

University and competition : the American model

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University as a higher education centre but also as a business. The future of Italian universities has been at the heart of a meeting organised by Liuc with also the presence of a guest, the American political scientist David Kirp, professor of Public Policy at University of California in Berkeley, deep specialist of the experience that the American academic world is facing during the recent years.

American universities are more and more careful about the promotion of the "label", in a hard competition in the research for financial backers, sponsors and students. From this tension, a development policy has been formed which is careful to the productivity, to the efficiency, to the management and to the synergy within the business world: a flywheel of competition whose relapses spread on the whole territory of reference. The more a university is able to develop International partnerships and local collaborations, the more it represents a competitive advantage for the whole community of reference.

The American model of university development "in the society of the knowledge" is conquering also the old-continent where the discussion about the autonomy and the university governances is passionate. David Kirp has presented to teachers, researchers and students of Liuc, his latest book "Shakespeare, Einstein and the Bottom Line. The Marketing of Higher Education" where the many aspects of university governance are highlighted with interesting insights drawn from the analysis of the situation in the U.S.: a very complex and multifaceted reference model, often idealised or treated in Italy in an overly simplistic way.

In his speech, Kirp has underlined the efforts made by U.S. universities to commercialise their educational offering capturing students, public and private funds in a dialogue with the increasingly tight world of business. One way that the Italian academic world should take to give a concrete sign of the society in which it operates.

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