admission to any Israeli university or will be 30 years of age or older. This requirement is crucial since some of the branches of foreign universities have been willing to accept all high school graduates, regardless of their credentials. Starting last year, this is no longer possible.

Third, all the institutions will offer programs that are similar to the ones the mother institution offers in their home country. This requirement presents some important advantages as well as some serious challenges regarding issues that are sometimes difficult to address. The CHE makes a serious attempt to preserve the academic level, but this colonization creates a real dilemma for the coordinators, who would like to adapt the curriculum to the needs of the local student. It makes sense for a master's student in education who wants to specialize in curriculum to analyze the existing curriculum in Israel rather than the one in Britain or in the United States—just as it makes sense for a master's student in business to analyze a local institution rather than a foreign one. In addition, the issue of academic freedom has to be addressed when faculty members are not allowed to make any changes in the existing curriculum in order to ensure that the syllabus remains similar to the one in the foreign institution. The CHE seems to have concluded that the public interest in Israel today requires stressing social mobility at the expense of academic freedom.

Fourth, the teaching staff at these institutions will be required to have qualifications that will be similar to those of the teaching staff in their country of origin. This is very important because in Israeli universities only people having a terminal degree can teach graduate students, while at the different branches of foreign universities, people with a master's degree or even people working toward one have been found teaching graduate students studying for the master's degree. It should be noted that some of the staff from the original institutions use distance learning, and some university professors from the seven traditional Israeli universities who are looking for an extra job have joined the staff. The ethical considerations involved have not yet even been raised.

Fifth, the institutions will have to prove that they have the necessary facilities for adequate intellectual work—such as, libraries, computers, etc. This requirement will prevent foreign universities from opening small branches that consist of only a few classes, without any facilities whatsoever. As a result of this move on the part of the CHE, there was a significant change, and the picture has become quite diverse. At an October 1999 meeting of the Education Committee of the Israeli Parliament, the minister of education stated that the ministry would make certain that all foreign universities would become accountable and would be judged on their quality and relevance and that he would make decisions on this issue on an individual basis. Seven institutions had to close down during the first six months of 2000 since they were not able to meet these demands; others are in the process of closing down (the students who have started the programs will be allowed to graduate but no new students are being accepted); and still others have changed their curriculum, closed some local branches that lacked the necessary facilities, and made significant changes in their teaching staff.

One can only hope that all higher education institutions will be accountable for their quality, respond to the needs of local students, and pay more attention to the issue of academic freedom. ■

East German Universities Ten Years After

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Germany today is a country with two societies—West and East—divided by a virtual wall. Though a higher education system and society are never completely congruent, the distribution of staff and students reveals significant patterns. Only one-third of the highest-ranking professorships (C4) in East Germany are now held by East Germans, and an East German professor in a West German university is an uncommon occurance. The proportion of West German students in East Germany and the proportion of East German students in West Germany are mirror images of each other. Only 2 percent of students who were born in West Germany study at East German universities, but 14 percent of students who grew up in East Germany study in West Germany.

Apart from these factors, East German higher education institutions are characterized by both advantages and problems. First of all, the equipment at East German universities is more modern than that in many West German universities, having been almost completely updated in the last few years. The staff-to-student ratio is very favorable in many disciplines. East German academic staff are more highly motivated to teach and advise students than are their West German colleagues. These are the main advantages.

First among the important problems is the aftereffect of the changes in the university system over the last ten years. Exhaustion can be noted due to the turmoil of institutional transformation. For this reason, East German uni-

versities are not very open to further reforms. This contradicts the widespread impression of the positive experience of institutional reforms and their enthusiastic continuation. The reform fatigue is also working against the efforts of some university leaders—for example, in Dresden (Saxony), Rostock (Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania), and East Berlin. Perhaps more relevant is the fact that the academic environment in East Germany is characterized by a conservative institutional culture. It is very formal, hierarchical, preferring frontal instruction in teaching. In short, while entrepreneurial universities are not unthinkable in East Germany, they are improbable.

The equipment at East German universities is more modern than that in many West German universities, having been almost completely updated in the last few years.

A special problem caused by the transformation of the system concerns the status of middle-aged East German scientists who are now employed at universities in part-time jobs. In 1989, they were between 35 and 45 years old and had to change their focus frequently while hopping from one research project to the next. They proved to be flexible and mobile: 60 percent of all scientists had to leave their original fields and go into another professional area or take early retirement. But now these same scientists are between 45 and 55 years old; they do not, of course, hold professorships (in Germany almost the only opportunity to have a tenured academic job) because to become a professor in Germany is only possible when the aspirant is integrated into the relevant network. But since 1989, the networks are all West German, and for a traditional academic career in West Germany the middle-aged East German scientists are now too old.

Such problems are amplified by another special situation. A lot of young East Germans prefer not to attend university after secondary school. In West Germany, approximately 30 percent of the relevant age cohort takes up studying at the university level, whereas in East Germany only about 20 percent do so. Therefore, the East German universities are not enrolling enough students (except in law, economics and medicine), and the politicians conclude there are too many academic staff. The weaker East German economy results in lower tax revenues for the East German states, and this in turn creates pressure to reduce the budget of higher education institutions. Apart from the change in structures and contents, the newly instituted academic freedom, and the opportunities for international communication, most East German academics experienced the transformation of the universities as a major cutback in jobs in higher education. Moreover, the transformation is not yet complete, inasmuch as the next round of cutbacks in jobs has already been announced. ■

Korean National Universities at the Crossroads

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Since the economic crisis of 1997–1998 Korean higher education reform has emphasized strengthening international competitiveness. The BK-21 Project introduced in the last issue of this newsletter was the first initiative taken by the Korean Ministry of Education. The second initiative is a report entitled "Development Plan of the National Universities." Released last July, the report reexamines the role and function of national universities as part of an effort to strengthen their academic productiveness and human resources development. The 44 national universities—23 percent of four-year colleges and universities in Korea—are being strongly encouraged to restructure themselves under the guidelines of the report.

Institutional Classification

The report classifies the national universities into four types of institutions, in accordance with their role and function: (1) research universities ; (2) teaching universities; (3) specialized colleges—such as institutions devoted to ocean engineering, teachers education, and physical education; (4) vocation-oriented colleges to meet the needs of local business and industry. The government would determine financial support based upon the specific purposes of each institution. Private colleges and universities compete for excess funds–a kind of "privatization" policy. Another important recommendation of the panel that put together the report is to improve the geographical distribution of higher education institutions. Consolidating or abolishing the national colleges and universities with similar departments in each of seven regional blocs is strongly urged.

Autonomy and Independence

The report also recommended a reorganization of the gov-