

DECLARATION OF THE PARTICIPANTS OF THE SYMPOSIUM
THE IDEA OF THE UNIVERSITY
& OF THE CROATIAN PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

ON THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES

Participants of the symposium “The Idea of the University” in the framework of the 21st Days of Frane Petrić, taking place in the town of Cres from the 23rd to the 26th September 2012, from twelve countries, after three days of discussions, have decided – in this time of economic and moral crisis permeating the whole society, and of growing threats to the role and mission of universities, and even specifically of very destructive and irresponsible law proposals – to give the following public declaration:

1. Universities as the highest institutions of research and dissemination of knowledge in our civilization must remain scientific and scholarly institutions, where teaching should be based on research in accordance with international standards and appropriate to each field of science or scholarship. In arts it should be based on creative work.
2. Universities are long-term infrastructure of a civilized society. Therefore they must not be reduced to an instrument of current politics or of private business interests.
3. Universities must therefore preserve their autonomy in creating their programmes and electing their heads and governing bodies. That autonomy should be based on the principle of subsidiarity between university and its constituent units: faculties, departments, etc.
4. Universities, the public as well as the private ones, must serve the public good and not private interests, and the public universities should be adequately supported by the state as crucial institutions of public interest.
5. Universities have the task of fostering critical and creative thinking, necessary for science, scholarship, and public activity, of offering life-long education, and of persevering in the search of knowledge and truth.
6. Universities have the tasks of pursuing basic knowledge, scientific discovery and technical invention, of developing human character of scientists, scholars and students, and of serving as advisory institutions to the society, economy subjects, and political and governmental bodies for the sake of general progress, freedom, preservation of nature, and common good. They must remain true to their mission and responsibility, and the state and society must support them and allow them to fulfill their tasks.