FOUR THEMES FOR REFLEXION ON DIGITAL SOCIETY AND HIGER EDUCATION

IMPACTS AND CHALLENGES

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THEMES

I. Knowledge Society and Digital Society (DS) "Change of epoch"

II. Socially distributed production of knowledge and "digital transition"

III. Impact of DS on HEI

IV. New institutional and social agenda for HEI´s under the DS

And a very preliminary conclusion ¡¡¡¡

I. Knowledge Society and Digital Society "Change of epoch"

- In a schematic way, the so-called "digital society" (DS) constitutes a higher stage in the development of the "knowledge society" while representing a qualitative change from the latter.

- This is because of the dominance of new technologies based on the digital revolution and the various capabilities generated with it.

- But mainly it represents a **radical transformations of social relations** with the configuration of a **cyber-physical society**.

I. Knowledge Society and Digital Society "Change of epoch"

A radical transition in a very short time from:

Cloud Computing

to Internet of Things (IoT)

to Internet of Everything (IoE)

So, ….a "Digital Society"

- Some features of this:
  - IoT will connect **28 billion "things "**to the Internet by 2020
  - **Half of the world's population** connected to the Internet
  - **Extraordinary power of few major technology co**mpanies; increasing interrelationship between human and artificial intelligence

II. Socially distributed production of knowledge and digital transition

- The knowledge society developed the production of scientific knowledge towards socially distributed mode (Gibbons)
- The development of digital technologies exacerbated this tendency and generate new set of participating social actors in the knowledge ecosystem.
  - private stakeholders for business purposes (technological companies, private universities),
  - the state with new roles in public higher education
  - traditional universities faced with a change due to the loss of their social monopoly of the production of scientific knowledge.
  - New social actors

II. Socially distributed production of knowledge and digital transition

Ecosystem of social knowledge production
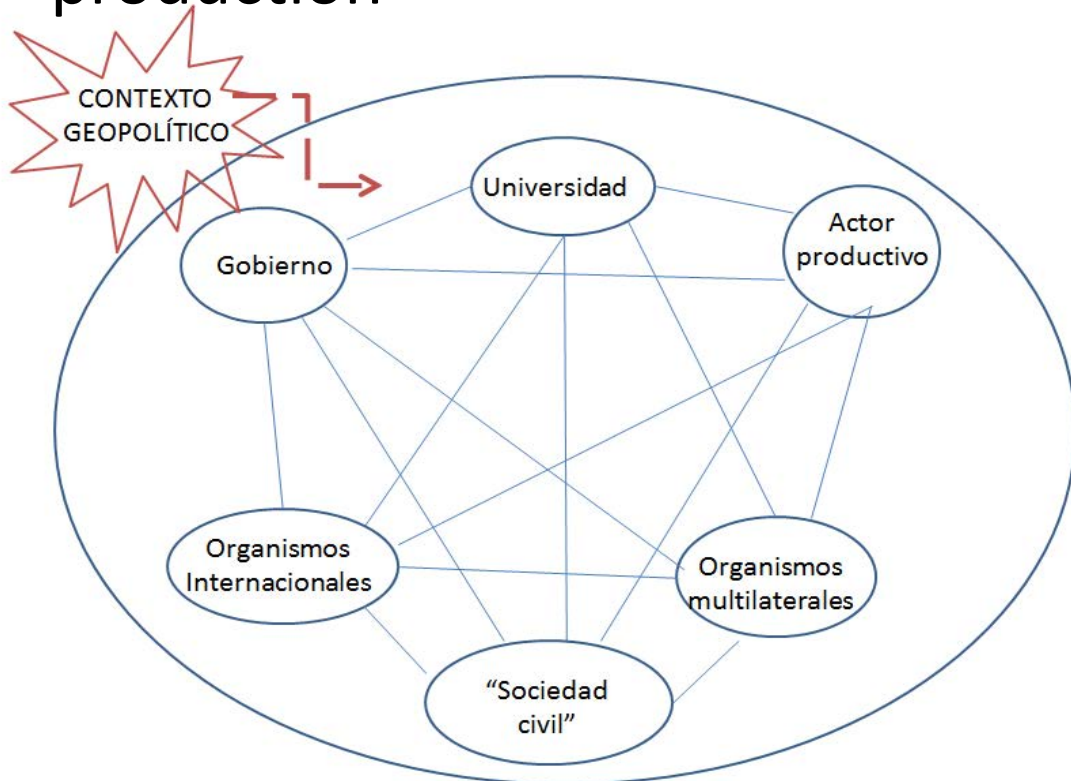
- This creates the problem of the governance of the production of knowledge in the social knowledge ecosystem.

- Some evidence is given by *fake* news, cybersecurity problems, etc.

- The oligopolistic power of Google, Facebook, Amazon

III. Impact of DS on HEI

Digital society has a strong impact on HEI´s, that demands them radical changes

- Distance learning "relocate" teaching activity
- Open educational resources modified the means of knowledge circulation
- Learning analytics enables individualized and adaptive learning
- Changing dynamics of occupations demands LLL offer from HEI
- Big data and artificial intelligence offer new tools for research activity
- But also the HEI´s have to learn how to interact with the "new millennials or after" students, understand its ways of social relations and its "digital thinking"

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III. Impact of DS on HEI

- Those impacts creates huge problems to traditional (and not so traditional) universities due they were created under other socio-historical circumstances

- So, they confronts a new and complex situation that will have to be managed as what is call as a "digital transition" towards the digitization of higher education

- This will be (and already is) a very relevant topic for the development of the higher education in general and the HEI´s in particular

IV. New institutional agenda for HEI´s under the DS

- HEI´s must change to achieve a new role on education, science, technology and innovation in digital society
  - Rethink the concept and role of knowledge with artificial intelligence
  - Create new paths for education, research and dissemination based on new technologies
  - Reorganize its institutional configuration and ways of government in relation with conditions created with "social networks"
  - Reconfigure learning activities in a more flexible and individual direction

IV. New social agenda for HEI´s under the DS

Given the current changes in the society, universities must redefine their role in social life.

This means a deep commitment to help the overall transition to a cyber-digital order that is favorable for the whole of society and the Planet.

- This implies a complex agenda of issues to be addressed by universities:

  - citizenship and democracy
  - environmental sustainability
  - food security; organizations
  - social inclusion and poverty
  - responsible data science
  - cyber security.

IV. A new social role for HEI´s under the DS

HEI´s can be leader in the "social dialogue" between ecosystem actors for a transition to digital society with inclusive and sustainable social development vision

- To create new ways of interacting with different actors so that new modes of production, circulation, appropriation and social application of knowledge through cyber- physical systems are fulfilled according to the well-being and development of Communities

A very preliminary conclusion

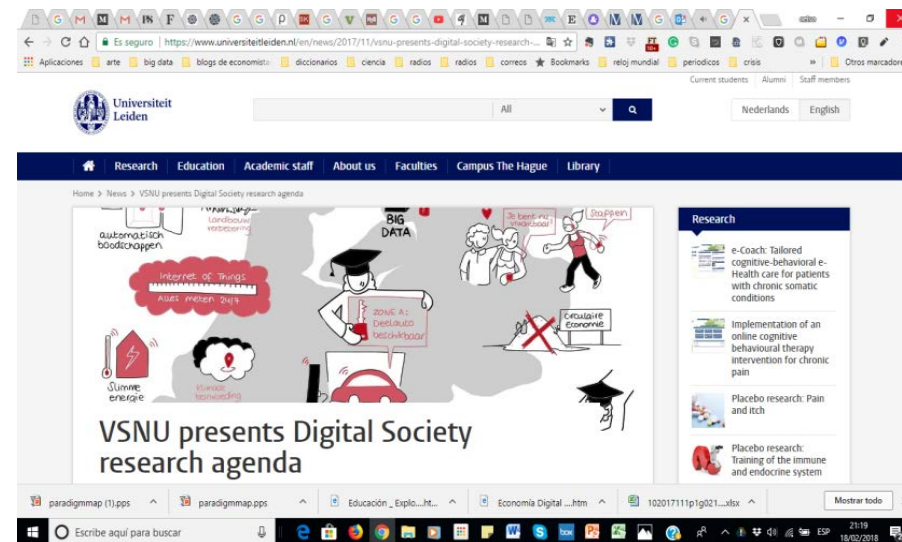**"HIGHER EDUCATION REFORM AND DS" IS VERY COMPLEX PROBLEM ¡¡¡**

Fortunately there are several HEI´s and associations that have been working on on both subjects of the agenda since long time ago

INSTITUTIONAL

SOCIAL

https://www.educause.edu/

https://www.thedigitalsociety.info/
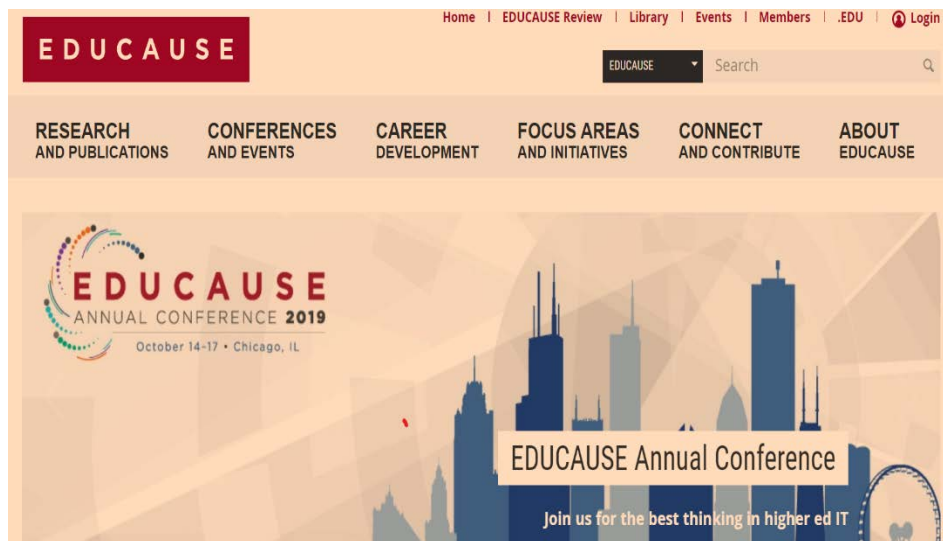
A very preliminary conclusion

In general we can say

- The defy of the HEI´s under the DS are equivalent to the problems of other social actors in this "change of epoch"

- HEI´s, Firms, Governments, Workers and other Social groups are confronted to a "digital transition " toward the unknown future of the "digital society"

- So, it seems possible that given its particular condition, HEI´s can promote some kind o **"Social Dialogue"** with all the actors to try build a collective guidance for this historical change

¡¡¡ THANKS ¡¡¡¡

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