

# **The Impact of The Hungarian Universities' Model Changes on University Innovation Management, Industrial Relations, And Research Activities**

**Attila Kiss , Zoltán Nagy , Róbert Magda**

*John von Neumann University, Hungary*

## **Abstract**

The model change implemented in Hungarian higher education since 2021 has fundamentally reshaped the governance, strategic orientation, and operational frameworks of universities. This transition from traditional state-run institutions to foundation maintained, autonomy-driven models has had significant implications for university innovation management, industrial collaboration, and research performance. The new governance structure has enabled faster decision making, more flexible resource allocation, and greater managerial responsiveness to industry needs, fostering the emergence of professional technology-transfer offices, innovation ecosystems, and science-park driven development strategies. At the same time, universities have strengthened long term partnerships with regional and national industries, particularly in automotive, manufacturing, and defense sectors, resulting in increased contract research, joint laboratories, and proof-of-concept programs. Research activities have also become more application oriented. Foundation universities exhibit rising R&D expenditure, improved intellectual property output, and a shift toward mission and impact driven projects aligned with national innovation priorities. However, despite public perceptions and external debates suggesting potential risks to academic autonomy, the model change has in practice expanded the scope of academic freedom by granting institutions greater strategic independence, enhanced control over resources, and more flexible governance structures. This apparent contradiction deserves particular attention in this publication, as it highlights how the new framework allows universities to pursue their long-term research programs with greater freedom and stability. Overall, the transformation has accelerated the integration of Hungarian universities into industry-oriented innovation ecosystems, positioning them as more active contributors to regional economic development and national technological competitiveness.

**Keywords:** Innovation, management, revenue