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Emerging Models of Institutional Autonomy

CASE STUDY SWEDEN - CHALMERS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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A short description of the Swedish higher education system will be given. The universities are mainly state institutions reporting to the government (Ministry of Education and Science). Of 15 state universities there are one foundation university (Chalmers) and a private business school (Stockholm) and of the 17 university colleges there is one university college foundation.

Chalmers university of technology is a single engineering faculty having a turnover of €230 million).2450 employees out of which 1630 teaching and research staff and around 9000 students in PhD-, Master -(4,5-5 years) and Bachelor -(3 years) programmes

The creation of Chalmers as a foundation university started when the government offered all universities in Sweden 1991 the possibility to be foundation universities. Chalmers was one of the universities which accepted the offer. The transformation took place 1994 The political goals were autonomy and pluralism and the

The definition of a Swedish foundation is given. Chalmers is a semi-private foundation-owned university founded by the Swedish State. The university is run as a limited company and has the same type of funding as the state universities but 7 % of the turnover is yield from foundation capital. The organisation of the system is described and the rule of the foundation board and the university board. Even if the university is run as a limited company there is full public transparency.

The foundation capital was 1994 €170 million and in Dec 2004 €187 million. Since 1994 the foundation has spent €233 million on owner undertakings, renewal funding and interaction funding. The renewal funding has been used for setting up programmes in four focus areas.

The academic staff has in principle the same rights and duties as at the state universities. Even the students have the same position as at the state universities but at Chalmers there is a Students' "Ombudsman" is commissioner for the individual student.

In the presentation there will be shown that there are increased possibilities for a foundation university compared with Swedish state universities in finance, investments. recruitment of staff. academic career structure, internal organisation, creating new organisations and partnership

Important areas to consider at a transformation will be discussed: relations to the political system - long term funding, academic values vs business orientation, management skills, attention on rights for students, participation for the faculty, balanced influence from donors and industry and relations to other national universities

The experiences of the foundation university will be mentioned. Overall the experiences are very good – the system with a foundation and a university run as a limited company has worked well.