it would be stupid not to keep it, even though it wasn't, you know, different so we kept it. So those who hardly noticed, and then those who said “yes, this is a new university, big and powerful”. I think when you do this you have to make some changes to show that it really changed. One of those was having a president, I think we were the first university in the country who had a President, we are not the only one now. Usually it is more Vice-chancellor or rector.

CR: Is it just a question of the name or is there something more behind?

RM: Was more of name than of substance, but I think it represented this idea that places that has colleges has both Principals and a Vice-chancellor. I think the President replaces the Principal and again it's common in other institutions. I mean we did discuss one stage, I think we were ready to have a President and Provost as they have in the United States. Provost for running the ship, but the President said no he didn't want that. That setup we could have if you wanted. You

know, a President has a lot of public duties and external duties and you need people you can trust to run things while you are not there but he felt a President who wasn't active internally was too dissociated from the institution he is representing. So, President is the one we adopted and that was before he came as part of the step change we wanted to be different and that would signal the difference.

Expected results

CR: About results, scale economies, duplications eliminated, stronger academic profile, better academic integration, rationalization. Which results would you remark from the merger?

RM: I think it, I'm finding hard to classify the kind of things I think are good results against those different headings. Clearly it removed unhelpful competition in some areas and enabled collaboration, provided people were willing to recognize that. And that led to, released a lot of opportunities for new working and actually new buildings or refurbished buildings. So that a lot of new buildings and refurbished buildings that was not possible at once. To take the Chemistry example again we couldn't have two separate Chemistry departments, it made sense to build, when we had all laboratories I mentioned, so we built new teaching laboratories against the bigger of the two departments. We refurbished them and we closed the other department, so that's easier to maintain. So, there was an economy there, there's an upgrading, and similar things are working around the campus. That couldn't be done at once, and it's still being done as a continuous process. It kicked started that process in a very significant way. So, I think that was, that provided, that was part of the step change. A new environment bringing colleagues together in a new place, which has helped a lot. I think it is, clearly, the way it was done made a signal as something with new ambitions, with large ambitions, that were meant, that made large so that we had to stick to. One of the things you mentioned, the 2015 or 2020 plan, that was a 10 year or 11 years' plan. The argument was "10 years is far enough away that you can be truly ambitious but is near enough things have to start now". Five years plan you may be too modest, so 10 years is a real-time frame, you have to keep rolling the plan. So, economies of scale there will have been gradually but it is a bit hard to tell because as student numbers have grown, whether the economies of scale if student number grew and staff number remains the same then there is an economy or it is more efficiency, but it is not quite an economy of scale in the same way. So, I think there were some more efficiencies arouse from that happening. When I think UMIST, it was a specialized institution that made you more vulnerable, we felt we were vulnerable, we knew we were vulnerable if things went bad. Science and Technology suddenly became less important and it seemed to be coming and going. That's not an overall result to the merger. That's one, I suppose you feel comparing the merger with the separate institutions, that could have been, that saved, that reduced the risk in that case. A large institution you have more scope to be flexible in the face of risk. So, I think that was important. And it is applied both ways, that's not said they (the Victoria University) won things. More things coming into a different size, and just the possibility to bring things together. That bringing together wasn't all just UMIST merging with them. For example, with this discussion about the academic shape, within what was the Faculty of Medical and Human Sciences, there were 3 different sorts of psychology, so those clinical psychology, there was a kind of sociological psychology and scientific psychology. All those were brought together into one school of Psychological Sciences. And although they recognized each other and they really weren't sure they wanted to do this. Nevertheless, it made a lot of sense for them to be together even with divisions within one school. So those kind of things, they were always in the University of Manchester and they could have done that at Victoria University, but this prompted the thinking and they said "why don't we do it?". It was not really imposed on them, but they were asked to discuss things and that's how it ended up.

9.2.6 Entrevista Universidad de Estrasburgo (1)

Introduction

CR: Why do you think that the merger was necessary?

FK: Because it was too divided and when you are going everywhere outside, for example Chinese or the States, everywhere, they don't understand why you have medicine in one university, law in another one, humanities in a third one. It was very difficult and sometimes over, I would say, there is no real reason why this field is in one university and not in the other. For example, I am in economics and management and economics and management was on the Faculty of Law and afterwards we decided to go to University Louis Pasteur. So, University Louis Pasteur is a scientific one but you also have included Geography, Economic and Management. There is a second one in the University Robert Schuman, where there is political science, law and also management, because they also have a management department. And the third one here well, I say here because it was in this building, at University Marc Bloch that was for humanities and social sciences. So, I guess the first reason I say we will have a real comprehensive university in Strasbourg so it will be easier to link, and specially now, with the globalization, it was also important to have a comprehensive university in Strasbourg. And also, there was the tradition, because it was like that before 1968 when they decided to divide our university. We want to restore the University of Strasbourg, that's my opinion. The first reason was to have a comprehensive university and not an artificial division.



Imagen 6. Prof. Francis Kern y Carlos Ripoll Soler durante la entrevista

CR: So, the artificial division came on 1968?

FK: Yes, we were in the Faculty of Law, for example economics, and afterwards we moved into University Louis Pasteur. So, it was interesting for us because University Louis Pasteur you have

also best organization for research centers and laboratories, because you have biology, mathematics, specially physics, chemistry. So, we had the same model for us. It was a good experience for us you know. Not to say with law or social sciences, but it was better added value.

CR: Beyond that, what makes the difference now that you have one single university?

FK: (takes time to think on the question) Because our links are really better. It is very easy to work with everybody in a retain way. It is easier to work with everybody. And I see here in international relations. I work with biology, but also with law, also with school of management and so on. So, after we have the same procedures for everybody and I guess, specially in research is an added value for social sciences and humanities. To work different now. We have only one doctorate college, division, with all of our post graduate schools. The same model, the same organization and they are working together.

CR: But I think the approach of the merger was not a managerial one, not just to be more efficient of more effective.

FK: No, it was not a managerial aspect. No, it was not a priority.

CR: So, what was the reason really.

FK: That, to have a comprehensive university where you could cover all the aspects of the knowledge, and I guess it was really an academic approach, or research approach to decided do that. It was first. And after of course we have some impact on managerial approach and so on of course. Before we had 3 services of international relations and they were working completely different. As the University Robert Schuman was a Faculty of Law it was very decentralization. Every faculty wanted to have their own international relations office. In University Louis Pasteur was more centralized we had a real central international service for everybody, for every faculty and so on. So, it depends really. Now we have the same approach centralization, decentralization with every faculty, because we have 37 faculties, institutes and so on. And we have 72 research units, so it is more than 100 entities in the university. For me it would be better to try to merge all of this. So, we have a project to have collegium, to say we can't deal with 37 components about decentralization and so on. We try to have an intermediate level, and the intermediate level would be the collegium. It is not for undergraduate, it is to say that we try to have some main fields. For example, collegium of economics and management, that's a small one, another one for health sciences, a third one for physics and chemistry, another one for law. Michel Deneken is very much involved on that.

CR: So, making this kind of reforms it is easier to make reforms

FK: Well, if you are on three different institutions, like we were, it is not needed, because you are too small. For example, University Marc Bloch was too small in international levels, and they didn't have enough means, financial possibilities and so on. And for example, now is very interesting because you can work, for example, I met yesterday researchers from the Indian Institute of Science, because there is an Indo-French conference organized by at Institute Charles Chadwick, that is in physics, new materials and so on. But in the same time I will go on Sunday to a university in India to work to have a chair for Sanskrit and Indian civilization, because we had already one, stopped, and now we are trying to discuss with Indian government and with this university for the support of the creation, or the recreation of this chair. But you see, Sanskrit and Indian civilization in one hand and new materials in another, so it is very interesting. And what is also very interesting is the people I would say they want to work together. So, for example, even the Indian people was very interested on having this chair, while we were discussing about their fields in physics

and new materials, they were also very interested on us because we had some fields in Indian civilization and so on. But also, the French colleagues they wanted to work like this. For example, the college of mathematicians in mathematics, research in mathematics, they told me "if you want we can also go to the Mumbai Institute because here mathematics people is working with them, but we can also work in social sciences". They asked me "if you want for social sciences it is also possible", while before it was completely divided.

CR: All of these things happen naturally or do you have to promote it in a certain way?

FK: Both, in a certain way naturally. Of course, after I have to coordinate, after I have to promote. But they really, every colleague is willing to work together. We are really surprised. Of course, I am talking about international relations, but now also the inter disciplinary approach is very important. Even in biology they want to know what is in society. So, they want to know what is in sociology and work with other people. My colleagues, Vice-president for research, he is also trying to promote interdisciplinary. But we say science frontier, and also, we had a conference on interdisciplinary approach in last June called "Conference on the time in science". Everybody: sociology, philosophy, biology, physics, and so on. What is the approach of the analysis and what is regard the representation we had in every field about this question.

CR: So, these are a kind of actions you do to break the silos.

FK: Yes, and it is very easy now that you have a comprehensive university.

CR: Do you think there is still people that think they belong to the former universities?

FK: No. During 4 years, during the first years of my mandate between 2009 until 2012 there are some references to the former universities, but now there aren't.

CR: Buy I mean about the people, that they feel they don't belong to the new university, and feel more connected to the former one.

FK: No, now there is no difference.

CR: Did you have to do something to blur that difference or did it happen naturally?

FK: (time to answer) Now it seems to be very easy, there was dialogue, and it was quite easy to make it. Of course, there is some resistance not the same approach, not the same references. We needed 5 years until the impact of the merge could be considered a success.

CR: How do you know it was a success after those 5 years? Which are the results of the merger after that time?

FK: There are different level. There is a local and regional level because it is easier to work with Alsace region, the metropolis of Strasbourg and the city, because there is only one actor in the academic field. So, for this it was something important. In the regional perspective now it is easier to cooperate because we are working also with EUCOR, that is a confederation of the Upper Rhine. We are five universities with Freiburg, Karlsruhe, Strasbourg, Basel and Mulhouse. Since 30 years we have EUCOR, the European Confederation of Universities, and last 11 of May we open the European Campus as part of an Interreg project. I will give you this document where you will find the budget, how many students, how many researchers and how many doctorates.

CR: So, this is a kind of international alliance

FK: Yes, something like that

CR: How deeply is University of Strasbourg integrated with this alliance?

FK: During 20 years, it was mainly for student mobility. We had some joint master and so on. But now it is also for a research program, we have some of our professors who can teach on any of the 5 universities. And also works for the recruitment of professors. The rector of Freiburg University is at the moment the President of the European Campus. And it is high level, because the President Françoise Hollande was in Strasbourg 2 years ago. He met with the students of this joint master, trans border joint master in a certain master. He asked "why don't you do a European campus, and not just a confederation of the 5 universities?". We tried to build a project around the idea of a European Campus. When you are in Strasbourg, with the Council of Europe, with the European Parliament, with the European Court of Human Rights, it makes a lot of sense. This is another level of the merger. We had the merger of the three universities, and we also have the merger of the European Campus.

CR: Would you consider this like a merger?

FK: It is not a merger, it is an alliance, but a very strong one.

CR: You mentioned something about Françoise Hollande, he was here in Strasbourg and he mentioned the possibility if this European Campus. Did the Government had some sort of influence in the creation of the University of Strasbourg?

FK: No. We have the autonomy of the universities. Of course, once with the agreement we had the support. After we had the European funding. But what we needed is we created, within the European law there is a new structured called European Group of Territorial Cooperation, and this is in the European law. It is a legal structure to support the European Campus.

CR: Did you have any economic incentive from the government for the University of Strasbourg?

FK: There is no more money in France because of the austerity, but this is another problem. We have also IDEX, some of the IDEX program supported the project. There was no special fund from the government.

CR: Did the merger cost money?

FK: No, because we worked for the moment actually, well we had some money from the IDEX (It seems the interviewee is misunderstanding questions of the university merger with the EUCOR project)

CR: Would you say that there is a reputation of University of Strasbourg as such? Does the people know well how the university is?

FK: Yes, because we are on top 100 on the Shanghai ranking. Only 2 or 3 French universities and not so many European universities. So of course, when you are in Asia, in China or in Japan and so on this is quite important and they immediately say "we are going to visit Strasbourg". And secondly Nobel prizes, we have some Nobel prize winners. There is a diversity of programs and our main fields, that are not exactly the collegium.

CR: And the Nobel prize winners were already members of the university when they won the Nobel prize or were they hired because they were Nobel prize winners?

FK: No, only one of them was working in Harvard and Strasbourg but the other 2 are already from here. (Now continues showing a kind of presentation of the university) These are our agreements around the world, the network, EUCOR, the Franco German university and I am very involved in the IC 21 and with Canada. This is Nigeria university that is also member of this network. We have a lot of relations with German universities, not only because of the EUCOR. Now we have a big project related with the two sides of the river. It is East, West act. It is quite new for us. Before Strasbourg was divided like a half circle. Of course, because the border, like this, this is the Rheine, here you have Strasbourg. Now we are working on a kind of Euro district, we are going on an urban project that goes East, West. It is a project of the two sides. Even in the urban development it is a reality, and it wasn't 20 years ago. Now it is really ok and we have the European campus.

CR: All of these international projects are possible because you have just a single university.

FK: Of course. I don't know how could we do that if we had 3 different universities. We had the 3 Strasbourg and the other in EUCOR. Of course, we have the Nobel prizes, the fact that we only have one single university. I explained about the Indo French conference in new materials. Everything is easier. For me is also the possibility of being more attractive. I cannot imagine if we were still 3 different universities. It is not possible to think how we can build the future a big project. Now it is possible because we have a big university, because the attractively is possible, we can communicate and we have a lot of solicitation all over the world. For American and British students, it is difficult mobility, and they don't want to come to Europe. I think it is the same for you. They prefer to go to Asia. Sometimes they don't want to come because there are no English programs. But we have 18 French German diploma, in French, German and sometimes in English. They are with German universities and 6 or 7 specially in the European campus. And we want to promote that and increase that really rapidly.

CR: You mentioned that University of Strasbourg is positioned among the top 100 universities in the world. Were rankings a reason for the merge?

FK: The reason wasn't the rankings, but of course there was an impact on it, but our Nobel Prizes are specially on University Louis Pasteur. I 'twas internationally well known. We are also well known in humanities but it is not the same. In law, we are also quite good. In humanities, we have a long tradition, it was a German tradition because for example in the Faculty of Language we have 14 departments about everything: Persian, Indian, Arabs, Portuguese, Spanish... A lot of. We teach 27 languages in our university, but it is also because it was a German tradition. Strasbourg was a German university under the Humboldt model with research inside the university.

CR: Having so much differences in the same university does create some sort of friction?

FK: No, really not. It is exactly the contrary. I am really astonished. For example, when I am on a working group there is people coming from different groups. I told you about the mathematicians who want to work in social sciences. We had the opportunity in Mumbai with mathematicians doing their research. On the contrary we have Philosophers at Joseph Deli. I take India because it is the country we are working most at the moment. And I try also to include our partnership, specially Freiburg where I do something also connected with India. We are doing things together because it is an International campus.

CR: How do you see the future of the University of Strasbourg?

FK: The future, what would I say... First of course to be excellent in research and to follow on those topics. For me one weak thing we have is that there aren't enough industrial partners. For example, in Germany about Fraunhofer and to discuss with them and to work with them. For me the difficulty is not enough take account on this dimension. It is a European campus. Fraunhofer is completely inside the campus.

CR: Would it be good to have that kind of institution inside the campus?

FK: Yes, for me it is. This is a personal opinion. I have not discussed it on a collective approach. You know we have elections in November and there will be a new team in 2017. We will see. We have to progress on it. We have a European institute for patents here in the university. It is a research center and training center. It is training for executives, for professionals. But otherwise, what I see for projection is that European campus will be very strong, we are working together, inside but also as an international approach. The interdisciplinary initiatives seem to be very important for me for the moment. And more professional approach with the working people, like industrial partnerships. It will be a challenge for the next few days.

CR: Did industrial partners had any influence on the merger?

FK: We traded, for example, a platform for entrepreneurship, where university was also involved. Student entrepreneurship with the city. There are some creative platforms or startup platforms. We are working together. It is for creativity entrepreneurship. It is not industrial research or development. There is a difference. For me it seems to be important. On an international approach, on what I am working is to make conversions between training and mobility students and research. For the moment, I guess is the same in the world, research is the same as their own logic, their own approach. Of course, you are working with people, but you don't rely you are working on an international approach. They are just working on their own research, but not looking for the opportunity for RECLA international partnerships. So, my project is doing study on international agreements and try to emerge something like 20 big partners in the world. It is very difficult. I guess is possible if you know exactly what you are doing in research, student mobility or other kind of cooperation. We don't want to exclude the other one, but we want to say all that we have 10 or 20 universities in the world we partner. We have a long tradition in German and also in Japan. There is an MUFJ. We have 25 Japan universities we are involved with.

CR: How do you say to researchers who they should work with?

FK: It is not an obligation. If it is possible you do it and also on an institutional approach. It would be a good sign if University of Strasbourg is on those fields because we are well known there. It is better to work with those universities.

CR: How are you going to decide who is strategic?

FK: Because we are going to see how many projects do we have. We are going to map things, not to decide. We say yes, this is the university with which we have the most interesting and also the most numerous projects. The most of projects are there and also interesting projects. Just to have a look. You see the map and try. Afterwards we can discuss if you want to have a real strategic partnership with them.

CR: Will you put additional resources, incentives, for people working with those strategic partners?

FK: We have to decide after the steady, at the end of this year, next year, we have to decide, ok this is the mapping. We want or not. We have to decide. We have an Idex program. I don't know if this is just because of international, it is an opportunity for science. I do it already for student mobility, for cooperation projects we have. For example, we have 15 universities, some universities in Canada, because you have something interesting with them, some interesting projects, if we want we give some grants for students to go to that university.

CR: So, it means there is a reciprocity so the Canadian university will also give some grants to their students to come to Strasbourg.

FK: Sometimes. We are a real partner and there is a reciprocity. You are right we didn't at the beginning. We just decided these are our strategic partners, but we didn't inform them. We have a real good information. Or for example I told you 25 universities in Japan, because we have a lot of student mobility, a lot of research, we are in Japan.

CR: How do you manage that the reality of the researcher and the reality of the institution becomes one?

FK: Good question. Much connected if possible. It is a necessity in sciences to have that connection as a federation of academics. We don't have the same question and the same interest if you are in a research approach or if you are on an institutional approach. It's funny. But we need to have an institutional approach. And the scientific community say you are right because you also say in Strasbourg our partner in the world is this... Sometimes we try to do. Researchers do work with other institutions and when they have results they mention their research center but they do not mention they are part of the University of Strasbourg. Now we try to have a real charter about how to sign agreements and an obligation to mention University Strasbourg. It is a new approach and I am very satisfied because our colleagues understand very well. We have to also communicate about the university even if your research center belongs to CNR.

9.2.7 Entrevista Universidad de Estrasburgo (2)

Introduction

CR: What is the merger for you?

NR: For me the merger, whatever it is, will be the platform from which changes will operate. What I am doing is helping individuals, groups, organizations and systems, to cross over this new reality. And I am looking at what prevents people from changing, within and without, and how can we make collective systems to change.



Imagen 7. Prof. Nicole Rege Colet and Carlos Ripoll Soler durante la entrevista

CR: Universities are in a way very reluctant to change.

NR: Everybody is reluctant to change, great resistant to change. The university itself is not a person, it is an institutional reality. I work with people, human beings and so I am interested in how people cooperate and build collectively and commit and engage in transformation. The framework from which I am analyzing all of this is a mixture of systemic approach from Peter Senge and Theory U from MIT about transforming self-organization and business. I look to all those frameworks to understand transformation processes and the social technology that goes behind it which is going to help people get over the various hurdles inevitably arise. What I understand your work is about, and I think is very valuable, I can tell you how people are reacting to it. How people are experiencing and sensing this time of changes. I look at it from the point of view of the people who are taking part and benefiting from it. From the perspective of humanity and society.

CR: So how do you feel that people is perceiving this transformation of becoming just a single university?

NR: Well, that is interesting. I am going to be a bit personal, because I wasn't born in France, I grew up in Switzerland where landscape in Higher Education is not the one that is in France. You probably know that we see now in France is the result of the May 68 when all the universities were divided so it breaks down the power games that were going on. That is the short version, I think you know what I'm talking about. I come from a place where people relate strongly to their university, to their alma mater. I mean I am very proud of, I think I hope I honor the university that trained me, it is a public university, I am grateful for the fact that the State provided me with an outstanding education and that I am pleased to take part in this and to continue a tradition from research. So, I came from that environment and I also really enjoyed my studies. For me it was a privilege to go to the university, though I come from a very academic family, but I always recognize it as a privilege and it is my responsibility to benefit from this. I am not taking for granted. This people tell me this. I honor the institution of higher education. I think it is part of our culture and scientific inheritance, our heritage and we owe it a lot and we should honor this institution and what it has brought us in terms of knowledge and understanding. This is how I operate and I

always say I was literally born in a university and I feel this is my home. So, when I came to Strasbourg, I came after the merger. It happened I came in 2013 so it was going for 4 years. But before I came here I didn't just turned up and called at the doorstep.

I came and I immediately felt in love with the university because it was very close, the historical university is very close on its identity to Geneva. We are protestant German. I mean the whole setting was very familiar for me. The fact that it was German, I'm coming from Switzerland with all the languages, the buildings, the architecture was very familiar. There were strong links between Geneva and Strasbourg for different reasons because the protestant theology had links back to 1670. For me it was a very familiar environment so I could immediately relate to it. For me it was just ok to say "I'm part of University of Strasbourg" and it meant something. When I came here it was to set up this structure, and there was nothing, so the first thing I did was to go interview to different stakeholders and I said "look the IDEX got this money and I am here to build this structure on innovation in teaching and learning, what would you like?". So, the first 3 months I was doing interviews like you and I understood that the people I was talking to, that had been here for many years, did not have that sense of belonging and identity towards the University of Strasbourg. So that is when I realized that, at least the people that I was meeting, had very fragmented identity and they kept referring to old structures that seemed to fit their mindset which for me didn't mean anything. They kept saying Strasbourg 1, 2 and 3, and it just didn't mean anything for me. It was like "ok I belong to this box in this set of fragmented things" so what I was getting from them was a very fragmented and a patch work. I couldn't find the identity. I said "this is a historical university and has an outstanding history" but it seemed I knew more about the historical perspective than them. I realized then that how we relate, how we link our identities to a university or an institution is a very complex pathway. What I was certainly peaking up was that the people was still upset about the merger. They felt that they had been mixed, I mean there was a sort of theory about destruction and people had a very negative look on it. That they were victims and they were people I think quite honestly, suffered because some of their administrative services they had to bring it all together when where there had been three services of international relations now there was just one big one and the people, four years after the mergers, was still trying to find their place on this new ecosystem. But what I also suspect is part of this problem is that this idea that the universities are autonomous and that they can decide, that is just an excuse my French bullshit because everything is decided and controlled in central and in fact the President of the university has absolutely no power, very very little power. In between this sort of old regime where everything is about the king and centralized there is something that it is still emerging, which is difficult to emerge, because people have never lived in a direct participated democracy. Well, that is not your field, but I'm sure you will understand, this idea of taking responsibility of individuals or even groups. I don't know what you found out in your interviews but I was certainly surprised about absence of vision, absence of strategic planning, absence of action plan, roadmap, there was nothing. This is more, and this is what I found after being here more than 3,5 years, that people seemed to go for things but the implementation of it and the managing of this is offered very chaotic. And added to that, the people who are in charge, the decision makers don't have the training, don't have the knowledge, they don't know how to do this. I come from Switzerland which is very very democratic where everybody, I mean the tools we are using like in accountancy things like that, when I came here I was like stepping back 50 years in public administration. Honestly. That was my experience. I am just giving you just my experience, but when I asked things like "Ok, and how do you do the budget?" It was sort ... These wonderful decisions, I am not against this, but implementation and the situation in France is currently in strive is also a manifestation that is very little sort of back office work, planning, retro planning, and that's all about a bit about quick fix and let's go. There were things that people were asking, because they knew I was coming from Switzerland and they said "how do you do this in Switzerland?". And I said "sorry but it is going a shock to you because what you have been asked to done in 5 weeks we did it in 5 years". So how are you about doing this? It was, it is like a

metaphor: we are happily married, but we don't sort out an actual contract about how are we going to live happily after. That is very lacking in public institutions in France. Because everything is decided up on the ministries and they keep changing around. There is going to be another change about all of this drive going on and so there is no continuity there is no perseverance on doing the things. That is why the country is getting into chaos more and more. You've probably also picked out that in France there is all this debate about, ok everybody recognizes that this organized central state is not efficient nowadays. It was probably very good after the II World War to get things running but nowadays with such a huge economy we need to have distributed responsibility. I mean all the models that you probably know about but this is very far for my colleagues. It is very difficult to shift from a sort of very centralized state organized, welfare state institution to a sort of ecosystem where communities are taking responsibility. So, they are trying to build the regions and as you know this is an extremely slow, very slow process so the political economical and societal background is extremely difficult. What I have seen at a University of Strasbourg was just an expression of what is going on at the level of the country, on all the levels. It is consistent all the way down, from the individuals up to the system.

CR: Do you feel that the university of Strasbourg is a community of academics or something more...

NR: No. You know the expression "to lead the university like herding the cats". Usually you have cows and you know what the cowboys do. They get all the cows. But this is with cats, and cats are not social creatures, they are animals who do not live in tribes. They are individuals. So here, everyone is an individual, everyone is unique and everyone wants to be on the top of the pyramid. That is very present in the mindset and the result is everything is fragmented into small cells where each individual is. It is a very competitive environment, where you have to be the best, where people are afraid not to be up to the expectations. So, it is a society which pressures a lot of values on doing things like rankings and all of that. This is a pyramid which is going to be on the main focus and the main objective is being on the top, like being president and things like that. It is very egocentric individualist society which is also based on showing of your merits so there is very little caring, support for people. On the opposite I like to think on myself, and I hope I honor that I've been on a service leadership, to serve other people, projects, so my students look at me and they know what it means. It is that type of society where collaborative collegial work is not there. So, the whole idea of merging which, I can see mainly economic reasons to do it, to bring down costs although initially you have to invest to make things happen correctly, I can see the point, but the people don't have the mindset, they don't have the experience. They find it very very difficult to sit around a table and say "ok what is our vision, where do we want to go, how are we going to do it, who is going to be responsible". At the same time to stepping out of this idea that "I am going to be more responsible because I want to be on the top of the head". This is not a caricature, this is what I see everyday in my work.

CR: Do you think that this is somehow related to the merger?

NR: The merger just makes it more visible because you can't merge and just expect people start working together. At one point, they had to sit around the table. I will give you another example, when the President built up his office, he got 25 people on it. You need a small team in order to build a real team spirit. Having 25 people is not the best option, it is just too big. It is unmanageable. Because everybody want their share "I need to be in the picture". And then there is no reflection as to "ok where are we going?".

CR: With 25 people you mean Vice-presidents?

NR: Yes, plus the administration. So, they spend most of their time fighting.

CR: It is quite different to what I saw in Finland, that they only had the President and 4 Vice-presidents.

NR: I took part on all this debates about professionalize management of higher education, because I was doing my PhD and when we were talking about this thing we said "Ok, these are huge institutions, they cost a lot. We need people that is fully trained to do their job". This is when Harvard started to offer courses for Deans of Faculties. What does it mean to manage on higher education? How can we develop leadership, the skills for this? And France, I've been in this field now for more than 25 years, and I've seen people grow, develop, meet and all of this. Who is out of the scene? The French, because they have that kind of "Exceptional Culture". I have sometime said they haven't yet started the French Revolution. They killed the king, but they haven't built up true a real democracy. There is all sort of historical reasons we can invoke to explain that and I do have a couple of hypothesis, but what I can see is that people have not learned to work together towards a shared goal with shared values. So, they come with the three things of the Republic "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité" but that is just something they are not embodied. It is a kind of imposture. I've spent a lot of time in situations with colleagues and students when we can say "this is a moment when we are living together", because people they've just declared it but they are not aware of when are we embodying these values, when are we showing up for these values. For me the French society is very hierarchical and everybody is in a little box and do a little thing, this is why they don't want to stop working after 35 hours. People are not embracing the complex problems we now have and the issues of today. Ok we can't solve these issues with the old thinking patterns. We need come together, work on it collectively. I mean what's the point of collective intelligence and all of this. I mean what I have seen and I have discussed it frequently with Romuald because I mean he has a very very good reading of it and he has been working on this for many years, people just don't know how to be together. I think the crisis is not hard enough. I am not unpleased with what is happening in France, because there is a point where they have to face reality.

CR: What is really manifesting this merger? What is behind? Are we covering a necessity?

NR: No, this is like the COMUE where I've also done expertise for the SRC, that is the auditing organization. I've been able to sleep around on all the COMUEs and all of that that. What is the idea? It is scarcity of resources, so the bigger we are the better share we get of the diminishing funding. It is just purely economic. They want to have more students because behind it is the idea of "too big to fail". What will happen is that they will help the big ones get bigger, while the smaller universities, the ones that are working with the local reality, training people for local economy, will disappear, because they are all literally bankrupt. Last year we noticed that there are many that are literally bankrupted because they get the money from the central government who decides the salaries and the universities just can't do it. I've seen the audits, and nobody wants to mention that. So, the idea was the bigger we are by getting together, we will get more money when we put our hands. And I know this because when we were doing this audit, there was a strong partnership with Spain, and I talked with 2 rectors in Spain and they said "it's all about the money". And also, being bigger in order to compete at a European scale to get European money. So, and it is all about research, trying to get some of this. They are just trying to survive.

CR: How big can you be? There is an optimal size that beyond of that size you are too big. Perhaps you are too big to fail, but also too big to do things.

NR: It is the economic thought that is behind it. I come from Switzerland so I can see how the banks, I mean UBS, behave very very badly. And then State and the people had to get out of this. And it is the economic thought that is behind it. And as long of the people keeps thinking that economic growth is going to be linear and is going to go up. I mean what is the philosophy behind

it. Nobody is questioning in France, because there are other places. What is the purpose of the university in a changing society? For me it is obvious, it's knowledge society, we produce not only fortune for other people. We are training 45.000 students come through here. We are training them to be the citizens of tomorrow, to look after these issues and these problems. That is a huge responsibility. When I say this some people look at me and they just don't understand. Some people look at students like if they were commodities, and the more students we have, the bigger we are, the whole system is chaotic. Behind all of that there is student accommodation, there are huge institutions to look after student accommodation. The whole economy of Strasbourg would collapse without the students and the universities. It is 55.000 people. You see why this is too big to fail. The impact on local economy would be tremendous.

CR: Don't you think that behind that merger movement in France there isn't a reflection about what the university is?

NR: No, they haven't. I can tell you why I know that, because with a colleague we are just publishing a collective book on higher education and austerity. We are looking it from a European perspective, why people are coping and facing austerity. People, frankly, the president and its team has no idea about what they are doing. It is because they don't have that type of leadership. It is more about getting up to the top position, but none of them have a philosophy. None of them have a vision, none of them have a strategy and it is all about egos. I mean, what I am observing is that probably one of the ideas behind the merger could be to be able to compete with the Grand Écoles. That is also another thing, because what I have discovered people in the universities, professor feel they have failed their academic careers because the only true proper career is to be on a Grand École. And I've met people who did their studies on a Grand École and then they started their careers and they feel they have failed in their careers because they end as professors here in Strasbourg. They feel like if this were a second class. And the frustration and the bitterness about this shows in their attitude.

CR: It is something that I have also noticed during my work that Grand Écoles don't want to become universities because they want to have only top people among them, and the rest of the world goes to the university.

NR: That is the awful thing, but that is true in a nutshell. It just comes down to that. I know that because I'm working with the person who is supposed to be merging the two programs from Central and Supélec, so there will be one engineer course. I am working with the person in charge of that and this is really hard, because she doesn't want to leave the old model, but she can't because she can't see the future. She has a certain intention of intuition like "ok, we can innovate we can do a new thing", but every time it comes up you get the same thing again and again. Because they can't see beyond the box. They are caught in this box. They have been trained for that. They can't do anything else beyond what they have been trained to do. Class society and they just don't want to give up on this. Honestly when you look at the students at the university of Strasbourg, some of the faculties, who are all second-generation Moroccans. Of course, is good that this people could get higher education, but where are all French middle class students? They are all in the Grand Écoles. And if you look at data on who is where it is quite clear that there is a gap between the working class and the middle class, and that gap is getting bigger and bigger year after year.

CR: I must say that, in the cases that I am studying, the only place that I saw there was a vision about what to do, it was in Finland. They are always looking ahead. The two former rectors I interviewed knew they were doing something that was beyond their individual situation, they were doing something for the sake of the country.

NR: Yes, I'm not surprised. I know, because Finland has been on it for 30 or 40 years. It's also people who has human values, who believe in the value of investing in education, and from the beginning they are prepared to pay the price. I've talked about participative democracy, because in Switzerland, when we started with my colleagues working on the Bologna reform we knew that it was a job for 2 or 3 generations. We won't see it, the achievement of it in our professional lifetime, but we accepted that, because it is what helped us to step out from our egos wanting to be in the front of the scene. This is a way of taking part on something that is bigger and longer than who we are as individuals, so it is a very very different approach. The other thing that I noticed is that "we were there, we were there with the people doing the work". I mean that we were action lead, we committed with this, I'm with the teachers, I'm with the students, I'm with my colleagues, I'm not sitting here in my office telling "this is what you should be doing". I go there, and I talk with the people, so "all this people I know they are all committed with a project are there. They are committed, they go to the meetings, they go with the trade unions, they go and talk to people. In the case of Finland, it's also easy going culture, people know who you are. I've seen people who go and sit in the lecture room to feel what feels like to be a student, just to get a taste of it, a sense of it.

CR: In Finland, they had a kind of managerial culture. I don't know if this is good or bad because many people think that university is a kind of community of academics. The people who is the Dean of a Faculty has a lot of power. It's a question of power fragmentation, something very common in universities.

NR: I've worked on this question of academic identity. The freedom is good, but you also have the responsibility to be accountable of your freedom. This people often forget it. What I sense as a difference is that there is a power game that is trying to get as much power as possible, which is very different from the notion of "empowering people to take part of a bigger vision". To empower people and help them to become responsible, to become creators, inventors, or simply to provide a public service to wherever they are. This is very dangerous here because everything is like a power game where people is trying to prove "I can do this". It is also that the France is a society where relationships are all about "who has power over whom", and is very different from Scandinavian countries where, for all sort of reasons, Northern Europe is a society that needed to be collective to survive. The environment is harder, the isolation, and there is an added value in being collective. It is not surprising these cultures where clans and tribes are highly valued, whereas in countries like Italy, where the culture is, well Italy is even worse than France in terms of fragmentation because the whole country, the nation is something very very recent. France has been always very centralized, and there has always been a king with a divine right and who has the truth.

CR: Is it also happening to the university?

NR: Yes, it's there all the time and people are not aware about it.

CR: But the rector is like a king?

NR: Yes, everybody is a king. Everybody spend their time saying "I'm more king than you".

CR: Would you say that there is some sort of culture of "University of Strasbourg" or not?

NR: Not that you would be able to identify. I expected to find something specific, but I think it is very close to all provincial universities in France. But this is just my personal observations. People who are here are not particular Alsacians. They don't come from the region, because they get positions wherever they can. I think Strasbourg is an attractive place to be, but people are not

here because they want to honor the university. Well, I've met people like that, but they are not on that type of positions now. To be able to have a sense of belonging and wanting to provide something, and to do something, and to make this university. I had ambitions but I was not necessary that, because I had ambitions for higher education in general. But talking about the culture of University of Strasbourg I can say it is not well forged.

CR: I will let you know one case that I have suffered here to see if you can give me an explanation. One year ago, I contacted Michel Deneken. His secretary Martin Arro and they agreed to have an interview and we finally decided to do it through Skype. She connected me with Michel Deneken and when we started the interview he told me: "It is better to send me the interview and I will answer the questions". He didn't like to continue, and I sent the questions written and never got an answer. I sent a reminder and never got an answer. I went to his office this morning and I had no answer either. What does it mean for you?

NR: Ok, well, I'm smiling as you probably noticed it. It is very interesting, well there is the person, the personality, and the strategy. I've told you they don't know how to talk and they don't know how to communicate. They also don't know how to manage their agenda, they are always canceling anything that might make them that they would avoid. They don't like any form of insight. They truly believe they have the truth, and they don't feel questioned or challenged. But on the other hand, they can't explain it: "I'm ok, I have a strategy". I told you that the feeling was "I'm not here to question which are your goals and visions. Who am I to make those questions?". I was also quite usually making interviews.

CR: And how did it go?

NR: Well, Michel Deneken refused it. He can't look at people. Eye contact zero. He is a preacher, so he won't touch a woman. You have somebody with huge difficulties in relations, and this what drove me mad is that he has big responsibilities with 55.000 people. Managerial skills, not even talking about culture, leadership, skills, managerial skills, learning to talk to people and if you do get an interview, they might eventually give you an appointment and they will cancel it. Because there is something extremely important. They are doing it all the time. They are my supervisor and they haven't talked to me for 8 months.

CR: So, you are a kind of advisor

NR: No, I'm on a special contract, I'm on a mission. They asked me to come here to build up this unit, and they never talked to me. When I said "what is your vision, where do you want to go, how can I better give service".

CR: Something very common when you arrive to a place

NR: Yes, you do the stakeholders interview, don't you? And I said "Ok, thank you very much for inviting me, I'm going to be on service, so what are your priorities, what should I pay attention to, what will make a difference...". So, I played the game, because I'm trained to do that, and it just went into "panic mode".

CR: Do you think that they are just representative a collective? They are not there because they are the right managers to deal with the university.

NR: My experience is a bit of a mix of the two. What I have usually met is that academics that go into university politics and decide to become deans, vice-presidents and all of that, are the ones that are not very good on research and don't like teaching. So, the ones that are not successful

in the usual fields and that are out of that say "Ok, I will dedicate myself to the institution". I know people for quite a long time and we have talked about it very openly and they say "I hate being an academic". And some people are actually very good because it fits their personality better. And this is often the case and then of course in order to get into these positions they have to deal with all the tensions going on, and you have to work with so many people that it is going to vote you. So, this is a democracy and the two things come together. What I'm observing now is that vice-presidents, because Deneken wants to be the next president, so he is campaigning. He is very unpopular and he doesn't have the charisma. He knows he has to be strategic in order to get enough votes. So, as I say he is reading Machiavelli every morning, you know what I mean. This is very personal but I'm not the only one that views it like me. He looks out for the people who have very low self-esteem, who are not achieving on an academic level, promising them a position of power, something that would get bring them up in the light, and that is how the power game is playing. Because the people who are very good in research, and I've seen them, people who are Nobel Prize winners and something like that, they are not going to get on that, and the pay is ridiculous. So, I think the incentive to be in this is to high a sense of low self esteem and lack of academic achievement.

CR: Do you think this is just a question of power?

NR: It is about power and ownership. I've been working with the heads of different universities for 25 years, and I've seen them every day around the coffee machine. For instance, in the Swiss university they have a mix model. The President's office is 50% academic and 50% administrative personnel. People probably like you that are highly qualified, because in Switzerland we recognize that these people have a knowledge and the capacity. When the professor is nominated or appointed vice-presidents, they are like babies. I was working in the South of France on research group last week and there were the French Parisian universities. The President's team has just changed and they are all complaining that it has changed. They are like babies. They've been on their position for two months. They don't even know where are their offices, they don't know how to do things, they are afraid, they are scared. You can help them become the people they are if you are a bit more supportive instead of saying "of course you can be more performing now". That is a huge problem: where they build the teams. We did that in the 80's and 90's in Switzerland, when we really challenged the believe that if you are an academic you are absolutely powerful at anything. This was challenged because "Ok, you are an specialist on this and that, you might know how to run a project because you have been competing at an European level, you might know how to deal with people because you have 10 PhD students working for you, this is just the beginning". You need that knowledge of the administrative personnel, that in Switzerland they are highly trained. I've been on an administrative position but it required a PhD to be on it. That happened also in England in the 80's and 90's that it was decided to create professional development units in management. When I came here it was like I told you, going back 50 years. Here they have the believe that "I'm a professor". To become a professor in France it is easy and very humiliating so they believe once they have got into that position, they know it all. Michelle Deneken is a catholic priest, and he was in charge of the finances of the university, he is now in charge of the education and the continuous education. I would never go into that responsibilities without having some formal training. What happens is that the administrative personnel, who in France is highly trained. To be what they call here DGS it is quite a job, and this people is badly treated, they feel that they have been shamed, and there is no dialogue. It is ridiculous, it is like if the pilot and the copilot on a plane don't talk each other. This is what you find different in the Scandinavian universities, they have the challenge of the assumption that the academics know everything. So, the question of the ownership on higher education has been challenged and opened. It's "ok, the academic has the scientific knowledge and that is fabulous, but if you on't have someone who can run the kitchen it's useless". So, the merger, what happens? The merger, which is a huge operation, brings to light all these problems, because the colleagues were telling

me what they have seen: "look, these people don't know how to manage a project. They have no idea". They don't know what it is a roadmap, they don't know what it is an action plan, they don't know how to evaluate or how to monitor it, because nobody has ever told them how to do

CR: Is this the difference between policy and action?

NR: Yes, but the interesting thing in the actual academic teaching is that it is so based on content transmission and not on developing skills, that the people are like having a wonderful wikipedia on their head, but they just can't use it, and I see with my students. Sometimes it is absolutely disbaring because I know they are full of good willing to do things, but they produce such terrible papers, and they are very good, I want to read, and I have to say "you are going to stop reading and start writing and thinking", but they have not learned to think. The thing is that, as we know, the change in the systems in that perspecive is a long time, because you've got to start a deep process of transformation, which is ok. What do you know? Which are your goals? Where do you want to go? Nobody is questioning whether it is good o not, who are we to question this is good or not? I can only help you if I know where you want to go. If you want to go in the war, well you can go in the war. This is what I felt with the merger, the same with the Idex during the SWOT analysis, and is that the university wanted to come up as a top university in France and was trying to go for. They went for something that was very flashing, very wow, but that is just the beginning of the story. When they got the resources, you have to manage it. You have to manage the sense of ownership, the sense of responsibility and with accountability. But as far as regarding to Idex, I mean the wonderful thing is a lot of money and everybody competes and to allocate their share of the money, but the administrative system behind to monitor it was not adapted, because it is supposed to be flexible, it is supposed to empower people to try thing, but the whole system of accountability is not prepared to do that. When I started that it was just hell. I mean, I couldn't spend the money because the system didn't know how to do it. The budget was there, somebody was paying my salary, so there must be some way. The people don't know, so we got to the point where I said "I had to pay everything, including the toilet paper". Because there was so lost, sometimes happen, you get huge amount of money and the people are not prepared, not trained. You get caught into action paralysis that is quite well known. All this needs mentoring, it needs coaching, it needs people who are there to say "ok, wonderful, great, congratulations, now guys the bad news is that you are going to put out your hands and start working, and working the first things getting around the table and brainstorming, putting things up, arguing possibly, but you have to have a vision, a strategic plan". When I came here they told me to create this institute because I've been doing this in Switzerland. I said ok and I drafted an action plan, a strategic plan, the whole thing and a two years' roadmap. I said "this is what I've heard you wanted and this is what I suggest, you can take it, we can discuss details, but my only condition is that once we agree we don't change it for the first 2 years because otherwise I don't know what is impacting. They looked at me and they were surprised, because they had never seen anything like that, they had never seen an action plan, and I broke it week by week, month by month. And what I said to me was "Where have I come? What have I done?".

CR: Well, but the point is that, from the interview I had this morning with Francis Kern, he didn't know very much about the merger, but he had the feeling everything was going well. The university is among the best 100 in the world according to Shanghai ranking. What do you think, is there any more just beyond being on the ranking? Is it University of Strasbourg just a number on the ranking?

NR: Well, if your are in that mindset, that is where the little boys want to go for. They want to be on top of the rankings but I think quite honestly that Strasbourg, the quality of life here is good. I mean it is very well situated in Europe, it has a very wide international community, it is a very safe place, it is a very pleasant place to be. Compared to some cities in France, parents would rather

send their children to Strasbourg, which is considered a safe comfortable family place. You are looking for security for your kids to send them to university. Ok, is also good rankings, so if you have a diploma that says "University of Strasbourg", that is quite good in terms of reputation, but those types of reputations are based on Nobel Prizes, that say "Ok, I've got 3 Nobel Prizes on chemistry and I'm trying to get more". I don't think that it is going to be viable because the country is on a big chaos. I mean, that type of reputation is not long standing, but it does still have, it is one of the leading European research universities, but you cannot base your future on that, because the other French universities are just as bad if not worst.

CR: Because the reputation is more on the Grand Écoles

NR: Well, when people say "where should I send my kids to university", it depends on what you value. Are you valuing security, good life? Strasbourg is quite a good place. I travel a lot around France and when you travel south it can be a bit... There are quite a lot of people sending their kids to the smaller universities because these places are not competing with the big ones. They offer services to students, like La Rocher, universities of about 4.000 or 5.000 students, so they are really focusing on the students, on the quality of the service in terms of training. The staff there are dedicated to students. My hypothesis is that the private universities and the small universities which will do best in terms of teaching, will create another fracture with the idea of an identity of academia with research and teaching will disappear in the following years. But even in the private universities in France, the academics are producing quite good research work. And it will grow because they realize they are going to survive, they are going to be there for something. This is what happens in Canada, the private universities have a duty with serving better the society.

CR: Do you think that University of Strasbourg is serving better the society due to the merger or they are just doing the same as always?

NR: They are doing the same thing. They are not doing nothing special because of the merger. I can't see anything special. Not something that I have noticed, because I was not there before so... I go quite a lot across France, and I find the other universities are more integrated such as L'Ille university, I find it is much more proactive towards society.

CR: Do you think that this kind of integration of the 3 universities cost money?

NR: I don't know

CR: Francis Kern told me this morning it didn't cost money. It sounds quite strange because when you do a merger you need to invest money. Otherwise nothing happens. It is not just about changing the name.

NR: Well, it must have cost money to redesign the logo and corporate identity. There must have been a bit of money in redecorating. I think there was a consultant to do certain things.

CR: So, there was no "rethinking" of the university.

NR: No, there hasn't been, and they are not prepared to do it yet. The people not, the people in office. I've seen universities doing it, and the point is that it need a very strong Rector, a very strong leadership who would take his team somewhere outside, with no computer, no iPhone, we are here, and you go into these situations and say "Ok, we go, and we go naked", not with all the things we know. We go in and we try to be as open as possible because we want to do this together. It needs very strong leadership, and it needs a huge dose of humility and generosity.

CR: And it didn't happen here.

NR: No, not with those people. No. This is type of the work I do. And this is what I would like to do until people are prepared to say "Ok, we now have the possibility to transform and to build something, what do we want to build, how do we want to build it". Until they take responsible and ownership for that, they are just going to repeat the same pattern over and over again. So, it needs a huge dose of courage.

CR: And it doesn't come from the economic crisis.

NR: It seems the economic crisis is not having that impact. It should do, if we were looking at shift in paradigms, it will eventually happen, but I am wondering how far do we have to go before people realize we can't continue like this.

CR: And why we can't continue like this?

NR: Because it is economically unsustainable.

CR: It costs too much money.

NR: It costs too much money while the State funding is diminishing and it is likely to continue to diminish. Here it is ridiculous. We are so lucky because we have IDEX money, but the situation with some of my colleagues in other places, they are very badly paid. It is ridiculous. I mean it is just not sustainable. One point, and this is why the protests we have now, it really needs "look, we have to stop it, we have to sit around the table, we have to find a solution". It is not "you against me or they against us, whatever it is we have to stop it and find the way to get out of this". It needs an extremely strong leadership and it needs to let go oppositions like right or left wing, all of those old patterns of thought.

CR: And which are the new patterns of thinking from your perspective.

NR: From my perspective, I truly believe in empowering communities, not to do things on the global or national. It is people what makes the difference, but not people in huge groups, because as soon as the group gets big enough there is going to be a leader, it is going to be awful. So, I believe in empowering communities and I think this is what we are doing here in this institute, empowering communities of practice. Small groups of academics, between 12 and 15. People who can talk each other, who can sit around a table, talk to each other and start developing projects.

CR: What is your role here?

NR: Well, I've built this institute of teaching and learning, and the idea was to work on innovative teaching practices. The first thing was to help academic develop as teachers, because they haven't any training in teaching as you know. It is what you call "Educational Development Units" in the universities. We have three things: We are providing workshops and comprehensive programmes on academic teaching and learning and how the students learn, how can be a bit more creative in our teaching, we do a lot of individual coaching and counseling individuals (there is nobody here because they are actually working in the Faculty with the Dean on designing new programs and courses, we call it curricula development), we do research, applied research, what are the impacts, we are doing all of this that costs a lot of money, so how can we measure the impact?

CR: You are trying to be a motor of change in the way of teaching at the university.

NR: I'm not trying, I am. I do it through the people. I work with change makers. People in change making positions or people who want to be change makers. I empower them to do it.

CR: *To have a multiplier effect by them.*

NR: Yes, and to get the resources and the tools that will help them unfold whatever it is they are looking them. Creating communities of change makers who can support each other. We are not talking about theoretical changes. It is about people who shares the same values in life, who want to make a difference, who want to empower themselves in communities and doing it on specific projects, not just on theory, on prototyping it. This is the type of work I am doing "you have a good idea, you have intuition, try to do that". We have some tools to monitor and to make it grow. Because my colleagues are not of course specialists in learning processes. They do not understand the mental processes I explain. The people come here, they are colleagues, they teach subjects and we relay help them to be in service of the learning of the students. This is the type of work that I do. I always told to Romuald that probably the reason I came to France, I didn't want to come to France, but France called me, was unable to see what happens when I have this philosophy and I come against people who do not share the values.

CR: *And do you think something happened?*

NR: Oh, yes, something happened, I've lost my job. This is quite clear. No, something did happen. The people shifted. The teachers at middle level and the low level of the university, people are moving.

CR: *So, the IDEX had some plan to change things.*

NR: Well they guy who recruited me, that was his job, to get the people fill in the slots of the IDEX detected. And then he retired.

CR: *And who were you reporting?*

NR: To Michel Deneken. But as you know him... So, I mean, I would be surprised if you get an interview, because he doesn't like to commit himself, he has his own agenda and he, another one of the problems I found is that they are not communicating here. Other people have said that there is an absence of communication. On some moments, I've thought that perhaps I've missed some information, it can happen, and I was asking colleagues "how can I get this information, is it available on the website?". There was a lot of embarrassment because that is when I realized there was no information.

CR: *This is quite clear, but if Michel Deneken goes into elections and win the elections, does it mean that the people is not interested on getting involved or getting information?*

NR: Yes, but look from different perspective. You can say ok, a good perspective is that you put somebody who is weak, who is very concerned about self-image and all of that. This means that the person will get rapped on that ego driven attitude. This means that meanwhile, at the middle level, the Deans of the Faculties run the business. So, there are always advantages and disadvantages.

CR: *Does it mean that the Rectorate is like another Faculty but even smaller?*

NR: It can be like that, but if you are on a university which is in fact a federation of faculties this is a good strategy. You say "Ok, you want to do the show and the business and the entertainment you go and do it, and meanwhile I am the king of the castle at my Faculty". I've seen it in Geneva,

and often in international evaluations of universities you see that this is the strategy. The idea is that why not, I have to survive in this ecosystem, but the idea is why people can't work on a more collegial way. Then it would be either research project that can bring people together. In France, there is an expression it is either a marriage of passion or reason, but quite honestly it is going to be always a marriage of reason. Why the Faculties of biology linked up with the Meds, because suddenly their cutting up research is overlapping both disciplines. They need to be together.

CR: Have they reorganized the Faculties? Have they merged the Faculties?

NR: Nothing, because the three universities they have split things up. So, they bring it all together and even now that they are supposed to be working on joint programs and things like that, the people have no idea of how to do it. I was very surprised because in Switzerland some of the curricula are there and here everything is fragmented into small boxes. I mean, if you are studying literature, which is a very good example, in most European countries, you study the literature of the whatever language you chose plus linguistics. You would never consider not to do linguistics and literature. Here it is two different faculties. It is because everything has been split up into small units so that every academic is individual and unique.

CR: So, no kind of discussion about overlapping disciplines and things like that.

NR. No. Sharing modules, sharing things like that... I mean, for us it is obvious. All of that debate about sharing resources, but the people they don't have the mindset. So, Central Supélec this is what they are hitting. I was talking to them about this and it was like talking to a wall. She can't see it. Everything has to be controlled in an excess of control like "the students have to do this, this and that, they need solid knowledge on that". They need to be messy and their hands dirty. They are engineers, design things. As we say "fail early in order to learn quickly", but this is not French. There is this sort of drive to control and in France what I've also noticed is that they have faith in the method. The method must produce the expected outcome. All we know that this is quite unrealistic.

CR: Yes, because we are talking about people, not about a production chain.

NR: Yes, but even in Physics, my father is a Physicist, they would never had that kind of statement. You've got a theory, you've got a hypothesis and you set up to see whether or not it is valid. This is scientific thinking. They have this faith in the method and if it is not working is because you haven't the right methodology, they think "maybe it is the wrong question you are asking". And this I found very difficult, because people say "Ok, we ought to have more online courses", and I said "Why?". The answer was "because everybody is doing it", but they are more looking at the how than the why, and this is because there is an absence of vision.

CR: Would you say there is a process of the merger? What would be the phases? Here it looks like get together, but nothing else. Pre-merger, negotiation...

NR: I wouldn't talk about negotiation, I would talk about creating space for, or holding a space where the vision can emerge. Because there again, the same mistake is we go for the merger but we don't question why. And I would say "Ok what is the vision". They are bringing back the three universities from the origin. I find that Ok, but it really needs, the first thing we have to ask is "why are we doing it, what is the purpose, what is the goal", because then the logistic of it will be ok. Because the people don't know why it has been done, they feel that they have been left out. Before you actually do it, or decide how are you going to do it, you need a clear vision. Because then it helps people understand and decide to contribute or not, or how they are going to take part on it. But if it just a question of trying to make believe that it is going to be good for resources

people can't get involved on it. They will have the impression that it has been decided behind their backs. There is a hidden agenda, that it might be the case. How can you relate to something? You need a very strong vision, it needs to be guided by people who knows how to do that. Big companies like Shell when they do things like this they work during 2 years for it. They have great people coming in. They go out, they write scenarios, they write several scenarios. It is a thorough work of reflection. Ok, the worst thing that happen, so you get people thinking in terms perspectives rather than reacting to whatever is going on. You work on scenarios and from this work of "ok what would be the worst thing, the best thing", you more or less you commit as a team and it also needs to have a core team, with not many people, say 5 people can change the world. So, 5 people who is are going to carry that out for certain time.

CR: And there was no team here.

NR: No, there was probably just one person driving it. I've seen people in other universities that say "I'm going a go there and I have this team". People who is going a be loyal with him for 8 years or more. It needs a core team of people who are going stick together whatever and are prepared to say "Ok, when we across to something that is difficult we agree that we sit down and discuss it". It needs honesty, humility and generosity. The other thing is that if you go on a team like that you let go of all your other mandate. You have to be fully committed with that. I left Switzerland, I came here to do that. It is not possible to do it part time. You have to dedicate yourself to something and accept to serve and to leave. In a certain sense the fact that they decided not to keep me on it has been very good for the project, because everybody is going grow up now. They have to take responsibility and ownership about the things.

CR: Why do you think they did not renew you?

NR: Because I was asking the wrong questions. Nobody likes to be faced with the fact that they don't have a vision, that they have personal agendas, because I was showing them, they were not responsible. For me personally I know what can I do with people and how to do it. I will never take on a contract if the other person is not 100% committed to it. So, it means before a I take on a new contract I make sure that the other person is committed, and we have a roadmap and agreement to what to do. This happens more on private universities because they go for that.

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