

Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation in higher education

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Rationale

Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation are three processes playing an important role in present society. All three are widely debated in many academic disciplines, as well as outside the academic arena. Especially the debate on globalisation is spread widely and gets a lot of attention in the media. Most of the time this is because meetings of global players are often combined with demonstrations against globalisation, e.g. in Seattle and Genoa.

The three processes play an important role in current discussions on higher education. Most universities are of old closely linked to the nation state (Kwiek, 2001: 27). They are often, at least partly, funded by national governments and higher education policy is (or until recently used to be) a national affair. But nowadays, more and more, universities are being influenced by other 'things' than just the nation state or are influenced within the nation state. Changes in the nation state and its position in the international order also influence the universities in it. Decisions taken or discussions on a global, European or international level influence the universities and their actions. Recent examples are the signing of the Bologna declaration or the discussions on GATS (General Agreement on Trade and Services).

There is no general agreement on what Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation are. For instance if we look at the debate on globalisation there are what Held and McGrew (2000) name the globalists and the sceptics. The globalists consider globalisation to be a real and significant historical development, whereas the sceptics "conceive it as primarily ideological or mythical construction which has marginal explanatory value". (Held and McGrew, 2000: 2) Further, views differ on how the different processes bear to one other. Van der Wende analyses internationalisation as a response to globalisation in an article in 2001. On the other hand, Scott states that internationalisation and globalisation may actually be dialectical (2001)¹. Responding to the processes of Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation may, however, pose a new challenge for higher education.

Furthermore, these three processes do not stand on their own. There are other important issues to be considered in higher education. McBurnie mentions the following: transnational education, international quality assurance, entrepreneurial approaches, regional and interregional co-operation, information and communication technologies and virtual universities, the rise of new providers and issues of equity and access. These other challenges may be intertwined with Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation, and as such, these challenges will also receive some attention in this research. The focus, however, will be on Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation.

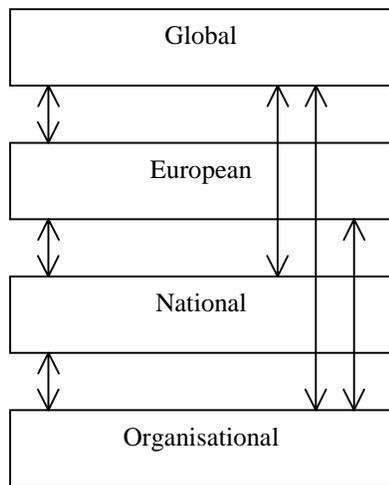
The nation states still play an important role in the three processes mentioned, also with respect to higher education. The nation states are still the actors negotiating on a European, international or global level. With regard to higher education nation states are still the ones responsible for higher education policy. For example if we look at the Bologna declaration, all the signatory countries have agreed on the goals to be achieved, but the actual implementation of the declaration is the responsibility of the individual signatory countries. The countries may decide for themselves how these goals are to be achieved. What also becomes clear from the Bologna process is that the national governments try to stimulate higher education institutions to participate and/or anticipate the processes of globalisation, internationalisation and Europeanisation. This is part of national higher education policies. On the other hand, higher education institutions act more and more autonomous. This is also made possible in new higher education policies and sometimes the institutions just go their own way searching the boundaries of the current policy and laws. In doing so they can anticipate in their own way the three processes under study. In The Netherlands for example several universities already implemented the Bachelor Master system before the new law had passed in parliament.

As becomes clear from the above, actors at several levels influence and make decisions on higher education institutions and policies. Also, the actors on these levels influence each other. To start, there is the global level;

¹ See also: Scott, P. (1998) Massification, Internationalisation and globalization, In: *The globalization of higher education*, P. Scott (ed), SRHE and open university press, Buckingham

then there is the European level, the national level and the organisational (higher education institutions) level. In a picture the levels of influence (and decisionmaking) look like this:

Figure 1: influence between the three levels



It is not yet clear how exactly the actors at the different levels influence each other. The responses of the actors to the processes of Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation are not yet known. This is one of the main parts of this research. The role of the national governments and higher education institutions are expected to change, but how and to what extent is the question. Both have their responsibility or freedom to respond to the processes of Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation. “European co-operation, and internationalisation more broadly speaking, constitute one of the main strategies for higher education institutions to contribute to Europe’s aim of becoming a globally leading knowledge-based economy. An in-depth analysis of the international activities of higher education institutions, and of their European strategies in particular, will add to a better understanding of possible models in this important sector of Europe’s economy and society.” (CHEPS, 2001: 3)

The freedom to act for the countries and institutions for higher education can, of course, lead to different responses in different countries and different institutions; the last also indicating that there can be different outcomes between institutions in one country. These differences can have all sorts of origins, e.g. different rationales underpinning policies (CHEPS 2001: 9) or differences in types of organisations. Convergence and divergence in the responses by different countries and institutions can therefore be a special point of interest in this research. Most interesting will be to try to explain the different responses, where the different origins might be a good starting point.

Provisional formulation of the problem

As yet, we are not sure how higher education is responding to Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation. Above it became clear that what is understood to be Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation can differ. This can also differ per country as well as within a country and that the responses to these processes may also differ per country and per higher education institution in a country. This leads to the following provisional statement of the problem for this research:

How do different countries and higher education institutions anticipate the processes of Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation (with respect to higher education), how convergent or divergent are these anticipations and how can differences in anticipation in these countries and institutions be explained?

Anticipating is a broad concept. As was already suggested in the rationale this research will concentrate on the

response in policies as well as in/by organisations. It is of course possible that the response in both correlates, since new or changed policy may lead to a response in/by an organisation. This will get further attention in the full elaboration of the theory (the next paragraph will only give a first insight into the theory that can be used in this research).

As is shown in the question by the point of convergence and divergence, a comparison of the anticipation by the several countries and actors are also part of this research.

Theoretical framework

In this research Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation are, as we can see in the provisional statement of the problem, the processes expected to lead to changes, or maybe even innovations, in policies and organisations. Keywords are, besides the three processes, change/innovation, policy and organisation. The theoretical approach for this research must therefore have attention for these keywords.

It seems that an institutional approach of organisations can be very useful in this research. (Neo) institutional theory receives considerable attention in social sciences.² There is no general agreement on what an institution precisely is, but there is agreement to some point. In general, institutions are considered to provide a 'structure' in which different actors can act.³ This structure may then give the actors a sense of direction for their behaviour. In neo institutional theory the character of institutions is less coercive than the 'old' institutionalism. In neo institutionalism it is said that institutions contain cognitive elements. These elements, such as academic insights, professional standards or practical knowledge, create freedom to act for actors. They can now, within certain limits, improvise and innovate. In neo institutionalism there is, because of this, the possibility of institutional change (Trommel, 1998: 3).

An organisation can be an institution itself, but it can also be part of an institution, or it can be both. "Organisations are assumed to be influenced by the institutional ... pressures... An essential feature of institutional theory is that these [of actors and groups: AL] interests and preferences are mediated by the institutional structure in which the actors and groups are situated" (CHEPS, 2001: 14). If we look at this short discussion on (neo) institutional (organisational) theory, it shows that higher education itself can be considered to be an institution. Neo institutional theory also leaves room for (institutional) change and innovation. Therefore a neo institutional approach of organisations can, in my opinion, be very useful in this research.

Since this research is also focused on the development of policy concerning Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation some attention should be given to policy theory in the theoretical framework. The theory of advocate coalition framework of Sabatier and Jenkins-Smith (1993) might be of use here. Actors within an advocacy coalition share the same beliefs; at least on the points they are trying to realise together. These actors will still act within institutions that will influence them. It may be possible to connect these two theories, but this will need further elaboration in looking in to both theories.

An other policy theory that might be interesting for this research is Hoogerwerf's theory of policy development (Hoogerwerf: 1993: 24-25). Hoogerwerf approaches policy development as a more or less linear process. This approach may be useful to analyse how the policies in the different countries were realised. This process may in reality not always be as linear as Hoogerwerf sets it out to be, but it might nevertheless be insightful. How this theory might fit in with neo institutional theory will need further looking into.

On the whole, existing theories of innovation and change in higher education will need further looking into. As was said before, Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation are conceived of as processes of

² For example: Powell, W.W. and P.J. DiMaggio (Eds) (1991), *The new institutionalism in Organizational analysis*, The university of Chicago Press, Chicago; Scott (2001), *Institutions and organizations*, 2nd edition, Sage, London

³ See for example: Scott (2001), *Institutions and organizations*, 2nd edition, Sage, London; Meyer, J.W. and B. Rowan, Institutionalized organizations: formal structure as myth and ceremony, In: *American Journal of sociology*, vol. 83/2, pp. 340-363

change and maybe innovations. Levine's (Levine, 1980) book on the failure of innovations might be a good starting point. As was mentioned before, neo institutional change leaves room for changes. Change is then guided by the institutional context (CHEPS, 2001: 16).

Furthermore, a basic insight in the meaning of convergence and divergence has to be reached. A good starting point is the overview given by Huisman in his book *Differentiation, diversity and dependency in higher education*.

Research objectives

To answer the question under the provisional statement of the problem, this research will (CHEPS, 2001: 4):

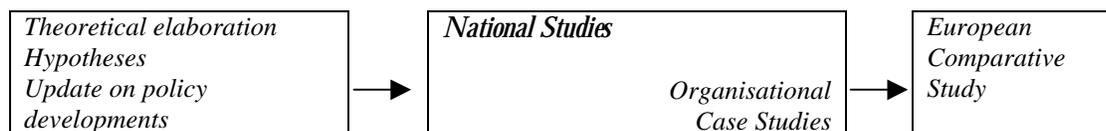
1. Develop a theoretical understanding and a knowledge base regarding the forces of Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation relevant for higher education institutions. The available theories and concepts as well as the major reviews and inventories of the actual conditions will be analysed.
2. Analyse in selected European countries: Austria, Germany, Greece, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the United Kingdom (a) the views and rationales for Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation underlying national policies for higher education, as well as (b) the actual policies and regulatory frameworks and means aimed at shaping the international role of higher education institutions and (c) the extent to which they foster or impede the development and management of internationalisation activities in higher education institutions.
3. Analyse in the same European countries (a) the perceptions of higher education institutions of the challenges of Europeanisation, internationalisation and globalisation, (b) their actual internationalisation policies and activities and (c) the organisational settings in which they are implemented and the extent to which these foster or impede internationalisation.
4. Compare the findings from the national studies regarding (a) the extent to which national contexts and policies and organisational settings and actions reinforce convergence or divergence in internationalisation policies and activities of higher education institutions in Europe, and whether and how the existing variety reflects the diversity of tasks and functions of individual higher education institutions in general, and (b) the factors at both national and organisational levels which foster or impede effective internationalisation processes.
5. Formulate on the basis of the above recommendations to policy makers at the institutional, national and European level concerning effective policy co-ordination and management in internationalisation of higher education.

Research Design

This thesis will be based on the work of the HEIGLO project CHEPS will be doing as of September 2002.

The outcomes of the project can be used for this thesis. The design of the HEIGLO project is summarised in this image (CHEPS, 2001: 17):

Picture 1: Project Design



The first and second research objectives are part of the first part of the research, the first block in the picture above. The third research objective will be dealt with in the second part of this research and the two final objectives are part the third and final part, the European comparative study.

Several research methods will be combined in the different parts of the research. In the first part will combine document analysis and interviews. This also holds for second part of the research. The national and organisational case studies are the basis for the final part of the research.

7 partners in 7 countries will carry out this research: Austria, Germany, Greece, The Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the United Kingdom. The partners in their own countries will do the national and case studies.

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