



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union

NEAR-EU JEAN MONNET NETWORK

Researching European Higher Education and its
Global Influence – Compilation of Project Research

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Preface

The NEAR-EU project aims to broaden the field of European integration studies by incorporating the domain of higher education in the research and activities of European Study Centers and departments of international affairs. The project developed an inter-regional, collaborative academic space to enhance the study of European higher education policy and academic internationalization. Among project objectives is the desire to develop the academic field of European higher education policy and to strengthen the ability of European research centers to study European education policy and its role in European integration. To this end, network partners conducted research projects on various facets of higher education internationalisation and European higher education policy. The individual research projects are summarised and compiled here. It is our hope that these brief summaries provide valuable insight into the various methodologies and theoretical frameworks which can be used to research higher education internationalisation and the influence of the European Higher Education Area on global higher education systems.

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Ben-Gurion University of the Negev (Israel)

Nanyang Technological University (Singapore)

University of British Columbia (Canada)

National Centre for Research on Europe, University of Canterbury (New Zealand)

University of Ljubljana (Slovenia)

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This project was funded by the European Commission Jean Monnet Network Programme.

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.

Centre for Educational Policy Studies (CEPS), University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Education

Research goals and objectives

CEPS has been monitoring and exploring the Bologna Process for a long time (we posted our relevant previous research reports and studies on the project website, see <http://ceps.pef.uni-lj.si/index.php/en/ceps-studies-on-the-bologna-process>), and we are paying special attention to the issues of internationalization and globalization of higher education. The research conducted so far has shown that there are some under-researched topics, and the Bologna Process itself has repeatedly experienced a kind of “mythologization” in the global context (i.e., presentations and definitions built on incomplete or unverified facts, etc.). Therefore, within the framework of the NEAR EU project, we have decided to continue our research on this horizon and to focus our research contribution primarily on the following objectives:

(1) Approaching the Bologna Process in the perspective of the history of policy ideas to critically analyse the emergence and development of two out of the several key Bologna concepts, as well as their effects:

- (a) *recognition of higher education degrees and periods of study* and the “paradigm shift” in this area;
- (b) the notion of *the “external dimension”* and the process of conceptualizing, approving and implementing *the “Bologna Global Strategy”*.

(2) Approaching the Bologna Process in its “soft dimension” (and not only with a focus on organization and governance of higher education systems, i.e. an approach that has prevailed in the research to date), that is, in the horizon of *academic values*, among which *academic freedom and institutional autonomy* are particularly important. The NEAR EU project facilitated and promoted comparative treatment between the EHEA and other world regions; in our case, a comparative study was conducted at the University of Bologna and the University of Singapore.

A brief outline and main research findings of the case studies

None of the three studies CEPS contributed within the NEAR EU project is a national case study. We considered that such a study would not make sense in our case and that it is better to focus our studies on the EHEA as a whole and base it on a historical and comparative basis. Slovenia belongs to a group of small European countries, but from the very beginning it has been actively involved in the Bologna Process and has implemented practically all the agreed standards and guidelines. Information and data on the Slovenian higher education system and on the national strategy in the field of international cooperation in higher education are available in the publications and on the websites of the competent national agencies (including, for example, the Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes – CMEPIUS, with which we worked closely in this project); this information, therefore, was not required to be collected and presented again within this project.

That being said, we have prepared three studies, which are summarized briefly below. (Note: all three studies are published at <http://ceps.pef.uni-lj.si/index.php/en/ceps-near-eu-studies-2>).

2.1 Recognition issues and the Bologna Process: Changing paradigms. Reflections from the perspective of the history of policy ideas

Throughout the Bologna Process, recognition issues have been one of the frontal matters. Recognition was one of the fundamental issues already in the early period of European integration, that is, in a period when educational policies were not yet integrated into the European framework and national states preserved full responsibility in the field. However, huge differences between national educational systems have resulted in huge differences in educational qualifications; and these differences emerged as serious obstacles in the process of European integration, e.g. as obstacles to free movement in the gradually emerging European labour market. With the gradual strengthening of European cooperation in education and training, especially since the inception of the Erasmus programme (1987), recognition issues have become a strategic issue. Soon enough evidence was gathered that

within the traditional recognition paradigm problems that arose in the process of European integration cannot be solved and that the solution is only possible within a new paradigm.

This study reconstructs and analyses the ideational and conceptual emergence of the new paradigm. First, it outlines the general trend that, in the 19th and 20th centuries (i.e., during the period of the emergence and strengthening of nation states) led to the emergence of various European higher education systems (e.g., “British”, “French”, “Humboldtian”, “Soviet”, etc.). Further, it argues that it is not only a matter of functional and formal (administrative) differences between systems, but also of different understanding of the purposes and roles that are attributed to higher education in a given country or (local / regional) culture.

The study seeks to show how different “philosophies” of higher education contribute to the way in which problems with access, admission and recognition in higher education were created, understood and regulated. Establishment and development of *national* systems of higher education (19th century) have led to *diverse* national educational qualifications systems. Growing differences between them brought problems, e.g. for individuals who want to “migrate” from system to system. From the “liberal” times of the Middle Ages, when these differences did not exist at all, we arrived in the 20th century to a completely opposite position. *Nostrification*, *homologation*, *equivalence*, and finally *recognition* are the key concepts – or policy ideas – that show how the understanding of the problem of switching between systems changed over time. Particularly intensive changes in ideas, concepts and policies have been brought about at the end of the 20th century when *transnational* “higher education area(s)” (e.g. the European Higher Education Area), aiming at *comparable and compatible* educational structures, began to appear.

The study looks in this process at its key stages: the first one is to a considerable extent connected with the gradual process of the “Europeanization of higher education” in the post-WW II period until 1980; then, a long way to the “paradigm shift” in the *Lisbon Recognition Convention* (1997) as well as the contribution of the Bologna Process (1999–2010) in this area are analysed and presented. Finally, some new dilemmas that arise in the recent period are briefly considered.

2.2 “Bologna in a Global Setting”: An Analysis from the Perspective of Twenty Years Later

The second study is characterized by a similar approach as the first one, but the focus is on another “Bologna policy idea”: the “opening up” of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) to the “wider world”. In other words, this study considers the ideational conceptualisation of the “external dimension” of the Bologna Process as well as the drafting, approval and implementation of the *Global Strategy* (2007). To this end, a number of (policy) documents have been obtained, used and analysed, including some of the lesser known and hitherto unpublished ones. (As a by-product of the research process, a significant portion of these documents were posted on a special website and are now accessible to the public; see <http://ceps.pef.uni-lj.si/index.php/en/history-of-the-bologna-process>). As the author had contributed a background study (2006) to the Bologna working group drafting the *Strategy* (2006–2007), he was able to use his previous findings, personal notes and experience to reconstruct its conceptualization. In addition, extensive recent research literature has been used to address this topic.

Research has shown that the term “external dimension” does not appear in the initial formulations of the aims and objectives of the Bologna Process; these objectives were initially limited to the intra-European context, but of course the fact that they were fuelled by the “global competition in higher education” of the 1990s cannot be ignored. The rather vague term “external dimension” began to be used in official documents only in the early 2000s and referred to the articulation of possible relationships between the then emerging European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and other “higher education areas” in the world. Two factors played a key role in this discernment: on the one hand, there was growing interest in the European “higher education policy experiment” from various countries and regions of the world (quite early e.g. Latin America and the Caribbean), and on the other the question of which (European) countries should still be allowed to enter the “Bologna Club” (originally only 29 countries), or in other words, where the “borders” of the future EHEA should be drawn.

In the study, first of all, the historical context of drafting the strategy is highlighted, as well as the conceptual dilemmas that have arisen at that time (e.g., various scenarios on the relationship between the concepts such as “attractiveness”, “cooperation”, “competition”). Further on, the study critically elaborates the thesis of the “Bologna model” and its alleged “export” to the world. It is argued that this thesis is controversial and that its background should be sought in dichotomies related to the Europeanization process, in particular in the dichotomy of “means” versus “ends” as well as the “market” versus “cultural” mission of the

European higher education institutions. In this context, the importance attached to the concept of *academic values* in the Bologna Process, as well as the related controversies (e.g. between UNESCO and WTO paradigms regarding the role of higher education in contemporary societies), which have had a significant impact on views expressed in ministerial communiqués as well as in the implementation of the agreed objectives. In conclusion, an assessment of the current situation and current dilemmas is given, taking into account also the recent debates in the light of the 20th anniversary of the *Bologna Declaration* (1999).

2.3 Academic freedom in an international perspective. A Case Study of the University of Bologna and the University of Singapore

This study is concerned with the issue of academic freedom in teaching in higher education. Academic freedom (i.e., the right of the individual scholar to follow truth without fear of punishment) is along with university autonomy (i.e., the freedom of the individual university to run its own affairs without outside interference) one of the two key traditional academic values in universities which also received specific affirmation within the Bologna Process. Even if these academic values seem to be well elaborated in the relevant literature and research, there is still one widely neglected aspect: academic freedom in higher education teaching. Despite the fact that teaching is and always has been a key role of universities, it is less promoted and valued in comparison with research in contemporary universities. Therefore, this work attempts to connect these two neglected and under-researched issues of academic freedom and teaching in higher education. Further, it provides an updated account of academic freedom in university teaching in a comparative view: the research was performed at the University of Bologna (Italy) and the National University in Singapore. Based on the collected data, the author concluded that the policy context between Italy and Singapore concerning academic freedom is very different. Whereas academic freedom is visible and adopted in regional and national policies in the case of Italy, there is almost no mention of academic freedom within the Singaporean case. The situation is similar at the institutional level. Despite the very different policy context, the core meaning of academic freedom from the interviewees' perspective differs more between individuals based on their (disciplinary) background than between the different cultural contexts. Nevertheless, the degree of academic freedom that academics experience is dependent not only on the

individual situation but also on regional, national, and institutional policies. Next to these influence factors, the immediate academic community, the career stage and the point of reference seem to be essential for the experience of academic freedom.

Overall, academic freedom in teaching is perceived as important by almost all interviewees regardless of which university they are from. The reasoning behind this perception is that without academic freedom it is almost impossible to encourage critical thinking and to introduce diverse and sometimes controversial ideas on a certain topic in class.

Methodological and theoretical approaches

The theoretical and methodological approach in the *first two studies* (written by P. Zgaga) is referred to as the “history of policy ideas”. In its traditional sense, the history of ideas deals with the expression, preservation, and change of human ideas over time. Our approach is slightly different and relies on that more recent theoretical flow that is usually attributed to the intervention from M. Foucault: instead of “diachronic” writing history (depended on dominant streams and providing “big pictures”) it is necessary to digging deeper into a more specific history – in this case, the recent history of higher education policy ideas as expressed in European higher education reforms that have been generally influenced by the European integration and specifically by the Bologna Process.

In this perspective, the development of (policy) ideas and concepts on what is – or should be – the “essence” (purposes, societal roles, etc.) of higher education is not simply linear but often contradictory; the way how the “essence” is understood is therefore important for the creation of further steps in current higher education policies at all levels. When we identify and analyse the development of higher education policy ideas, we mainly focus on the last two decades (and mainly on the European context) in which we have witnessed a set of rather radical reforms of the entire national systems of higher education. These reforms were generally based on the critical confrontation with old and formation of new concepts and ideas, which reflected not only shifts in purposes, roles and functioning of the systems of higher education but also thoroughly changed circumstances that characterize modern society – the “knowledge society”.

In the methodological view, the research goals and content required mainly qualitative approach. On one hand, comprehensive documents had to be obtained and analyzed; the

main documents of the Bologna Process are indeed easily accessible, but the various archival documents that can be found by conventional historical methods may be even more relevant for analysis. Insofar as quantitative data on higher education systems were needed, accessible and official databases were used (when it comes to EHEA, these databases are fairly sophisticated and trustworthy). On the other hand, extensive literature review was also required.

The main aim of the *third study* (written by Sina Westa) was to deepen the understanding of academic values – an issue which was already addressed in the second study, but this time in an international comparative perspective and with a bit different approach. The specific objective was to approach academic freedom from the perspective of academics, by investigating the research questions: *What does academic freedom – especially academic freedom in higher education teaching – mean in different cultural spaces?* In the methodological view, the study required a qualitative research design based on interpretative comparison (Custers et al. 2015). The data used in it derives from the author’s doctoral research project concerning “Academic freedom in higher education teaching in Europe and the Asia-Pacific-Rim” (2017).

Two in-depth case studies have been conducted, one at the University of Bologna and one at the National University of Singapore. The University of Bologna was chosen, due its possibility to show how academic freedom is perceived within an institution that has a long (European) tradition of adopting academic values. It is one of the oldest universities founded in 1088 and was also initiator of drafting the *Magna Charta Universitatum* (1988), an important document which is also referred to in the *Bologna Declaration* (1999). In comparison, the National University of Singapore is a rather young institution, with its roots in 1905 and its establishment under the current name in 1980. Despite Singapore’s history as a British colony that also influenced its higher education system, Singapore counts today together with Japan, China, Hong-Kong, Korea and Taiwan to the Confucian education zone. Thus, Singapore is a particular interesting case as it is influenced by Europe but has also (re-)adopted Asian values after their independence. (In addition, Singapore is one of the partners in the NEAR EU Consortium).

To reach a level of contextualized understanding of the concept of academic freedom this study looks at different dimensions using the main data collection methods of policy analysis and semi-structured interviews with academics from different disciplines and at different career stages. The data collection process took place on a macro-, meso- and

micro level. The method of data analysis is thematic analysis. This data analysis method is suitable to depict plurality of a certain concept as it can identify various patterns in the data. This way it is open for emerging ideas on academic freedom but also provides an overview of the identified topics and patterns and helps to organize them.

Contribution

We believe that the results of our studies can contribute to continuing discussions in various research circles as well as among policymakers, notably by:

- contribution to ongoing discussion on internationalisation of higher education in the global research community, especially by shedding light on less explored topics (conference presentations, articles, book chapters);
- providing relevant information and knowledge on specific topics related to the Bologna Process and the European Higher Education Area and relevant both for European and global interested parties;
- providing conceptual background for the development of the higher education internationalisation strategies (at institutional, national or international level);
- contribution to the design of Evidence-Based Education Policies at the institutional level (University of Ljubljana), at the national level (e.g. Ministry of Education; the Centre of the Republic of Slovenia for Mobility and European Educational and Training Programmes, etc.) and, last but not least, at the international level (e.g., Bologna Follow-up Group) ;
- human resource development: young researchers involved in the group; the project provided them with an environment in which they were able to develop their potentials, while at the same time contributing to joint results;
- transferring research findings to the modules of the Doctoral School at the Faculty of Education, University of Ljubljana (including ongoing and future mentorships and supervisions);
- creating opportunities and conditions for further project cooperation in this consortium and / or with other institutions.

TU Darmstadt, Institute of Political Science

Prof. Dr. Michèle Knodt

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Research goals and objectives

The Erasmus+ Program has always been an essential part of the Bologna Process. Its objective is to enable European and international students to spend time abroad. The program is embedded within the Bologna Process, which aims at greater comparability in the standards and quality of higher-education qualifications. For over 30 years, Erasmus has been sending millions of students to foreign countries and their universities. The aim of this paper is to evaluate the performance of universities in hosting foreign students and fulfilling their tasks within the program. The data are based on student reports of their experience during their Erasmus mobility. This paper results in policy recommendations for European universities regarding strategies to more effectively host Erasmus students. The findings show that first of all help regarding with finding an accommodation is a crucial point. Second, the proper support for exchange students demands substantial human resources. Another important aspect is a broad offer of courses held in English.

A brief outline of the case study

The Erasmus Program does not seem to be of core interest in political science. Apart from studies concerning European identity, research on this topic is rather the exception. The Erasmus Program works within the very specific context of the European Union. The EU context always renders political subjects in a certain way unique, which always makes political research in this area more complex due to the lack of comparability. Thus, the Erasmus Program is also in a sense unique. It would be difficult to identify a program that has a comparable scale of institutionalization. Erasmus can be considered a success and is already recognized as a role-model internationally. Nonetheless, given its success and growth over the

past decades, it appears sensible to evaluate it¹. What does a university need to do to participate effectively in such a program? Concerning this question, the paper focuses on the tasks that universities must fulfil as a host when receiving Erasmus students from abroad.

Internationalization appears to be of growing importance for universities worldwide. First of all, every university has a genuine interest in international knowledge exchange. However, a university's degree of internationalization, measured by the number of incoming students, is also an important indicator of faculty performance. This again is an important factor for generating budgets. Being a good host for international students thus should be an aim for every university.

Methodological and theoretical approaches

To answer this research question, a three-step analysis was carried out. In the first step, survey data were analysed. These data were gathered from Erasmus+ students after their stay at a foreign university. Every Erasmus+ student is obliged to complete a questionnaire after his or her mobility. This survey contains questions about different aspects of their stay, including ratings of various issues and their overall satisfaction with their exchange. The data used here were conducted in 2016. The data refer to international incoming students coming to Germany during this period².

The aim of this first step was to gain insights into which dimensions of their stay the students considered problematic and were seen in a rather negative way. These aspects were considered to identify starting points for improvements in the Erasmus+ program and for recommendations to the universities. For those issues that were particularly notable, further quantitative data were conducted and analysed³. Additionally, special attention was paid to the reasons why students chose a certain university. This aspect seems to be decisive when

¹ This seems to be especially true regarding the fact that Erasmus+ will soon end and a reformed version of the program will be launched (European Commission 2018).

² Conducted in 2016: n=21,601. Sending countries: Belgium, Greece, Lithuania, Portugal, Bulgaria, Spain, Luxembourg, Romania, the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Slovenia, Denmark, Croatia, Malta, Slovakia, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Finland, Estonia, Austria, Sweden, Ireland, Latvia, Poland, and the United Kingdom.

³ Conducted in 2014 (n=27,299), 2015 (n=31,655) and 2016 (n=32,047). Receiving countries: Belgium, Greece, Lithuania, Portugal, Bulgaria, Spain, Luxembourg, Romania, the Czech Republic, France, Hungary, Slovenia, Denmark, Croatia, Malta, Slovakia, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Finland, Estonia, Austria, Sweden, Ireland, Latvia, Poland, and the United Kingdom. Refers to German students going abroad.

discussing what universities need to guarantee when they want to be chosen by exchange students.

In a second step, the statistical insights were mirrored in a qualitative way. This was done through interviews with former Erasmus students⁴. When selecting interview partners who could display their personal Erasmus experience, we aimed at a systematic variation across different fields of study and host countries. We use the country as a proxy for accommodation, as housing prices differ strongly within European countries⁵. Through the interviews, on the one hand, the overall experience was investigated, and on the other hand, special attention was paid to the crucial points detected in the previous statistical analysis.

As a last step, the administrative perspective was also captured through interviews. Several administrative actors in different positions were interviewed to gain a broad perspective⁶. Concerning the selection of administrative actors to interview, our attempt was to select persons responsible for different tasks in the organization of exchange programs within universities. These positions included on the one side the general administrative level and on the other side academic administration. Therefore, it was possible to capture a broad perspective on the different tasks and levels within universities attached to exchange programs. To detect the specific advantages and disadvantages of the Erasmus+ Program, interviews were also conducted with actors responsible for Erasmus and non-Erasmus exchanges.

Outline of research findings

The first conclusion to be drawn is clearly that the Erasmus+ Program can be seen as a success and can work as a role model. The statistical analysis as well as the interviews with students and administrative actors confirmed this picture.

All the students strongly recommended a semester abroad. All of them felt having succeeded at growing personally and reported that it was overall a great experience. This is also reflected

⁴ We conducted 13 interviews with students from different fields of study who reported their experience from Estonia, France, Israel, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Spain, Sweden, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

⁵ The interviews confirmed this relationship.

⁶ In total, 9 interviews were conducted at Technical University Darmstadt in three different departments.

by the fact that it was quite uncommon for the interviewees to report “very negative experiences”.

Regarding the administrative actors, the greatest advantage and, simultaneously, disadvantage of the Erasmus+ program was seen in its tight structure. On the one hand, the high level of institutionalization was regarded as providing security for the participating students because they would know what to expect and what to do. On the other hand, most of the administrative actors complained about “paper-warfare”, and some students mentioned it as well. Participation in the Erasmus program demands considerable bureaucratic work from students, at the receiving and at the sending university, and most of it has to be completed in print and in addition then sent via mail across the continent. Thus, that at least an attempt should be made to completely digitise the process was mentioned several times⁷.

Another problem the program still has to face is the issue of accommodation. Obviously, the living standard and level of rents in a city beyond the control of universities. However, the provision of flats and the support structure for Erasmus students in this respect are crucial issues to consider. Students and administrators recommended in general that universities should provide student residence places for incoming students. Even those students who voluntarily opted for a private accommodation supported there being at least some kind of “stop-gap” possibility. In particular, administrative actors from universities in regions or cities with tight housing markets emphasised the importance of university accommodation possibilities exclusively for incoming exchange students. It was clearly demonstrated that the Erasmus grants cannot equalize the different levels of average living costs across Europe, even though they are differentiated into three categories. This difficulty raises the question of inclusiveness. Taking action in attempting to improve the problems regarding this issue would mean securing this crucial factor of the exchange program.

A further point that was outlined by administrative actors and students was offering classes taught in English. For a university to be attractive for incoming students, an extended and attractive program in the English language seems to be decisive.

⁷ It was also mentioned that this might be one of the changes indicated within the reform period beginning in 2020.

Another important factor that needs to be secured by universities is the existence of a permanent counterpart for the students to address their needs beforehand and during the mobility. This means, first and foremost, staff. Providing support for incoming international students from different cultural backgrounds demands numerous general staff members and academic staff in faculties and departments. Universities should provide as much information as possible for incoming students beforehand to give them the possibility to prepare themselves as well as offering information during their stay. This includes help with questions of accommodation and academic problems. In particular, the interviews with administrative actors clearly indicated that participation in an exchange program entails substantial human resources. Securing information and support for the incoming students on an academic as well as an administrative level can only be achieved with a large staff. In addition, they underscored the need for steady communication between the overall administrative level and the academic sections. Both levels are needed to successfully establish exchange programs and have to be in close contact with one another.

Despite all of these difficulties encountered in the program, the concluding remark should be that the Erasmus Program is a successful European project. This is also due to its degree of institutionalization within the European context. Any intention to treat the Erasmus program as a role model needs to bear this fact in mind. In addition, it can be shown that even within this very structured context, some divergences exist. However, the overall conclusion is that the Erasmus program is a successful part of the European Bologna Process.

Contribution

This study underlined the status of the Erasmus programme as a successful European project and an international role-model. Nonetheless, an evaluation seemed to be fruitful regarding the launching of the next programme phase next year. It was possible to show, that there can still be found some points improvable within the programme. First and foremost, the issue of accommodation needs to be addressed more by the universities as well as the policy actors. It was confirmed by the students and the administrative actors that this is one of if not the major concern students have, when going abroad. Knowing this, it seems surprising how little the issue is clarified within the legal text compared to other topics. It was recommended by students as well as administrative actors to secure accommodation within student dorms for the incoming students.

Besides the issue of accommodation, the research conducted outlined that universities should provide a diverse course catalogue with classes held in English, the transcription of accomplishments needs to be guaranteed (Transcript of Records) and there needs to be a permanent counterpart for students to address their questions to during the mobility and beforehand. Providing these insights, the study contributed to the evaluation and thus improvement of the Erasmus+ programme. As mobility is one of the core features within the Bologna Process and the creation of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), an evaluation of the Erasmus programme contributes to an essential part of this process and its improvement.

Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Research Summary

The research that was carried out at NTU's Bologna Resource Centre focussed on unpacking the *impact* of Singapore's higher education internationalisation approach. This particular focus was chosen because the effects of higher education internationalisation remained an under-explored area. To do so, the research at NTU's Bologna Resource Centre examined whether the overall efforts to internationalise—at the national level and at the institutional level—affected how students make their decisions concerning their futures. Specifically, the research concentrated on developments at the *individual* level, focussing on how students perceived their universities' internationalisation efforts in light of their employment and further studies prospects.

A brief outline of the case study

Located in Southeast Asia and with a population of 5.64 million people, Singapore is an island state with no natural resources. It is a founding member of the Association of Southeast Asia Nations (ASEAN) and one of the leading economies in the region with the most stable political system since independence. The universities of Singapore—National University of Singapore (NUS) and Nanyang Technological University (NTU) in particular—are generally considered world class given their good performance in many existing global university rankings. Three types of institutions populate Singapore's higher education landscape: universities, polytechnics and other diploma-granting institutions, and the Institute of Technical Education. The research carried out at NTU's Bologna Resource Centre focussed on universities. At the time of reporting, Singapore has six Autonomous Universities, a status the government confers on selected higher education institutions to increase their operational autonomy on issues concerning budget use, internal governance, admissions requirements, and tuition fees. The Autonomous Universities are: NUS, NTU, Singapore Management University (SMU), Singapore University of Technology and Design (SUTD), Singapore Institute of Technology

(SIT), and Singapore University of Social Sciences (SUSS). While NUS and NTU were established before 2000 and SMU in 2000, SUTD, SIT, and SUSS were created more recently, after 2000.

Methodological and theoretical approaches

The methodological tool chosen for examining the impact of higher education internationalisation on the individual level was a survey instrument, which is a common tool in social science research, including studies on European higher education developments.

To design the survey questionnaire, we carried out two sessions of focus group discussions with nine students from diverse study fields and year levels from NTU Singapore. The primary purpose of the focus group discussions was to obtain student inputs in the phrasing of the questions (what kinds of questions we could and should ask Singaporean students about internationalisation). The focus group discussions lasted for an hour for each session.

Developing the survey required several iterations in the framing of the questions and the re-arranging of the question sequences. The questionnaire contained 14 questions seeking student responses along a Likert scale concerning their awareness and perceived impact of higher education internationalisation efforts. Two additional questions were added, the first about their post-study plans (to work or to study), and an open-ended question for their comments. Ultimately, the questionnaire had 16 questions.

We invited students with various exposures to internationalisation activities at NTU Singapore to conduct face validity of the questionnaire. We used *Qualtrics* as the main platform for the survey administration and conducted several trials on multiple devices (e.g. mobile phones, tablets, and portable and desk computers) on multiple browsers in multiple operating systems to ensure online accessibility of the survey instrument. We carried out a pilot test with thirty selected student respondents from NTU Singapore to determine and address other potential issues that may be encountered during actual survey environments.

Finally, the survey was launched on 5 November 2018. Because we were not able to reach students systematically due to data privacy issues (university administrators do not share email

lists of their registered students, nor did they support the distribution of this survey instrument), we applied the snowball method from our existing network of students (e.g. former students, colleagues from other universities, and their own network of students). While this method constrained the size and the spread of respondents against the total population, this was the most likely way of collecting survey data from students in Singapore considering the data protection policy of the universities. We closed the survey on 15 March 2019, with responses from Singapore’s six autonomous universities.

Outline of research findings

To unpack the impact of Singapore’s higher education internationalisation approach, this study surveyed students at all six of the City State’s Autonomous Universities. Two hundred and six ($N=206$) students participated in this survey. Table 1 shows the frequency distribution of student respondents for each of the universities, as well as the total share of students according to total enrolment. The student respondents from NUS and NTU (which are the largest universities in terms of student enrolment and also most prominent Singaporean universities in terms of internationalisation activities) were the majority; our sample size ($N=206$) constituted 0.25% of the total number of undergraduate students in Singapore (83,845).

University	Number of Respondents	% Share	Total Enrolment*	% Share
NUS	56	27	30,098	36
NTU	103	50	23,665	28
SMU	7	3	8,182	10
SUTD	6	3	1,900**	2
SIT	8	4	6,000	7
SUSS	26	13	14,000	17
Total	206	100	83,845	100

Note: *2017 undergraduate data from university websites **estimates

The frequency statistics confirmed that 95% or 195 ($N=206$) of the students were fully aware of the overseas programmes such as study visits, study abroad, and international internships opportunities. This percentage was much higher than their level of awareness concerning access to courses or modules that offered international perspectives at their own universities (59.7% or 123 respondents). Only about 63% of the respondents were aware that their respective universities provided funding support for overseas programmes. Forty-six percent of the respondents agreed and 4.8% strongly agreed that they acquired new skillsets through internationalisation activities. The same pattern was observed concerning whether the diversity in the composition of faculty and student bodies prepared them to work with people from different national and cultural backgrounds. The results from the survey also confirmed that the students perceived that overseas experience improved their career and postgraduate prospects. Overall, the responses showed that the students have a good awareness of internationalization activities at their universities.

Contribution

While students are the end beneficiaries of internationalisation of universities, their perspectives are less studied in comparison to those that explore institutional and national strategies and reforms. This is especially the case when it comes to the question of how internationalisation efforts affect how students make decisions about their future endeavours. The results showed a very high level of awareness of different internationalisation strategies of Singapore universities. Their level of awareness revealed that internationalisation has become integral to the campus (university) culture of Singaporean universities. Indeed, even in terms of funding the students were very aware of the different funding streams available to them to participate in overseas activities.

The study carried out at NTU's Bologna Resource Centre should be seen as a starting point for investigating the nexus between higher education internationalisation efforts and the career aspirations of students. In higher education systems that are highly internationalised (such as the one in Singapore), further stages of model building are essential for testing the direct or indirect effects of mediating variables on the nexus between internationalisation and career aspirations. The inclusion of mediating variables would allow us to examine, for instance, whether internationalisation strategies and practices affect the means (manner) of university

training and whether this relationship then subsequently affects the future aspirations of the students.

Ben-Gurion University of the Negev

The Bologna Process in Israel: Perceptions and Reactions

Research goals and objectives

The Bologna model has generated interest in Israel among policy-makers and politicians, leading to official requests for full membership to the Process in 2007 and 2008. While Israel's requests were ultimately denied, it was granted observer status. Israel's affiliation to the Bologna Process (BP) is an interesting case because of its special relationship with Europe, which varies on a scale between strong economic, trade, and research relations, and complicated political relations. As this project will show, the Bologna path in Israel is telling for a wider understanding of the EU-Israel relationship, shedding light on how higher education (HE) permeates international relations.

A brief outline of the case study

The Bologna Process and the Global Strategy

The BP aimed to create the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) by harmonising higher education systems in Europe. Yet, it was not established as an EU process. Despite the initial objection of the signatory states, shortly after its launch, the BP was taken under the auspices of the EU. Today, The European Commission has full member status and the EU steers the BP through a few mechanisms, such as the Bologna Follow-up Groups (BFUG), which allows it to navigate the 'Bologna ship' towards the EU's desirable directions (Keeling 2006, 203-23). Although the BP signatory countries do not correspond directly with EU membership, it is conceived (internally, but also externally) as an EU Process (Ibid). As discussed by both Zahavi and Friedman and Asderaki (this issue), the EU actively promotes the BP outside European borders. Therefore, this outline will relate to the BP as an EU process, in terms of the EU's foreign relations, interests and perceptions.

The BP had crossed the borders of Europe with its ‘Global Strategy’, setting a model for reform in HE for other parts of the world. Although the BP is managed by European bodies, and applied in European countries, it aspires to influence more than the HE systems in Europe. The intention of the global strategy is to promote the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area and increase cooperation with other parts of the world (Muche 2005). While the use of HE for domestic policy, especially in the European context, has been the focus of important research (Archer, Hutchings, and Ross 2005; Voegtle, Knill, and Dobbins 2011), its use by the EU as a foreign policy tool has been examined to a lesser degree (See Damro and Friedman 2018). This project aims to contribute to the conceptualisation of HE as a tool and reflection of foreign policy and foreign relations, through the example of the BP, and its permeation in the EU-Israeli relationship.

Israel-EU Relations: A Brief Overview

The Israeli-EU relationship started on a positive footing when Israel was one of the first countries to engage in dialogue with the European Economic Community (EEC). In 1959, Israel and the European Community formally established full diplomatic relations (Pardo and Peters 2010, 1-4). Yet, despite this early interest, relations between Israel and the EU in these early years did not develop much further, with Israel behaving ‘more as an island in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean than a Mediterranean country neighboring the European Continent’ (Dror and Pardo 2006, 10; Pardo and Peters 2010, 1). Over the decades, Israel and the EU have strengthened their ties, with the relations between them developing into a complex form, which can be described as dual: mostly positive and strong on the practical dimensions (trade, economic cooperation, research and development, tourism, etc.), but much more complex and moderate on the political and declarative levels (Del Sarto 2011; Pardo and Peters 2010).

The EU-Israel Relationship: The Political Level

On the political declarative level, the EU-Israel relationship was very much influenced by the EU’s desire to form a common stance towards the Middle East and the Israeli- Arab conflict, starting in the early 1970s. Through its issuing of the Venice Declaration (1980), the EEC expressed its aspiration to play a greater role in the Israeli-Arab conflict⁸ (Harpaz and Shamis

⁸ The Venice Declaration outlined some of the principles defining the EU's vision towards the Israeli-Palestinian conflict until today. It was perceived by Israel at the time as anti-Israeli, because of

2010, 584-85; Pardo and Peters 2010, 6-8). The Venice Declaration marked a turning point in Israeli-European relations, adding a charged political undertone, which would cast a shadow over the relationship throughout the 1980s (Pardo and Peters 2010, 7-9).

With the launch of Middle East Peace Process in the 1990s, the EU asserted a more positive attitude towards Israel and the peace process through a series of declarations and practical steps⁹ (Harpaz and Shamis 2010, 585). Following the peace process developments during the 1990s and 2000s, the EU and Israel continued to develop their relationship on both declarative and practical levels. These developments led to the establishment of the Euro-Mediterranean Partnership (EMP) and the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP), as political frameworks for the consolidation of EU-Israel relations (Del Sarto and Schumacher 2005). Yet, this more positive tone in EU-Israeli relations ended with the Israeli military operation ‘Cast Lead’ in Gaza in December 2008 (followed by other Israeli military operations in Gaza in 2012 and 2014). Since then, the relations on the political and declarative level have deteriorated, with both sides’ political leaderships moving further away from each other’s positions.

The EU-Israel Relationship in Practice: Economic, Trade and ‘Technical’ Relations

As mentioned, the EU-Israeli relationship carries a dual quality. Contrary to the political dimension, from a practical level, the relationship has developed positively throughout the years, creating an increasing cooperation in economy, trade, science, technology, and culture (Pardo and Peters 2010, 2). The first trade agreement between the EEC and Israel was signed in 1964, followed by a new five-year trade agreement, signed in 1970. In 1975, the EC and Israel signed their first free trade area agreement, eventually replaced in 1995 by the Association Agreement (Gordon and Pardo 2015, 270). Since 1996, Israel is the first non-EU country, to become a full member of the European Research Area, participating in the Frameworks Programmes for Research and Technological Development (today, Horizon 2020) (Dror and Pardo 2006, 11). These developments reflect areas beyond trade and economics, in which both parties are interested in closer cooperation.

the recognition of the Palestinian right for self-determination, and other issues regarding the conflict (Pardo and Peters 2010, 6-9).

⁹ In the Essen European Council of December 1994, the European Council expressed its willingness to establish special relations with Israel, declaring that it ‘considers that Israel, on account of its high level of economic development, should enjoy special status in the relations with the EU’.

In recent years, Israel has signed numerous agreements with the EU and joined its various frameworks for collaboration such as the Agreements on Conformity Assessment and Acceptance of Industrial Products (ACAA) in 2012, and the Open Skies Agreement in 2013. These cases reflect how the EU and Israel upgrade their relations with different legal agreements directed to increase trade and economic cooperation between partners and to encourage economic growth in both parties. These various agreements and cooperative frameworks are not purely technical. They carry normative, declarative and political aspects in their various articles.¹⁰ Thus, the agreements mark a flourishing sphere for EU-Israeli relations on practical levels, yet are not completely detached from the political declarative normative aspects which can be observed in their wording. Today the economic relations between Israel and the EU are thriving, with the EU representing Israel's largest and most important trade partner (Central Bureau of Statistics, 2018; Pardo and Peters, 2010, 2). Hence, the duality in the Israeli-EU relations; between flourishing practical/technical aspects, and challenging relations on the declared political level. This duality which has been examined by a number of scholars, (Del Sarto 2011; Gordon and Pardo 2015) is also evident in the case of the higher education – as evidenced below.

In light of the above described developments in the Israeli-EU relationship, the next section will outline their relations in the field of HE. Specifically, the section aims to provide an outline of the BP in Israel, how it was perceived by both political and institutional actors, as well as the degree to which its ideas were diffused in the Israeli HE system. This examination will shed light on the close, however complicated relations, through the prism of higher education, reflecting on their dualism and complexity.

Methodological and theoretical approaches

¹⁰ For example: Article 2 of the Association Agreement states: 'Relations between the Parties, as well as all the provisions of the Agreement itself, shall be based on respect for human rights and democratic principles...' (European Council 2000, art. 2).

Normative Power and External Perceptions Studies

The Normative Power theory relates to notions of non-military power (such as civilian power, soft power and ethical power). It can be defined as ‘the ability of an actor to shape the perception of what is normal and proper, without using force but by attractive existence of the actor which makes others cooperate with it, and adapt it as a model’ (Manners 2006a, 168). While gaining interest in the fields of EU studies and international relations in the last two decades, the idea of normative power was present in their literature earlier. Its roots were developed already in Carr's work, which made the distinction between economic power, military power, and power over opinion (Carr 1962, 108). Relating to the EU's creation, Duchêne emphasised the ‘*idée force*’, which can be seen as an element of normative power in the political field (Duchêne 1972).

Based on official declarations and legislations of the EU's institutions, Manners lists what he calls the ‘core norms’. These identify the normative aspects of the EU, in internal and external policies. Manners suggests that the EU's normative power stems from the diffusion of norms (Manners 2006b). Manners' idea was later developed by Diez, claiming that while the European normative power serves the EU's foreign policy and external relations, it is also used as a practice of ‘discursive presentation’ aimed to consolidate European identity (Diez 2005). This aspect of normative power is connected to the study of external perceptions, since an analysis of the ways in which ‘other actors represent EU's sponsored norms, can provide insights into the EU's potential to play a role of a normative power’ (Sicurelli 2015, 26). Relating this to the subject at hand, the ways in which non-European actors (like Israel) perceive the BP and its norms, can provide insight into the potential of the EU to lead and assert its normative power in the international arena of HE.

In the last decade, the study of external perceptions has been integrated into the fields of international relations and foreign policy, and EU studies in particular. As Lucarelli and Fioramonti explain, ‘looking at external images means looking at one's variables that contributes to shaping a European political identity among Europeans. ...Self-rhetorical representation, public debates and mirror images are fundamental components of political identity in the making like the UE/ European one’ (Lucarelli and Fioramonti 2009, 1). Various factors influence the process of identity building. One of them, and maybe the most important, is the relationship with external Others (Strath 2002). The relevance of Others is appreciated

in socio-psychological studies (Hall 1997) and international relations literature (Neumann 1998). 'Others' produce a 'mirror' for the self as an individual, but also for a group engaged in a self-identification process. Hence, images of the EU as seen by other actors can contribute to consolidate European identity, European self-perception, and European future internal and external policy (Lucarelli and Fioramonti 2009, 1-9). In the HE arena, the EU has become a rather strong player, with the creation and emergence of the BP and the EHEA. If the EU aspires to heighten its external influence (as Asderaki and Zahavi and Freidman's articles in the special issue, published as part of the NEAR EU project¹¹), it cannot avoid taking into serious consideration the external expectations, images and perceptions towards it, the BP and the EHEA.

The theories of normative power and external perceptions have mostly been developed independently from each other with limited cross over ideas from one to another (Pardo 2015). Nevertheless, in recent years, scholars from both sides have started to relate to the complementary theoretical frameworks in different studies (Browning 2003; Diez 2005; Pardo 2015). Indeed, as this study supports, the theories complement and serve each other. Specifically, the normative power theory requires the definition of certain actors as 'Others', towards whom normative power will be activated (Diez 2005; Browning 2003, 52).

This project will apply these complementary theoretical frameworks in the case of HE, and more specifically, EU-Israel relations in the field of HE. This is not the first study to use the theory of normative power in the field of HE (Damro and Freidman 2018; Figuerroa 2010; Hartmann 2008). Its innovation lies in its focus on international relations and foreign policy as well as its connection to the literature on external perceptions, and how these interact with normative power theories. The scope of this project is limited to the 'receiver' of normative power (Israel in this case): how the actions, existence and policies of the EU in the field of HE are perceived by Israel, as an external entity. As such, the project does not go into detail

¹¹ Hila Zahavi & Yoav Friedman (2019): "The Bologna Process: an international higher education regime", *European Journal of Higher Education*.

Foteini Asderaki (2019), " Researching the European Higher Education Area External Effectiveness: Regime Complexity and Interplay, *European Journal of Higher Education*.

surrounding the EU's interests in activating its normative power, or how the norms are being diffused by different mechanisms, rather it is limited to examining certain aspects of external perceptions.

Research Scope and Method

This study examines how European HE policy developments in recent decades (specifically the BP) were perceived and discussed in Israel, and how they intersect with EU-Israel relations more broadly. To this end, the empirical analysis is based on twenty open interviews with policy-makers from relevant governmental and national authorities in Israel and the EU, as well as representatives of Israeli HE institutions, and institutional policy-makers. The research is also based on official documents and reports from Israeli national policy and political discussions. Both sources were analysed using qualitative content analysis, to form a contemporary historical analysis and describe the trajectory of the BP in Israel. Prior to outlining this trajectory, and the perceptions towards it – the following section sets the context of the BP, its Global Strategy and EU-Israel relations.

Outline of research findings

Initial Reactions and Perceptions: A Top-Down Perspective

It would take a few years for Israeli governmental bodies to relate to the BP. The first time an official reference to the BP was made, was in 2005 (and later in 2006) within Knesset (Israeli parliament) discussions (Knesset 2005, 2006). In both cases, the BP was not the primary subject of the discussion but a side reference to the issue of recognition of academic degrees. Similar references were made later in 2007 and 2008 during Knesset discussions on Antisemitism in Europe and the issue of academic boycotts on Israel (Knesset 2007, 2008). Thus, while the BP was developing in Europe and beyond, it had yet to be publicly discussed by Israeli officials. This reflects a low level of interest of Israeli leadership towards the BP, and the perception of the BP as a non-relevant issue. The turning point of Israeli perceptions towards the BP was when Prof. Yuli Tamir, as the Minister of Education (2006-2009), saw the potential of the BP for Israel and applied for membership.

Israel's application for membership in the BP came about as an initiative of the advisor to the Council for Higher Education (CHE) together with the head of the European Desk at the Manufacturers Association of Israel. Motivated by the idea that it is in Israel's best interest to

belong to the club of European HE, their initiative was passed on to the Director General of CHE, and to the then Minister of Education.¹² The decision to join the BP ensued, even though it was understood that Israel did not satisfy the eligibility criteria.¹³ Two official applications were made in 2007 and 2008, through the Foreign Ministry, and supported by other national governmental bodies (including the Israel Academy of Sciences and Humanities, the Planning and Budgeting Committee at CHE).¹⁴ This reflects a joint awakening of the Israeli political echelon, towards the developments of the European HE reforms. Israel's applications were nevertheless rejected based on technical issues.¹⁵

Several themes can be discerned relating to the motivations of the Israeli political echelon to apply for membership status to the BP, as evidenced through the analysis of the interviews.¹⁶ These include: gaining exposure to the world, enhancing Israeli HE, and conducting a dialogue and partnership with Europe. The theme of exposure to the world was attributed to both

¹² As described in interviews conducted with an Israeli policy-maker in a governmental economic authority, 28.12.2014, Israel; a former advisor to CHE, 16.12.2014, Israel; a former high-ranking Israeli politician, 20.3.2016, Israel.

¹³ Israel is not a member of the Council of Europe and hence does not meet the conditions for membership.

¹⁴ As detailed in an interview conducted with former high-ranking Israeli politician, 20.3.2016, Israel.

¹⁵ Israel's official applications to join the BP were rejected because Israel is not a member of the Council of Europe and hence does not meet the conditions for membership. The leading officials considered positively joining the Council of Europe to overcome this obstacle. However, political pressure from the USA prevented Israel's aspiration to do so. To join the Council of Europe, Israel had to sign the European Cultural Convention. The United States refused to sign the convention and pressured Israel not to sign as well, since the convention was perceived as recognising the rights of indigenous peoples, which could have led to a political and territorial interpretation by the Palestinians in the Israeli context, and other minorities in other geo-political contexts.

¹⁶ Interviews with: Senior policy-maker in an Israeli university, 6.3.2016, Israel; senior researcher of HE policies and advisor to HE institutions and governmental bodies in Israel, 18.6.2015, Israel; Israeli policy-maker in a governmental economic authority, 28.12.2014, Israel; a former advisor to CHE, 16.12.2014, Israel; an Israeli former high-ranking politician, 20.3.2016, Israel.

academic exposure and a wider exposure leading to links in other fields. The main idea is openness to the world: Israel ‘must learn to live not as a nation that dwells alone’.¹⁷

In light of the perceived importance of academic ties with Europe facilitated by the BP, Israel proactively tried to achieve these goals in various ways. For instance, in 2008 Israel signed a convention for collaboration between the Israeli Education Ministry and the European Commission (the ‘Jan Figel Convention’). The objective of the convention was to ‘enhance policy dialogue on greater compatibility of education systems and to increase educational mobility and exchanges’ (EC 2008). One of the immediate results of this collaboration agreement was that since 2009, Israel is represented at the senior level in the Bologna Policy Forum. On a practical level, the senior political/bureaucratic echelons of the Israeli government have remained involved and aware of developments occurring in the European HE sphere. Here we see how normative aspects and dialogue are taking form in frameworks, which might on the surface seem purely technical. A convention with the aim of promoting students’ mobility among parties, opens a stage for normative influence through dialogue, presence, and more. One of the interviewees related specifically to this potential:

I see Europe as a very important partner for Israel on all levels. ...I think that in the network of relationships there is more than simply the academic ties; there is also a set of values that is part of the picture, and there is no doubt that Israel (which is not Europe, but does perhaps claim to have the values of a European society) has the ability to integrate and work together [with Europe].¹⁸

This quote demonstrates the potential of dialogue and the related normative aspects of the EU programmes to act as a bridge to overcome difficulties in the relationship and strengthen ties with Europe. This idea was commonly cited in the interviews conducted. The fact that interviewees were relating directly to the effect of European values and norms through technical frameworks and dialogue, demonstrates the potential activation of normative power.

¹⁷ Interview conducted with Israeli policy-maker in a governmental economic authority, 28.12.2014, Israel.

¹⁸ Interview conducted with Israeli policy-maker in a governmental economic authority, 28.12.2014, Israel.

Although these developments have meaning on the declarative- significance aspects, and even on agenda setting, none of the above developments resulted any actual implementation of aspects of the BP in Israeli institutions or HE. However, the commencements of the adoption of BP's components did occur. Parallel to developments described above, Israel was drawing closer to Europe in the field of HE through EU programmes closely associated to the BP. Since 2007, Israel has been a partner in the Erasmus Mundus programme (later included in Erasmus+), a framework for student and faculty mobility between European countries and countries affiliated with the European Neighbourhood Policy. A year later, Israel became a partner in the Tempus programme (later merged into Erasmus+), which was intended to promote HE reforms in countries outside Europe and bring them close to the BP (EACEA 2010; Keeling 2006). Israel's partnership in Erasmus Mundus and Tempus programmes exposed Israeli HE institutions to the ideas of the BP, and forced them to learn the BP terms to "speak the same language"¹⁹.

As a result of Israel's partnership, in European HE programmes, a Tempus office (today, the Erasmus+ office) was opened in Israel in 2008, under the auspice of CHE and funded by the EU, as a branch of the Education, Audiovisual and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA, an agency of the European Commission). One of office's tasks is to run the Forum of Higher Education Reform Experts (HERE) as a means to introduce the BP to HE stakeholders and institutions in Israel, through local agents holding managerial positions in HE institutions appointed to the Forum.

During this time, Israel joined additional European HE agencies and networks, which promote the BP.²⁰ Through these different professional frameworks and agreements, Israel is currently in a process of assimilating various elements of the BP (such as learning outcomes) into its HE system. Moreover, the fact that Israel continues to join these kinds of frameworks and agreements, shows that the positive perceptions of Israeli politicians, officials and policy-

¹⁹ Interview conducted with a senior policy-maker in an Israeli university, 6.3.2016, Israel.

²⁰ Israel is a member of the ENIC-NARIC network (represented by the Ministry of Education). Israel is also a signatory of the 1997 Lisbon Convention on the recognition of professional and academic studies (ratified in 2007) (National Council for Research and Development 2010, 156–60). Another framework of this kind is the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, in which Israel is an associate member (represented by CHE) (ENQA, ENQA website).

makers towards European higher education reforms were not reflecting a temporary or personal attitude, but were part of a wider sustained perception. This development strengthened the European presence in the Israeli HE sphere and the Israeli presence in European HE forums, promoting dialogue and normative effects.

Although the assimilation of certain elements of the BP to the Israeli system were promoted at the national level, a large-scale implementation of the reforms was not adopted. Following its unsuccessful attempts to join the BP in 2007 and 2008, Israel seems to have abandoned its membership aspirations on the national level. According to the interviews conducted for this research, once Israel did not have an external commitment to the Process, there was no reason to continue to introduce it in a formal way, especially given that over the years Israel was a partner in many European research frameworks and student exchange programmes. As one of the interviewees observed: ‘we are getting the good side of Europe without being involved in the problems’.²¹ For the national leadership, this reduced the value of the membership in the club. The strained political dynamic between Israel and the EU was also mentioned as an explanation with one interviewee stating, ‘relations with the EU have become increasingly political, and in Israel no one distinguished the Council of Europe from the EU, they were all in the same basket’.²²

In 2013, when the Erasmus+ programme was launched, Israel was given the opportunity to become a full partner. After discussions on the ministerial level, Israel decided not to join the programme on a full basis but to retain the status of associate membership (and avoid paying membership fees).²³ This demonstrates again how the Israeli national leadership abandoned the idea of assimilation with the EHEA instead deciding to remain within the second circle of beneficiaries and involvement.

From a Top-down to a Bottom-up Approach

After the rejection of Israel’s second application to join the BP, political-level discussions surrounding the reforms and its ramifications for the Israeli higher-education system largely

²¹ Interview conducted with an Israeli former high-ranking politician, 20.3.2016, Israel.

²² Interview conducted with Israeli policy-maker in a governmental economic authority, 28.12.2014, Israel.

²³ Interview conducted with an Israeli diplomat, 24.3.2015, Belgium.

wavered. Yet, the initial political interest was in many ways replaced by an institutionally-led interest towards the BP. Indeed, the wavering of interest on the national-political level made it possible for the institutions themselves to take the reins and spark the reform processes from below.

As observed through the analysis of the interviews, there was an increasing international pressure on Israeli academic institutions to learn about the BP in order to weave ties with European institutions for student exchanges, and to expand the odds of being granted EU-funded projects. This pressure began to have a noticeable effect during the first half of the current decade, when the institutions began to approach the BP through a bottom-up approach (as arose in a CHE discussion on October 22, 2012). Another aspect of this bottom-up trend involves the European higher education programmes mentioned above. All of the European programmes that Israel joined, which are managed and funded by the EU, are intended to promote the BP outside the EU, either on the national or the institutional level. They do so in diverse ways, as one of the interviewees described:

The immediate motivation [to join Bologna] was the start of a period of international academic ties ...this is not possible if the systems do not understand each other or speak the same language. ...that is, if we cannot meet the technical demands, we cannot enter the pitch and play the game. That was the trigger that sparked the process. Over time, many of us [officials of the Israeli higher-education system] began to understand that this process has many valuable elements that can change the higher-education system for the better.²⁴

This trend continued with the Erasmus+ programme, which helped diffuse the BP from the institutional level, bottom-up, by encouraging Israeli institutions to get acquainted with the BP features.²⁵ This resulted in many pilots and even full implementation process of Bologna

²⁴ Interview conducted with a senior policy-maker in an Israeli university, 6.3.2016, Israel.

²⁵ In 2008, as part of the Tempus program (the previous name of the Erasmus+ program), 32 Israeli academic institutions participated in 18 projects for a total of more than €10 million. Between 2008 and 2013, the number of projects with Israeli participation grew threefold: in 2013, there were applications by 27 projects involving Israeli education institutions. As of the same year, 577 Israeli students and faculty members had taken part in the Erasmus Mundus exchange program.

components in different Israeli HE institutions: mostly learning outcomes, but also ECTS and even diploma supplements. Thus, while the effect of the European HE programmes was driven from the top – through the signing of programmes – it generated a bottom-up approach, driven by institutional policy-makers to promote the BP in the institutions and then in the entire system.

One of the factors promoting the bottom-up support of the BP in Israeli HE institutions was the increasing trend of internationalisation of HE, in which the BP has become an international standard and even prerequisite. Dr. Ami Shalit, the academic secretary of the Feinberg Academy at the Weizmann Institute of Science, explained this as follows: ‘The lack of compatibility with the Bologna Process will impair the ability of Israeli scholars and institutions of higher education to collaborate with foreign institutions, including to win research grants and the like’ (Bashaar Forum Conference, 2012). Another factor contributing to this development was the Bologna Training Center, founded in 2012 an independent national resource centre on the BP, under the auspices of Ben-Gurion University of the Negev. It was intended to assist Israeli institutions to understand the BP, the possibilities it offers them, and how they can partially implement it on the institutional level.²⁶ These developments emphasise the leadership role taken by HE institutions to promote the BP in Israel. These two factors reflect the positive perceptions and interests of Israeli policymakers on the institutional level towards the BP and EHEA. Thus, the interest and positive perceptions were not limited to the national governmental sphere but arose on the institutional level as well.

To sum up the discussion on the bottom-up approach: the discourse focuses on strengthening the international dimension of HE in Israel, the potential for improved quality it bears, and its economic potential (in terms of EU funded projects in research and in HE, and in term of student mobility as an economic resource). Nevertheless, the BP is far from being applied on both the institutional and national levels, and many of its elements are still not addressed properly. Nevertheless, as the globalisation of HE intensifies, and as Israeli access to European

²⁶ See the Bologna Training Center website. The Bologna Training Center conducted tens of workshops in different universities and colleges in Israel, mostly focused on implementation of learning outcomes, ECTS and diploma supplement. The Bologna Training Center guided many institutions and departments throughout the implementation process.

funding programmes increases, the Israeli higher-education system is drawing closer and closer to Europe, in a process that begins at the institutional level and radiates upward.

In September 2018 a new Twinning project was launched in the Israeli Ministry of Education, with the objective to establish the Israeli National Qualification Framework (EEAS 2018). This may reflect a renewed interest of the Israeli policy-makers in the BP and EHEA, in contradiction with the later developments since the rejection of Israel's application, which was framed as bottom-up, led by the HE institutions.

Bologna's Israeli Trajectory: External Perceptions and Normative Power

Despite the limited political attention paid to the BP in Israel in the years following the country's membership rejections, it did not lack influence on the Israeli system. As the above trajectory exemplifies, the perceptions and reactions to the BP in Israel shifted from the political-national scale to a more bottom-up approach initiated by the academic institutions themselves. While the national level's interest stagnated after the membership rejections, the institutions themselves showed increased interest in the process out of their pragmatic reasons and motivation for internationalisation. One should wonder whether Israel loses or gains from its current bottom-up approach, led by the institutions, and not by the national official level.

We can track several reasons for the Israeli interest in the BP, both from the national and institutional levels, which should be linked to the Israeli perceptions towards the BP and European HE. The first reasoning is related to the concept of Israel's need to open up to the world and increase its international cooperation ('not as a nation that dwells alone'). In this regard, the BP and Europe are perceived in a positive light as a bridge to reach other parts of the world and thus as a prominent actor in the global arena.

The second reasoning is related to the 'international officials'. This reasoning sees the BP as a way to promote international norms in a local arena, and overcome local obstacles, through the acceptance of international standards, networks and norms. In the case of the BP in Israel, local officials saw the BP as an opportunity to promote needed reforms such as inter-institutional recognition, by imposing European norms on the Israeli HE institutions and HE system. Hence,

the BP and European HE are perceived as a positive force to promote quality and normative aspects.

Another reasoning is the realisation that the process has started, and it cannot be ignored at this point. This realisation stresses that BP is perceived as relevant and powerful process which cannot be overlooked, since it had an effect of the international arena of HE.

The forth reasoning is related to the agenda of HE internationalisation. The BP was perceived as answering many of the needs related to the process of internationalisation of HE. Again, this shows a recognition and acceptance to the prominent role which the EU and Europe lead in the global arena of HE.

The last significant reasoning is related to the issue of quality. The BP, if completed, was perceived as able to enhance the quality of Israeli HE. This reflects a very positive perception of the essence of the project as a way to promote quality in HE. In addition, this reflects a positive perception of Europe as a force for good in the world, and as an actor which helps others enhance quality aspects of their performances. The above reasonings reflect an overall positive perception of the EU as a dominant actor in the international arena of HE. Moreover, these perceptions are closely related to normative issues as revealed through the interviews.

According to the Normative Power theory, norms can be diffused in various ways. From the above analysis, we can recognise different methods of diffusion in the current case. *Contagion* is the diffusion of norms, resulting from ‘unintentional diffusion of ideas from the EU to other political actors’ (Manners 2002, 244). From the interviews, we observe that the actual existence of the BP activated interest among Israeli policy-makers, which perceived its ideas and norms in a positive manner. *Procedural diffusion* ‘which involves the institutionalization of a relationship between the EU and a third party’ (Ibid) is present in the case of the BP in Israel through agreements (such as the Jan Figel convention, EC, 2008) and EU programmes as described above. *Informational diffusion*, ‘the result of the range of strategic communications’ (Manners 2002, 244) appears in this case as calls for applications for EU programmes promoting the BP and public reports of the EU to track the implementation of the BP in neighboring countries (EACEA 2010). *Transference diffusion*, which ‘takes place when the EU exchanges goods, trade, aid or technical assistance with third parties through largely substantive or financial means’ (Manners 2002, 245) appears in in this case in the activation of EU HE programmes such as Erasmus+,

which provide not only training and technical assistance, but also financial aid. *Overt diffusion*, which ‘occurs as a result of the physical presence of the EU in third states’ (Manners 2002, 245) is evident in our case in the establishment of the Tempus offices/ Erasmus+ offices, as a branch of the EACEA and the European Commission, physically inside the offices of CHE. *Cultural filter*, which ‘affects the impact of international norms and political learning in third states and organizations leading to learning, adaptation or ejection of norms’ (Manners 2002, 245), was reflected in the interviews which specifically mentioned the normative effect of the EU and BP on the Israeli field of HE. Hence, the case of the BP in Israel is indicative of the norms diffusion discussed in the normative power theory.²⁷ As demonstrated earlier, the Israeli echelon was aware of the normative aspect of the BP, its promotion in Israel by the EU, and its potential to affect EU-Israeli relations.

Contribution

Thus far, this outline has discussed EU-Israel relations through the prism of HE. It would be valuable to turn to examining how this relates to a broader understanding of international relations and how the HE sphere in particular can shed light on the study of foreign policy. First, perceptions are fluid, constantly changing and affected by various influences. Thus, perceptions related to a specific area can affect and relate to perceptions and relations in other spheres (Moisio et al. 2013). This notion was evidenced in many of the interviews conducted for this research – through which the HE connection was understood as facilitating relations in other domains.²⁸

As discussed above, the adoption of the BP in Israel is highly selective characterised by the embracement and application of the more positive features, less costly aspects, and the exclusion of costly aspects, with no set commitment to implement the process as a whole. A number of the Israeli interviewees mentioned that this scenario is a fair representation of EU-Israel relations. Indeed, Israel rather stay within the second circle of affiliation with European

²⁷ Larsen (2013) indicated the overlap of external perceptions and normative power.

²⁸ Interviews with Israeli policy maker in a governmental economic authority, 28.12.2014, Israel; senior researcher of HE policies and advisor to HE institutions and governmental bodies in Israel, 18.6.2015, Israel

processes, networks, and programmes. Thus, enjoying most of the fruits without the need to pay the full price or fully commit to adjust to the European norms as a whole.

The response of the Israeli HE system to the BP reveals the duality in Israel-Europe relations, between the applied and pragmatic aspects and the normative and declaratory aspects (Del Sarto 2011; Gordon and Pardo 2015). This can be linked to the functionalist approach in EU's internal and external policies, as described in the past (Haas 1958; Mitrany 1994).²⁹ These trends and duality also appear in other fields of EU-Israeli relations throughout the years, as shown above.

There were two factors at play in the initial motivation for Israel to join the BP: a practical-utitarian motive and a normative motive. The practical utilitarian motive sees advancing the Israeli HE system on the international scene and opening the Israeli HE market to new groups from the rest of the world. The normative motive relates partly to an identity-related motive: 'Israel must learn to live not as a "nation that dwells alone" but as part of the family of nations'.³⁰ Both motives see the BP and Europe in a positive light and reflects normative aspects of the relations. Hence, the example of the BP in Israel demonstrates a successful case of European normative power, related primary to a positive external perception. This finding runs counter to other studies showing the failure of European normative power in the case of Israel (Gordon and Pardo 2015). Thus, HE has a potential positive normative influence, which should be further researched for academic and policy purposes. In addition, it would be valuable to further study the application of normative power as a European foreign policy tools in other fields in Israel in order to better understanding the mechanism in this geo-political context.

As arose above, Israeli leadership, representing both institutional and national scales, perceived the BP and the European leadership in HE in a very positive way: as a global leader of trends,

²⁹ This idea was described in past research dealing with Israel-EU relation in the field of knowledge policies (Steinberg 1988).

³⁰ Interview conducted with Israeli policy-maker in a governmental economic authority, 28.12.2014, Israel.

a promoter of quality, and an overall force for good.³¹ The fact that the normative aspect was a crucial part of the discussion and perceptions on the BP raises the potential of viewing European HE policies as a tool in foreign policy, as part of the tool kit of Europe's normative power. Granted, this is not traditional foreign policy. However, the EU is not a traditional actor in the international arena, thus it is not surprising if the tools it uses (or should use) are non-traditional, and related to non-traditional fields to IR.

This study has demonstrated how interests are mixed with technical issues as well as political considerations, producing a multi-dimensional situation. The relations between Israel and Europe consist of pragmatic issues, guided primarily by economic interests but also relating to normative aspects, motivated by considerations of foreign relations and the discourse of norms and identities. This discussion is relevant not only for HE, but for all domains making-up the Israeli-EU relationship.

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Research goals and objectives

This research focused on norm transfer in higher education, examining the influence of the Bologna Process on the New Zealand university sector. New Zealand engagement with the Bologna Process, leading to accession to the Lisbon Recognition Convention, was spurred by industry interest and underpinned by a view that the framework would have a number of international implications for higher education including acceptance of New Zealand tertiary qualifications. This motivation for engagement raised the obvious question as to the normative impact Bologna would have on the New Zealand university sector. In addressing this, the research was framed by a series of overlapping questions:

- How is the Bologna process to be conceived in normative terms? How is it an expression of Normative Power Europe?
- Do we see a normative influence on the New Zealand university sector? How is this normative influence expressed?
- What characteristics of the New Zealand university sector shape its receptiveness or resistance to external normative influences?
- What does internationalisation mean in the New Zealand context?

A brief outline of the case study

The defining factor that has shaped the Higher Education sector in New Zealand, and indeed the broader socio-economic context, is the rapid transformation of the New Zealand economy to neoliberal market orthodoxy that took place from the mid-1980s. When the fourth Labour Government was elected in 1984, it inherited a fiscal deficit and debt crisis resulting from the prior National Government's (1975–1984) significant external borrowing to fund domestic infrastructure investments as a spur to economic growth and employment. Over the lifetime of the National Government, net official public debt increased from 4.4 per cent of GDP to 29.6 per cent, with an increase in interest from 2.5 per cent to 11.5 per cent of tax receipts (Wilkinson 2017: 5). This was accompanied by an increasing fiscal deficit, which by 1984 was approaching 7 per cent of GDP (Evans et al. 1996, 1860; Wilkinson 2017, 6).

When the Labour Government assumed office on 26 July 1984 it launched a process of economic liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation, with an emphasis on the market, competition and individual responsibility becoming central to the functioning of economy and society. Neoliberal orthodoxy in effect came to penetrate almost every aspect of state, economy and society, including the university sector. The debate on tertiary education policy took place from the end of the 1980s, centring on the extent to which universities should be subject to market disciplines and involving discussion as to whether a university education was a private benefit or a public good. While the New Zealand Vice Chancellors' Committee fell on the public good side of the equation, viewing education as a right and advocating maintenance of public funding as far as was possible (Universities Review Committee 1987), organisations such as the New Zealand Business Roundtable fell toward the other end of the spectrum, arguing that education is a private good that should be exposed to the same market framework as other commodities (NZBRT 1988). This latter view clearly reflected the thinking of the New Zealand Treasury, which envisaged government financial intervention as producing sub-optimal outcomes (New Zealand Treasury 1987, 177) and therefore advocated the removal of government controls and mechanisms to instead allow universities to operate as profit centres in a contested marketplace (193). It was in this direction that government policy was increasingly to travel.

The result of this debate was embodied in the Education Amendment Act 1990 which transformed the statutory foundation on which the New Zealand University system had been

built. From a system of effective autonomy under individual Acts of Parliament, a single regulatory framework was established involving a move from funding through a semi-independent agency to direct funding from the Ministry of Education, as well as the requirement for corporate charters, CEOs, contractual engagement with the Ministry and other paraphernalia of economic market actors (Kelsey 2000; Olssen 2002). A new funding formula was subsequently introduced meaning that by 1991 universities were receiving government funding for only 85 per cent of student course costs (Olssen 2002, 66). As a consequence, student fees were introduced to make up the difference. At the same time, international students, whose fees had until that point been heavily subsidised by the government, were required to start paying the full cost of tuition (Smith & Parata 1997). In the years since, this marketised vision of university education has been strengthened, with greater emphasis on competition among tertiary providers for student dollars and annualised funding cycles based on student demand (characterised also by ongoing declines in the relative level of central government funding).

The consequent underfunding of the university sector, the emphasis on universities as competitive market actors, and the vision of education as a commodity accumulated for individual benefit rather than as a right or a public good, provide the context in which New Zealand universities operate, and in which their internationalisation strategies are to be understood. Importantly, with the restrictions placed on the level of fees that institutions can charge domestic students to cover the difference between government funding and the cost of tuition, the fees levied upon international students which are not subject to the same restrictions have become an increasingly important mechanism for addressing the University funding shortfall. Indeed, the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Auckland observed in 2012 that at his institution, “each international student generates on average a margin (in commercial terms, profit) of \$7000 over that generated by an equivalent domestic student” (McCutcheon 2012).

The direct consequence of this policy and legislative evolution is that internationalisation in the New Zealand context has been conceived in largely instrumental terms, both by Universities and by central government, as a mechanism for overcoming domestic funding deficits. This stands in stark contrast to visions of internationalisation focusing on more cosmopolitan values such as intercultural communication, and on the enhancement of educational and research quality.

Methodological and theoretical approaches

The first stage of the study was a literature review of government and other documents relevant to New Zealand's response to the Bologna Process and the wider internationalisation environment, as well as relevant academic studies. Following this, interviews were undertaken with key policy actors to identify any gaps in the preceding literature review and to verify conclusions developed from it. An electronic survey was then distributed to representatives at each of New Zealand's eight universities, to be completed by the person or people with strategic oversight of internationalisation. The survey focussed on the priorities and drivers of internationalisation at the institutional level, as well as the importance attached to Europe and initiatives linked to the Europeanisation of higher education. This was in the same format as a survey used by colleagues at the University of British Columbia in Canada, allowing comparison across different contexts.

Challenges included a limited response rate (4/8). This is likely the results of busy and under resourced staff having limited time. Further thought needs to be put into how to approach this, because while 50% is an adequate response rate, it is a small sample size. There are also questions regarding how open respondents might have been, especially in a competitive setting like New Zealand, and whether their responses reflected the institution's view or their view? The survey was designed with this in mind, but it would be recommended that future research includes follow-up interviews to dig deeper in this sense, as well as to clarify any ambiguous responses and to test initial conclusions.

What theoretical approaches do you base your research on? How are these approaches valuable to the study of Higher Education Policy?

This research focused on norm transfer in higher education, examining the way in which Bologna Process internationalisation has intersected with the University sector in New Zealand. This necessitated the use of a theoretical framework for conceptualising soft power processes, including those of imitation and resistance. Normative power, in explicitly addressing new forms of agency and influence in international relations, provides that lens. The concept of Normative Power Europe, stemming from Manners' (2002) seminal article, recognises European Union influence in the realm of ideas, of 'power over opinion', of

‘ideological force’: the EU as ideational power. According to this conception, it is the centrality of its core norms that defines the Union as an actor. At a basic level, norms occupy two places: (i) as a value to be transmitted to other actors and to be diffused throughout the international system – Manners’ (239) “*idée force*” or “ability to shape conceptions of ‘normal’ in international relations”; and (ii) as a framework guiding external relations – as the Treaty on European Union asserts, “[t]he Union’s action on the international scene shall be guided by the principles which have inspired its own creation, development and enlargement, and which it seeks to advance in the wider world” (European Union 2012, art.21). Normative power, in other words, may be embodied both in ‘presence’ and in ‘action’, or as Gerrits (2009, 4) alternatively suggests, by ‘default’ and by ‘design’.

At the heart of the normative power proposition is the question as to how normative influence, be it active or passive, is best conceptualised. How are norms spread? This question is central to examining the influence of Bologna Process internationalisation on the New Zealand university sector. In this respect, in the years since Manners’ initial formulation and rather limited treatment of norm transfer, a significant literature on norm diffusion has emerged, providing a useful hook for exploring the role of New Zealand as a receiver (or not) of Bologna norms. Börzel and Risse’s (2012) work on normative emulation, for example, identifies three distinct mechanisms of relevance to the projection of norms in higher education. *Competition* involves the adoption of best practice in the context of rivalry with other actors, for example to promote economic growth (9). *Lesson drawing* involves the adoption of norms in the context of problem solving, with the transference of norms into the domestic context that are perceived elsewhere to have solved a problem currently being faced (9–10). *Normative emulation* is premised on the desire to be a “member[] of the international community ‘in good standing’” (10), with the adoption of particular norms (e.g. on human rights, the rule of law) seen as serving a legitimising function in this respect. Finally, *mimicry* is a more passive process of downloading norms, policies or institutions because these are in essence appropriate – they are “what everybody does in a given community” (10). Where competition and lesson drawing essentially stem from an analysis made by actors as to the functional value of norms, policies and institutions, normative emulation and mimicry are related more to the perceived legitimacy of the norm sender – in this case the European Union (see e.g. Jetschke and Murray 2012, 181).

Beyond the issue of norm diffusion, the question of impact also arises: in identifying the expression of normative power, must there be a transformative impact? Indeed, for Manners

(2008, 47), Normative Power Europe is to be judged “in terms of its principles, actions and impact”, a tripartite formulation in which consideration of the “impact and outcomes of EU actions” (58) is central. Importantly, however, the impact of norm diffusion is varied. In this respect, Risse (2015, 5) recognises three potential outcomes. *Adoption/convergence* involves the wholesale importing of normative structures. By contrast, *adaptation/transformation* recognises that localisation processes may also be at play, adapting structures to domestic circumstances. Finally, *resistance* posits rejection of normative influences as a third potential outcome of norm diffusion. As became evident in this study, however, these three categories are insufficient for explaining the normative impact of the Bologna Process in the New Zealand case. While there was little evidence of a transformative impact (or, indeed, of resistance) in New Zealand, notable was the extent to which compatibility checks were, and continue to be, undertaken. This process of *compliance confirmation* is evidence of an, albeit low, level of normative influence.

In the context of the increasing globalisation of higher education and the consequent pressure to achieve recognition of frameworks, or indeed convergence around common standards, normative power offers a lens through which to examine and explain policy transmission and influence. It provides a framework both for understanding channels by which relevant policy and practice is transmitted, and for conceptualising the impact on norm receivers. This study contributes to the testing of this framework in this respect.

Outline of research findings

New Zealand engagement with the Bologna Process was, in effect, a clash of internationalisations. Internationalisation in the New Zealand university sector, as evidenced in the surveys undertaken in this research, is framed by the marketised approach to higher education that has been entrenched since the 1980s. In our survey, when asked to rank their five greatest priorities in relation to the various aspects of internationalisation taking place at their institution, three out of four respondents ranked expanding the recruitment of international undergraduate and taught-postgraduate students first; the other ranked it second. When asked to rank the five most compelling reasons for promoting internationalisation at their university, revenue generation was the only element of internationalisation emphasised by all respondents. Alongside this, three of the four universities highlighted the role of

internationalisation in increasing their institution's global profile, which itself may be seen as significant in terms of revenue generation through the attraction of foreign students, while one additionally highlighted trade in education services. Reinforcing this, the identified external drivers of internationalisation among survey respondents heavily focused on issues of funding. Three universities underlined the lack of public funding for tertiary education as a key driver: for two it was ranked as the primary driver and for the other it was ranked second only behind international rankings. For New Zealand universities, therefore, stemming from the neoliberal transformation undertaken from the mid-1980s, internationalisation is intrinsically linked with revenue generation through competitive engagement in the market for international education services. This contrasts with the view of internationalisation built into the Bologna Process, emphasising cosmopolitan values such as intercultural communication, as well as the enhancement of educational and research quality. The impact of this clash, and the findings of this study, are evidenced both in normative and strategic terms.

Normative Impact

First, in terms of the normative impact on New Zealand's university sector, substantive influence has been limited but identifiable. The initial response to the Bologna Process was government-led: Prompted by industry interest, the Ministry of Education and New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) undertook a study of New Zealand's compatibility, the result of which were published in the 2008 paper *New Zealand and the Bologna Process* (New Zealand Ministry of Education and NZQA 2008). The document is particularly significant for the way in which Bologna is viewed through the lens of New Zealand's vision of internationalisation, and the importance accorded to the international market in education services that this involves. In this respect, the Process was viewed as potentially significant for enhancing the reputation of tertiary institutions as providers of "world-class education to both domestic and international students" and as a "useful marketing tool in third countries" (4). With university internationalisation strategies significantly directed toward revenue generation through the recruitment of fee-paying international students, the identification of such potential market value in the Bologna Process is unsurprising. Similarly, the focus of the paper on assessing New Zealand's compatibility with the EHEA was consistent with a market-based internationalisation strategy for which qualification framework conflicts are an important barrier to trade, inhibiting inward student mobility. Conceived in terms of norm transfer, what we see here is intriguing evidence of Börzel and Risse's (2012) *competition* diffusion, with

market incentives driving New Zealand institutions' limited engagement with the Bologna Process. In this respect, the examination of compatibility is to be conceived as a defensive response in the context of a competitive international education market, and entirely consistent with New Zealand universities' vision of internationalisation.

This process of compatibility testing has continued in relation to the Bologna framework. Most recently, for example, the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) completed a joint project with the European Commission, involving a comparative examination of the New Zealand Qualifications Framework (NZQF) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The resulting report concluded that "while there are conceptual and functional differences between the NZQF and the EQF, due to their different purposes and functions, the analysis shows that both frameworks can be considered comparable" (NZQA and European Commission 2017, 4).

What this suggests in relation to the normative influence of the Bologna Process on New Zealand is that, even in the absence of a transformative outcome, norm diffusion is to an extent occurring. Where Risse's (2015) tripartite framework for norm diffusion involving *adoption/convergence*, *adaptation/transformation*, or *resistance* involves substantive transformation or active resistance, in the New Zealand case we might add a fourth category: *compliance confirmation*. Thus, while in New Zealand there has been little evidence of a transformative impact (or indeed of resistance), it is nevertheless noteworthy that compatibility checks have been, and continue to be, undertaken. The perceived need for such compliance confirmation is evidence of a level of normative influence, even if substantive change is not to be found. The fact of NZQF compatibility makes it difficult to measure the influence of the Bologna Process beyond this, though perhaps the decision to leave NZQF level 8 unlevelled in relation to the EQF is indicative of an element of resistance, or at least the lack of any perception of the need for, changes to New Zealand's Qualifications Framework to bring it more closely into line with its European counterpart. The exception is NZQF level 8 (Bachelor Honours Degrees, Postgraduate Diplomas and Certificates). These have been left unlevelled to the EQF, or in other words they were not recognised as equivalent to any EQF level.

So what does this somewhat limited engagement tell us about the normative influence of Bologna? The answer returns us to the question of transformative impact: must there be an identifiable and substantive change on the part of the norm recipient for diffusion to be

inferred? As highlighted earlier, for Manners (2008, 47) this is definitively the case, with subsequent theorists attempting to conceptualise variation in such impact. Risse's (2015) tripartite framework, for example, recognises the possibility of *adoption/convergence*, *adaptation/transformation*, or *resistance*. In the New Zealand case, we might add a fourth category: *compliance confirmation*. While, beyond perhaps acceding to the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the subsequent establishment of the TEQS, which has nevertheless failed to substantively penetrate the universities themselves, there is little evidence of a transformative impact (or indeed of resistance), it is nevertheless noteworthy that compatibility checks have been, and continue to be, undertaken. The perceived need for such compliance confirmation is evidence of a level of normative influence, even if substantive change is not to be found. The fact of NZQF compatibility makes it difficult to measure the influence of the Bologna Process beyond this, though perhaps the decision to leave NZQF level 8 unlevelled in relation to the EQF is indicative of an element of resistance, or at least the lack of any perception of the need for, changes to New Zealand's Qualifications Framework to bring it more closely into line with its European counterpart.

Strategic Impact

Second, evident was an overwhelming absence of Europe from the internationalisation strategies of New Zealand universities. Indeed, when asked to list their geographic foci, only two out of four respondents listed Europe among their institution's top three priority regions, with both ranking it third. The overwhelmingly dominant focus is Asia, ranked by all respondents as their institution's first geographic priority. When drilling down to individual countries, China is at the top of the list, with other Asian countries (particularly India and Malaysia) also featuring highly, as well as the United States from which there is a sizeable inflow of fee-paying study abroad students. In Europe, the United Kingdom is the clear leader, with three respondents ranking it a priority (4th, 6th, 11th). EU27 countries, where prioritised at all, generally fall toward the lower end of the scale. Denmark, France, Germany and Norway are the only other European countries listed (7th, 9th, 10th and 12th respectively) and none are cited by respondents at more than one institution. Meanwhile, internationalisation initiatives, which have a significant history of development in the European context, bear little influence in New Zealand. While there is almost universal awareness of the Bologna Process and the EHEA, ECTS, the Bologna Diploma Supplement and the Lisbon Recognition Convention, as well as Erasmus+ and Horizon2020, these frameworks are identified by Universities as having

little influence in the New Zealand context, with respondents typically answering that they do not play any role in their internationalisation strategies.

How is this absence to be explained? Here the vision of internationalisation in the New Zealand context plays a fundamental role. With internationalisation largely focused on the recruitment of fee-paying international students as a mechanism for revenue generation, Europe suffers because it is not considered a major market, certainly by comparison to Asia. In 2015/16, the total economic contribution to New Zealand of students from Europe across all education sectors was valued at NZ\$280 million, roughly equal to the total economic contribution of students from Japan alone which was NZ\$288 million (Education New Zealand 2017). By contrast, the economic contribution of students from Asia as a whole was valued at NZ\$3.14 billion, with China and India ranked at the top of the list (NZ\$1.4 billion and NZ\$659 million respectively).

In terms of outward student flows, Europe is the most popular destination for New Zealand students who study abroad: of the 1,044 university students who undertook an overseas exchange in 2016, 46% of went to a European country (New Zealand Ministry of Education 2018). Promoting such mobility to Europe, however, is not a government priority. While political support has recently been given for increasing the number of students who spend a study period abroad, the main focus is again Asia. In 2013, the Prime Minister's Scholarships for Asia (PMSA) were launched, which provide funding for New Zealand higher education students to study or undertake an internship in Asia for a period of up to two years. Again, the rationale is largely economic, as articulated by the then Tertiary Education Minister, Stephen Joyce in launching the PMSA scheme, "New Zealand's economic future is very tied in with our key trading partners in Asia... We need more young Kiwis who have had the experience of spending some time studying in Asia, and can help strengthen our people-to-people links with those countries" (Joyce 2013, para. 3). This reflects the wider policy agenda which views New Zealand's economic future as being determined "by interactions with the rest of the world – and especially the national ability to increase trade and wider economic connections with Asia... [for which] The education system will need to provide students with the required knowledge and skills" (New Zealand Government 2011, 5). For this reason, even when it comes to outbound mobility, Europe is not considered a strategic priority in terms of internationalisation.

Contribution

This study, focusing on the New Zealand university sector, contributes to the wider discussion of the Bologna Process and the internationalisation in two ways. First, it contributes to the ongoing stress-testing of the normative power framework as it is applied to the internationalisation of higher education. In this respect, we see in the New Zealand example elements of normative impact that do not comfortably sit within the existing theory. This necessitates the inclusion of an additional category of norm diffusion – *compliance confirmation* – as a way to frame the New Zealand case.

Second, the study offers a window on a clash between (arguably) conflicting internationalisations. A more cosmopolitan Bologna vision of internationalisation is confronted, in the New Zealand context, with a neoliberal market-driven view. It is this essential incompatibility that explain the limited normative or strategic impact of the Bologna framework on a New Zealand university sector the strategic interests of which lie elsewhere, driven by an institutional approach to internationalisation that is heavily focused on the recruitment of fee-paying international students as a way to generate revenue and overcome domestic funding gaps. Interestingly, what limited response there has been to Bologna in New Zealand, can also largely be explained in the context of New Zealand's market orientated approach to higher education; assuring compliance is seen as a way to maintain or improve attractiveness in a competitive market.

Given these findings, New Zealand example raises further questions for the study of the Bologna Process and the internationalisation of higher education. Given that the normative influence of the Bologna framework has seemingly been insufficient to outweigh the specific focus of internationalisation in the New Zealand context, what are the implications for Bologna and the EHEA elsewhere? Does normative influence firmly rest on the material foundation of an attractive European market, and are we therefore likely to see the appeal of such frameworks progressively weakened in states where, for reasons of geography or other economic, political, social or cultural factors, that market bears less apparent lustre? Certainly, the New Zealand case would suggest that in education systems characterised by entrenched neoliberal norms, the ability of European Bologna norms to penetrate may be limited, beyond prompting compliance confirmation, unless strong market incentives are present.

University of British Columbia: Near-EU and the Canadian Case

Research goals and objectives

During their initial phases, the Council of Europe's Bologna Process and the European Union's Erasmus Programme were both focused on the internal dimension of higher education Europeanization: to create a harmonized European Higher Education Area by 2010, and to increase European identity vis-à-vis intra-European mobility of university students and faculty. Since the mid-2000s, however, there has been increased emphasis on the 'external' dimension of the Bologna Process, as well as more focus on mobility between EU and non-EU states via Erasmus-Mundus. Because of these activities, we can now speak of Europeanization of the global higher education sector. However, this can depend on the global region, as Europeanization serves different purposes and works along different pathways. For Canadian policy-makers, the Europeanization of higher education could instead be perceived as a competitive or collaborative policy process, with Europe as a 'new' global competitor in the international higher education marketplace, or else as a model/teacher in the modes and processes of higher education internationalization. This research evaluates these dynamics, by investigating the relationship between the Europeanization of higher education and the internationalization of Canadian universities. This study queries this relationship, asking: *What are the internationalization strategies employed by higher education institutions in Canada, when faced with the burgeoning Europeanization of the global higher education sector? For example, has the Bologna Process been ignored by Canadian universities and government actors?* In asking these questions, this research project hopes to illuminate a wider set of concerns pertaining to how

policy-making is influenced by ‘external’ Europeanization: *What can the internationalization of Canadian higher education institutions tell us about how ‘external’ Europeanization occurs?*

A brief outline of the case study

Canadian Higher Education

There are nearly 300 post-secondary institutions in Canada, most of which are publicly-funded. Of these, 95 are publicly-funded degree-granting universities, the majority in Ontario and Québec (as befitting the population distribution). The Canadian HE sector is aligned to the American higher education model, taking signals from and being integrated into a North American HE market. Accordingly, this has resulted in a wide diversity of institutional offerings in Canada, from private language schools to major research universities.³² The ninety-five Canadian public universities are distinguishable from other post-secondary institutions by adherence to a traditional three-cycle degree structure (i.e., Bachelors/Masters/PhD). Universities are themselves divided into three major groups: research-intensive institutions that offer graduate and undergraduate programs across all major disciplines (‘Tier 1’); mid-sized comprehensive institutions (‘Tier 2’); and smaller teaching universities that offer undergraduate education and degrees (‘Tier 3’).

Access to public universities is determined by academic merit and the affordability of tuition fees. Canadian post-secondary can be classified as mass education, with the share of Canadians between 25 and 64 years who completed tertiary education having increased from 46% to 55% between 2004 and 2014. This puts Canada at the top end of accessibility to post-secondary, when compared to other OECD countries. However, costs are also high: tuition fees for domestic students is 60% higher than OECD average. Thus, the Canadian HE sector is a ‘mixed’ good: it is a public service yet also requires private investment. Government funding accounts for just over 50% of operating costs for post-secondary (amounting to approximately 8% of public expenditure). Other streams of revenue are sought to recover costs, which include alumni/donor support and variable tuition fees. Over the last few decades, Canadian universities have turned to the international market to attract foreign

³² This entails a high degree of institutional diversity, rather than just the programmatic diversity one sees in many European countries with state-operated HE sectors.

students, as they pay much higher tuition fees than domestic (typically three times the domestic fees).

Governance of the HE sector involves actors at different levels: national, provincial and local/institutional. Principles of institutional autonomy and academic freedom mean that individual universities are largely responsible for their own strategic planning. Universities are, however, dependent on provincial governments for block-grant funding in order to recover costs for teaching (determined by enrollment of ‘domestic’ students), as well as the federal government for research funding (determined by a number of merit-based mechanisms, including grants to individual researchers working in public institutions). Each province has some form of Ministry of Advanced Education, which sets post-secondary policy. Typically, the primary focus for provincial governments has been education and training schemes for the local labour market. The federal government can only steer or nudge universities indirectly, vis-à-vis allocation of funding for research, or promotion of Canada’s educational ‘brand’. At the national level, there are a number of actors involved in post-secondary policy-making (although national HE policy as such is something of a misnomer, because education is a provincial competence). The primary actors at the national level are Global Affairs Canada (International Education Division) and the Council of Ministers of Education, Canada (CMEC).³³ There are also a number of important interlocutory associations that represent universities to the government and vice versa. The most important of these is Universities Canada (formerly the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada). This decentralized and deconcentrated system of policy-making has led to innovation, adaptability, potential for peer learning, and institutional diversity. However, it has also led to a lack of coordinated activities or strategies, and a degree of redundancy and inefficiency (notwithstanding efforts by federal and provincial governments to steer the sector using various policy instruments).

³³ The CMEC is an intergovernmental body engaging provincial ministers to provide leadership in education at the pan-Canadian and international levels. It contributes to the exercise of the exclusive jurisdiction of provinces and territories over education. Global Affairs Canada is equivalent of a national Ministry for Trade and Foreign Affairs. That this Ministry is the most appropriate (and only) Federal Government actor involved in higher education speaks volumes about the federal government perspective on this sector – namely as a sector relevant for the Canadian economy (the service sector, and to supply the Canadian labour market).

Overall, the Canadian HE sector functions like a highly-managed ‘market’ with a variety of public sector offerings across national and provincial lines, all of which is set within a larger (global) reputational market. The strengths of the Canadian HE sector include a reputation for education quality, as well as a high capacity for research performance and collaboration. The challenges include the low profile of its higher education system (compared to Western European countries and the USA), and the lack of coordinated activities and strategies – resulting in a moderate degree of incoherence across the sector. Nonetheless, Canadian universities maintain a high reputation globally, driven by the rankings of its top institutions in global indices (such as the Shanghai and Times HE indices), as well as the favourable reputation of the system as a whole.

The Internationalization of Canadian Universities

Internationalization of Canadian HE has changed radically over the last several decades. From the 1960s through to the 1980s, internationalization was largely a foreign policy tool, with an emphasis on international development and promoting Canadian values and interests abroad. Since the 1980s, HE internationalization has focused much more on inbound mobility (especially from Asia) to serve as a cost recovery mechanism for underfunded universities, as well as a ‘pipeline to the labour market’ for Canada’s liberal (and economically-focussed) immigration regime. There is now the widespread perception amongst government actors and institutional administrators that they must retain (or increase) their global ‘market share’ of international students, and Canada should not to lose its competitive advantage within this market. This competitiveness discourse has increased in recent years, along with the absolute numbers of international students entering Canada to study. In 2009, the number of international students at all levels was 204 045 (up 72% from 2000). In 2015, this increased to 353 000, with 450 000 the target set by Global Affairs Canada for 2022. International students comprise approximately 11% of the total student population in Canadian universities, with some institutions well over 20% (such as the University of British Columbia). Some attention is paid to other elements of internationalization, such as outbound mobility, domestic curriculum development or comparing quality assurance mechanisms. However, internationalization is now primarily devoted to (predominantly Asian) students coming to Canada and contributing to local economies.

There are number of actors who have developed strategies for internationalization of Canadian higher education. The most recent involvement comes from government actors. The federal government released its International Education Strategy in 2014, which set targets for inbound mobility as well as devoted funds to the promotion of Canada's education 'brand' abroad (vis-à-vis the creation of an agency called EduCanada). Many provincial governments have also adopted internationalization strategies.³⁴ Furthermore, the federal government is working with national associations and provincial governments to internationalize the HE sector.³⁵ Yet it is the universities themselves who are the primary 'policy-makers' when it comes to internationalization, with 95% of Canadian educational institutions identifying internationalization as part of their strategic plan (CBIE 2016, 11). This approach to internationalization is not without its problems and challenges. There has been a non-systematic and non-coordinated approach to internationalization, and this will likely persist despite the recent involvement of government actors. Finally, some aspects of internationalization have been much better developed than others. Inbound mobility and research collaboration has been the overwhelming focus, due to immediate and tangible benefits generated by cross-border flows which profoundly affect service sectors, and by the reputational market established from global HE indices. Therefore, it seems as if the recent modes of internationalization in Canadian higher education have been accompanied by some degree of 'quasi-marketization' of this traditionally public sector.

Canada and the Europeanization of Higher Education

Although the Bologna Process and the development of an EHEA has been the most significant recent development in European higher education, it is not the only one. Canada has been engaged with a number of sectoral-reform projects that were initiated by European

³⁴ For example, the British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education has adopted an International Educational Strategy (2016-2019), a "four-year strategy to encourage a two-way flow of students, educators and ideas between countries while providing valuable social, cultural and economic opportunities for educational institutions, students and communities in BC." This strategy set performance targets for increasing the number of international students studying in BC by 50% by 2016. They also established the British Columbia Council for International Education (BCCIE), a provincial Crown corporation that promotes international education in and for the Province of B.C. and supports the International Education Strategy.

³⁵ The five critical associations at the national level have formed the Canadian Consortium for International Education (CCIE). They include the Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE), Universities Canada, Colleges and Institutes Canada, the Canadian Association of Public Schools – International, and Languages Canada. Global Affairs Canada also worked with the CMEC to establish the Federal-Provincial Consultative Committee on Education-Related International Activities (FPCCERIA), for branding and promotion of Canadian education systems and the recruiting of international students.

actors, including the Lisbon Recognition Convention (LRC) and the EU-Canada Transatlantic Exchange Partnerships (TEP) Program.

The 1997 Lisbon Recognition Convention is an international treaty that facilitates global mobility through the mutual recognition of academic credentials. In 1997, Canada signed but did not ratify the Convention (i.e., Canada recognized and supported the principles, but has not been legally bound to the treaty). The Canadian Information Centre for International Credentials (CICIC) adopted the LRC in 1997, even though credentials and quality assurance frameworks are managed by overlapping accreditation agencies (at the provincial level), and post-secondary institutions are responsible for setting their own admission requirements for specific academic programs. Nonetheless, many of the provincial and institutional objections to the LRC have been overcome, and ratification is imminent. The treaty was tabled in Canada's House of Commons on 31 October 2017. Although ratification of this treaty will not profoundly alter the higher educational landscape in Canada or orient it towards Europe, it will affect how Canadian institutions read 'Bolognized' credentials emerging from the EHEA (more on this below). Moreover, the signatories of the LRC largely overlap with members of the EHEA, with China and India not party to it (which are the major 'sending' states for international students to Canada). In short, the LRC can make inter-operability of credentials and credits more fluid, not least of which between Canada and the members of the EHEA.

Since the signing of the 1995 EU-Canada Agreement on Higher Education and Training, Canada and the European Union have been bilateral partners in the development of structured exchanges of students and faculty, with a focus on curriculum development and innovation. The federal government's Human Resources and Social Development Canada (now called Employment and Social Development Canada) and the European Commission's DG Education and Culture (and specifically, its Erasmus Mundus programme) expanded their bilateral activities in 2006 with the EU-Canada Transatlantic Exchange Partnerships (TEP) Program. This program looked to move beyond exchanges, towards joint degree programmes. However, there have been persistent issues regarding degree length and quality assurance, not only at the undergraduate level but also for *co-tutelle* PhD degrees.³⁶ Beyond

³⁶ The crux of the issue is simply the number of years typically required to earn a degree, and fundamentally, the assumptions regarding quality assurance therein. Many 'Bolognized' Bachelor's degrees are three years in duration, compared to four years in Canada. PhD programs in Canada often take a minimum of five years and

the TEP, the EU has had other programs which have engaged researchers in Canada, such as the ERA-Can+ research network and funding for Jean Monnet Activities (that promote European Studies at Canadian universities). Many of these initiatives (including the Erasmus-Mundus activities involving Canada) were supported by the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Technological Development (2007-2013) and were not re-funded as part of Horizon 2020 (2014-2020). Reciprocal interest (and resources) were not forthcoming from the Canadian federal government in 2013, when the EU was re-evaluating its international priorities for research and higher education. We are still waiting to see if there is an appetite within the current federal government of Canada to re-engage with the European Union on matters of research and HE. With the recent ratification of the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement (CETA) between the EU and Canada, prospects look positive. For the most part, however, this would be supplemental to current inter-institutional activities anyway, as universities in Canada and Europe have well-established relationships for research collaboration (especially within the UK, Germany and France) and for student exchange (mainly Canadians going outbound to Western Europe on exchange and French students coming to study at universities in Québec). Improvements to EU-Canada relations in higher education could reinforce existing relationships and build new ones, yet it is unlikely that this would significantly alter dynamics at the level of institutions.

Methodological and theoretical approaches

This research project uses theoretical and conceptual frameworks developed by scholars of comparative politics, comparative public policy and international political economy. Within IPE, social- and critical-constructivist scholars can help us to understand the ideational effects of higher education internationalization (see Dale & Robertson; Harmsen; Knill; Martens & Jakobi). Domestically, historical institutionalists and comparative public policy scholars are well-positioned to illuminate the effects of political and/or policy-making institutions (see Pierson; Thelen; Baumgartner & Jones; Sabatier & Jenkins). Taken together, these theoretical approaches inform this research project, and allow us to develop an

involve many more components than the common three-year PhD cycle in Europe. These differences have been surmounted by bilateral arrangements between individual universities or vis-à-vis an international consortium (see for example, arrangements between the Université de Montréal and a number of French universities, or the memoranda of understanding within the Universitas 21 group). In terms of systematic Canada-Europe arrangements, however, challenges remain.

understanding of how *processes* influence other *processes* – in this case, how Europeanization influences the internationalization of Canadian higher education.

This study utilizes a mixed-method research design which analyses various forms of evidence to determine how Europeanization has influenced the internationalization of Canadian higher education. The research design is based on both qualitative and quantitative methods. It compiles and triangulates primary documents (such as policy papers produced by governments and universities, statistics from StatsCan, as well as census and survey data), alongside secondary analyses of Canadian higher education. From this, a survey questionnaire was developed which allowed us to assess forms of HE internationalization and the degree of influence from Europe, which then permitted a larger-N (quantitative) analysis of these processes. Finally, select actors were interviewed, to determine which mechanisms and theoretical models were most salient for explaining the factors driving internationalization in Canada, and the degree of Europeanization effect. Cumulatively, the approach embedded in this research design was that of ‘process-tracing’ the influence of one policy dynamic (Europeanization) on another (internationalization in Canada higher education). Therefore, rather than examine the *motives* for internationalization, this study used process-tracing to evaluate the drivers and processes by which internationalization(s) occur. Process-tracing is a rigorous qualitative or mixed method that relies on internal validity in order to draw causal inferences. Process-tracing allowed us to develop a high degree of confidence in the veracity of findings, because it produces relatively brittle (and falsifiable) hypotheses regarding the causal mechanisms proposed by different models.

A novel aspect of this research design is that it allows us to examine the *transnational* relationships between actors at different levels of governance, and the processes that link these disparate actors together. In Europe, the Bologna Process has been driven by state actors such as national ministers of education, and the Erasmus Programme by state and supranational actors (in the EU). These processes were fundamentally intergovernmental and, to a lesser degree, supranational. Yet Canadian higher education is a very different domain, in that the dominant actors are sub-national or within civil society (i.e., provincial education ministries and university administrators). Using a multi-level ‘organizational’ approach to our research design, and process-tracing the mechanisms of causality, contributes to our understanding of internationalization in two ways. First, it allows us to tease out and test the ways that processes can have influence not just across borders or regions, but also across

level of governance. Second, it allows us to hypothesize about how internationalization (and Europeanization) can be a bottom-up *and* a top-down process, which intersect within the strategies and activities of organizations (in this case, universities).³⁷

An added value of this research design is that it uses the robustness checks of quantitative data alongside the internal validity tests of process-tracing and qualitative approaches. A mixed-method design allows for a high degree of confidence in the findings, and therefore also in the causal models used for explaining phenomena. As higher education internationalization has begun to generate much interest amongst scholars from various disciplines – especially recently – this project has the potential to lay the groundwork for our understanding of transnational influence between forms and processes of higher education internationalization.

There were some challenges inherent to the Canadian case, and due to the research design employed to study it. The first challenge involved the size and boundaries of the population sample. In Canada, there are many and myriad actors involved in higher education internationalization, and these actors vary in power and responsibility throughout the organizational field. For example, large universities will have devoted staff, sizeable resources and discrete strategies for internationalization. Smaller institutions might have a single administrator for whom internationalization is part of their overall portfolio. Provincial governments also have varied roles to play, and varied relationships with higher education institutions, provincial/national associations, and their federal ‘counterparts’. To overcome this complexity, a rigorous assessment of the field (*vis-à-vis* analysis of primary and secondary documents) allowed us to make decisions about which actors were instrumental for HE internationalization, and thus form part of our sample. The second challenge involved the truncation of the population sample to a manageable size in order to make meaningful comparisons. Our survey targeted 56 respondents across 9 provinces, with three provinces in particular as the primary targets (B.C., Alberta and Ontario). Quebec was not surveyed because the unique, long-standing cultural connections between France and that province could skew the results in one direction (systematically *towards* Europeanization).

³⁷ “It is usually at the individual, institutional level that the real processes of internationalization is [sic] taking place” (Knight 2004, 6–7). This is consistent with Jane Knight’s proposition to use both a bottom-up (institutional) approach and a top-down (national/sector) approach to understand the dynamic relationship between what occurs at both levels.

The interview sample frame was further truncated to include sixteen Tier 1 & 2 universities from Ontario and British Columbia. The geographical distance and cultural diversity of Canada meant making research design decisions based on methodological insights *and* cost/benefit analyses, yet the design challenges were overcome using the logic of the former more than the latter. The third (and most significant) challenge was the low response rate to the survey questionnaire. With a target population of 56 respondents, we received only 11 responses. The interview sample frame was more successful (16 of 20 university international liaison officers were interviewed). This was likely due to introductions to interviewees by representatives from peak associations (Universities Canada and the Canadian Bureau for International Education). Notwithstanding these challenges, the researchers could have a high degree of confidence in the reliability of the evidence and validity of their cause inferences.

Outline of research findings

The Bologna Process and the ‘completion’ of the European Higher Education Area in 2010 has had only a marginal impact in Canada. During the same period as the Bologna Process (1999-present), Canada has been looking south (USA) and west (Asia) when developing internationalization strategies. The USA has long been the structural model and reputational market for the Canadian HE sector. Asia has become the primary target for (inbound) student mobility programs. Europe is relevant – indeed research collaboration and outbound student mobility is still very much a European domain – but Europe has mattered less and less over the past two decades. This is partly due to timing. The Bologna Process did not cultivate its ‘external dimension’ until it was too late to influence the internationalization strategies in Canadian higher education. Yet, for the most part, this seems due to the political dynamics of higher education in Canada: it is amongst the most decentralized and deconcentrated policy sectors, and only very recently have government actors cultivated any kind of policy for HE internationalization. The concerns within the EHEA, namely intra-European mobility and development of robust quality assurance frameworks, are simply not very salient in Canada at the current moment. There was a brief period of time just prior to the completion of the EHEA (from approximately 2007 until 2009), where sector-specific actors in Canada began to pay attention. However, many of these actors did not understand Bologna, or perceived it as a sophisticated exercise for marketing European universities (and thus a competitive threat to Canada’s ‘market share’ of international students). A small minority of actors, such as the now-defunct Canada Council on Learning, believed that Bologna might offer learning

opportunities for mobility and quality assurance not just internationally, but also for lesson-drawing *within* Canada (Charbonneau 2009). In terms of planned internationalization, development of new quality assurance mechanisms, and reforming the governance of the HE sector, Bologna has been an opportunity for Canada to ‘get its house in order’, vis-à-vis reflection on the lessons learned in other regions. So far, this opportunity has been missed.

Being within the normative ‘orbit’ of American higher education, one would not expect Canada to become radically Europeanized from the external dimension of the Bologna Process. One might, however, expect some learning and policy response to this significant new development in the internationalization of universities. Except for a brief and shallow period between 2007 and 2009, this has not occurred. In the Canadian context, the main drivers of internationalization have been the universities themselves, with provincial and federal governments (as well as mediating civil society associations) serving as support and reinforcement of universities’ predominant orientation towards global engagement. Thus, the Europeanization of higher education has had inertial effects in Canada, largely because of stark differences in political and organizational cultures. Yet this might not pertain indefinitely. For one, the recent ratification of a free trade agreement between Canada and the European Union, and a renewal of their Strategic Partnership Agreement in 2016, might encourage Canadian actors – the federal government especially – to better understand Europeanization ‘beyond and without Europe’.³⁸ Moreover, the increasing demands placed on Canadian universities might alter the political and organizational culture, such that stronger central coordination (à la Bolognese) is needed. Theresa Shanahan and Glen Jones have remarked on the general shift of logic occurring in Canadian higher education, away from that of a ‘sector’ and towards that of a ‘system’ (Harmsen and Tupper 2017; Shanahan and Jones 2007). If this continues, we might witness not only adjustments in the norms of mobility and competition, but also shifts in political and organizational culture. But we have yet to see this, notwithstanding the global dimension of the Bologna Process.

³⁸ CETA, the free trade agreement between Canada and the EU, specifically exempts public education, including higher education. However, the modality of CETA negotiations (the ‘negative approach’) leaves open the possibility for trade in private cross-border educational services, as well as forms of education not yet regulated (Hahn and Sauvé 2016, 20–23). More relevant, however, will be the effect that CETA has on labour mobility, and the knock-on effects this will have for education and training regimes in each region. Moreover, the inter-governmental Strategic and Partnership Agreement specifically called for an increase in educational linkages and collaboration between Canada and the EU (Council of the European Union 2016, sec. 16).

Contribution

This research has contributed to three scholarly discussions: the Europeanization of higher education (especially vis-à-vis the external dimension of the Bologna Process); the factors that drive internationalization policies and strategies within Canadian higher education; and the national dynamics of educational politics when domestic actors respond to global or regional policies and discourses. This report will briefly address each in turn.

The globalization of the Bologna Process has been a comparatively new phenomenon, in need of empirical analysis to better understand its scope and extent. Introduced at the Bologna meeting in Norway in 2005, yet not fully elaborated until the Bologna meeting in Armenia in 2015, the ‘external dimension’ of the EHEA is still being conceptualized and operationalized by education practitioners. However, as researchers, we already see this external dimension have influence in different parts of the world. This study examines cases – outside of ‘the usual suspects’ in Europe and Central Asia – where some degree of Europeanization could be anticipated. Canada is a suitable case study in this respect, where Europeanization effects were expected to be small but present. Indeed, the effects of Bologna were even more muted than anticipated, and this study determined why: because domestic politics and policymaking are critical factors in receptiveness to the external dimension of the Bologna Process. In short, this study demonstrated how the transmission of European norms and standards is not a sufficient cause for policy change – receptivity is just as important, if not more so.

Although much has been written about internationalization of Canadian universities, Kumari Beck asserts that there are still important gaps in Canadian research related to the “perspectives, practices, and experiences of participants engaged in internationalization” (Beck 2012, 136). Glen Jones (2011) has also noted the absence of either comparative data or case studies on institutional experiences of internationalization in universities. Therefore, this research contributed to our empirical and theoretical understanding of how and why Canadian universities are engaged in internationalization. It suggests that the Canadian university (and its senior leadership) are critical for internationalization decisions, more so than for many other national settings. When confronted with regional policy learning – such as Europeanization – effects on the internationalization of Canadian universities remains relatively marginal. We demonstrated how architectures of governance matter, and from this

research we know more about the governance structures in Canada that are vital for determining internationalization policies and strategies.

Finally, this research has contributed to broader political science, and our understanding of education politics. Until recently, education policy has been relatively understudied by political science (Busemeyer and Trampusch 2011). The study of the internationalization and Europeanization of (Canadian) higher education contributes to our overall knowledge and understanding of politics and policy making, by addressing four gaps identified by Fink-Hafner and Dagen (2017, 585): the role of the sub-national and organizational (i.e., the university) factors in the globalization of public policies and their implementation; the role of changing values in public policy globalization; patterns of policy innovation and dissemination; and the role of national context when ‘global’ public policy is implemented. This research illuminates some critical factors in each of these areas, filling in gaps in our knowledge about the politics of higher education internationalization.

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