CONCEPTIONS OF THE NATIONAL POLICIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION INTERNATIONALIZATION IN EUROPEAN UNION COUNTRIES

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ABSTRACT

As internationalization becomes an increasing priority for higher education worldwide, national governments are implementing policies and programs to promote related activities in their countries Motivated by a variety of academic, economic, political, and social goals, governments in the EU are implementing policies and programs developed to enhance higher education internationalization. The purpose of this paper is to better understand national policies and programs for internationalization of higher education in a comparative context, examine issues of effectiveness, and consider the future and impact of such initiatives going forward. This paper analyses the government-initiated higher education internationalization programs and policies in EU. Numerous policy examples presented, and issues surrounding implementation and effectiveness are considered. This paper categorizes such policies by primary activity type and discusses key factors that can impact policy success.

Key words: *internationalization, higher education, higher education policy, international education, intelligent internationalization, mobility, universities, international collaboration.*

ანოტაცია

ვინაიდან ინტერნაციონალიზაცია ხდება უმაღლესი განათლების პრიორიტეტულ მიმართულებად მთელ მსოფლიოში, ეროვნული მთავრობები თავიანთ ქვეყნებში ახორციელებენ შესაბამის პოლიტიკას და პროგრამებს. ევროკავშირის ხელისუფლება აკადემიური, ეკონომიკური, პოლიტიკური და სოციალური მიზნების მოტივაციის საფუძველზე ახორციელებენ ისეთ პოლიტიკას და პროგრამებს რომელიც შემუშავებულია უმაღლესი განათლების ინტერნაციონალიზაციის მიზნით. აღნიშნული სტატიის მიზანია უკეთესად გავიგოთ უმაღლესი განათლების ეროვნული პოლიტიკა და პროგრამა შედარებით კონტექსტში, შევისწავლოთ ეფექტურობის საკითხები, განვიხილოთ მომავალი და ასეთ ინიციატივების ზემოქმედება მომავალში. სტატიაში გაანალიზებულია სახელმწიფოს მიერ ინიცირებული პროგრამები და ევროკავშირში უმაღლესი განათლების პოლიტიკა. განხილულია პოლიტიკის მრავალი მაგალითი ასევე საკითხები რომლებიც დაკავშირებულია მათ რეალიზაციასა და ეფექტურობასთან. სტატია ახდენს პოლიტიკის კონცეფციის კლასიფიცირებას ძირითადი საქმიანობის ტიპების მიხედვით და განიხილავს საკვანძ ფაქტორებს, რომლებიც ზემოქმედებენ პოლიტიკის წარმატებაზე.

საკვანძო სიტყვები: ინტერნაციონალ-იზაცია, უმაღლესი განათლება, უმაღლესი განათლების პოლიტიკა, საერთაშორისო გა-ნათლება, ჭკვიანი ინტერნაციონალიზაცია, მო-ბილობა, უნივერსიტეტები, საერთაშორისო თა-ნამშრომლობა.

Issue outline. Modern processes of internationalization determine the development vectors of higher education system; therefore, the state policy in the field of higher education should be adapted to new conditions and have an impact on the system of values of the university community. Internationalization at the national level becomes a key element of the development of higher education in most countries of the world, especially in the European Union (hereinafter - the EU). The experience of strategic approaches to the state policy of internationalization of higher education in the EU countries can be valuable in terms of reforming the Ukrainian higher education system.

Internationalization of higher education is a relatively new phenomenon that can have different interpretations. The process of internationalization of higher education develops due to dynamically evolving political, economic, socio-cultural and academic factors. The combination of these factors varies depending on the region, country, institution of higher education or a specific educational program. There is no universal model of internationalization. Existing regional and interstate differences in internationalization are constantly changing, as are the differences between approaches to internationalization used by different universities.

Analysis of recent research and publications. Among the Ukrainian scholars on the issues of internationalization of higher education in the European context are the works by A. Sbrueva, A. Chyrva, I. Sikorska and others. The questions of academic mobility as an element of internationalization of higher education were studied by O. Kozievska, O. Krasovska, V. Luhovy, L. Kolisnyk, and others.

Among foreign scientific literature in the field of internationalization of higher education the works of J. Knight, H. de Wit and L. Rumbley are the key sources for this study.

It should be noted that the issue of analyzing the international experience of internationalization of higher education at the present stage and especially the formation and implementation of national strategies for the internationalization of higher education remains poorly researched.

The aim of the paper is to justify and analyze national strategies for the internationalization of higher education in the European Union countries. According to the goal, such **research objectives** are defined as to analyze the main scientific and analytical sources concerning the national policy of internationalization in the EU; highlight the main types and objectives of national strategies for the internationalization of higher education in the EU.

The main part. The internationalization of education in most of countries becomes the object and purposeful policy of the state, focused on addressing specific national political, social and economic problems. The undeniable advantages of internationalization include increased accessibility of higher education, universalization of knowledge, the emergence of international quality standards and the development of the innovative nature of higher education, as well as the expansion and strengthening of international cooperation, the enhancement of academic and student mobility.

Studies on the internationalization of higher education take into account a wide variety of global, national, regional and institutional features, identify and analyze the similarities and differences in the development of internationalization in order to understand the impact and support the process of internationalization in higher education.

As noted by N. Frolich and A. Veiga internationalization in higher education, although largely depending on the globalization context, remains largely determined by national legislation, culture and system. In connection with this, there is no single universal model of internationalization [1, p.169-170].

According to H. de Wit, people tend to use the international dimension of higher education in the way that best suits their purpose, because they will be more recognized by this [2, p. 14] and this leads to many myths regarding the internationalization of higher education [3, p. 14-15].

H. de Wit and other researchers of the processes of internationalization highlighted the fundamental thesis that internationalization should not be seen as a result, but as a means of achieving the quality of teaching, research and higher education services for a society [4, p. 213-218].

A key element of progress in the internationalization of higher education is the developed strategy.

The results of the International Association of Universities research show that there are significant differences between institutions in different regions of the world regarding the availability of such policies. It is obvious that in Europe, in comparison with other regions, the greater proportion of institutions note that they have a strategy of internationalization (61 %) [5].

The definition of "national strategy of internationalization" can be widely interpreted, which may cause difficulties in comparing real situations in countries. In some countries, the strategy for the internationalization of higher education is an independent document, while in others it is part of a national strategy for higher education or even part of a strategy for economic development. Strategies can also be very general or, conversely, focus on specific aspects. As an example, the federal government of Germany adopts a typical internationalization strategy in April 2013. It identifies 9 areas for promoting internationalization in higher education institutions. Another example is the national strategy for the internationalization of Belgium, which differs significantly from the previous model, as it is designed as an action plan and focuses exclusively on mobility issues. In Norway the internationalization strategy is presented in the form of a report with a list of tasks.

Among the countries that have adopted national strategies for the internationalization of higher education, only Finland, Ireland, Lithuania and the United Kingdom (Scotland) have included strategies for impact assessment and outcomes. The mentioned below strategies of the four countries adopted by the Ministries of Education.

Taking into account that by 2013 the strategies of internationalization were absent at all in the international area of higher education, it should be noted that development in this direction is growing

rapidly. We consider it worthwhile to note that the Strategy for 2013 "European Higher Education in the World", which recommended that EU Member States develop integrated strategies for internationalization, will continue to have an impact both on EU member states and non-EU countries [6 , p. 3].

An important issue is the financing of the state policy of internationalization of higher education. Analytical data show that the EU countries allocate a significant share of budget financing to activities within the framework of internationalization. Most countries have specific budgets of internationalization, but such funding is mainly focused on the mobility.

By comparison, in the years 2013-2014, the student mobility rate in Belgium amounts to 3.8 million euros and will be increased to 7 million euros for 2019-2020. In Italy, the internationalization budget includes 12 million euro for outgoing credit mobility and 5 million euro for outgoing credit mobility for foreign departments, and only 1.5 million euro for joint programs and foreign students. Annual strategic planning envisages up to EUR 13 million for mobility and other internationalization measures. In the Czech Republic, a specific budget part for international cooperation accounts for 2% of the budget from all educational activities. In Switzerland, 1.7 million euros are focused on internationalization between 2013 and 2016 for universities of applied sciences.

In some countries, internationalization is seen as one of the areas focused on activities and financial contracts between higher education institutions and the government. For example, in Croatia, within the framework of the pilot program, agreements were concluded between the Ministry and the higher educational institutions on the financing of teaching activities. In Finland, a high level of internationalization exists due to the funding model. Student mobility and the number of foreign teachers are among the criteria for attracting additional resources. Funding for various aspects of internationalization in higher education institutions is also concentrated in various national agencies responsible for internationalization (CIMO), as well as other stakeholders. In Poland, the internationalization index (calculated on the

basis of the number of foreign students and those who went abroad to study) is one of the elements of the formula used to calculate the annual amount of funding for teaching activities [5].

In response to the demands and opportunities of an ever globalizing world, governments in a wide range of countries are introducing policies and programs to promote higher education internationalization. These initiatives are underpinned by a variety of academic, economic, political, social, and cultural motivations; sometimes higher education internationalization is an explicit goal, while in other cases, the focus is more specifically on a discrete activity, or on broader national policy goals. A recent study by the American Council on Education (ACE) and the Boston College Center for International Higher Education (CIHE) took a close look at the content of such policies—an overview, including a wide assortment of specific examples, is the basis for our recent report, Internationalizing Higher Education Worldwide: National Policies and Programs.

The analysis revealed five main categories of policies in place around the world, based on their primary focus:

Type 1: Student mobility. Policies designed to encourage and facilitate student mobility stand out as the most common point for policymaking related to internationalization of higher education.

Type 2: Scholar mobility and research collaboration. Policy activity in this area is being undertaken by many countries around the world, as well as by key regions—notably Europe, where the European Union is investing heavily in this area under the Horizon 2020 initiative, and specifically through such mechanisms as the Marie Skodowska Curie actions. Common types of initiatives in this category include support for visiting scholars, programs, and grants to send faculty abroad, policies to repatriate faculty living in other countries, and project-based research grants.

Type 3: Cross-border education. Whether involving branch campuses and other kinds of physical "outposts," or virtual (or hybrid) forms—such as MOOCs—national policy and program activity in this realm include initiatives to foster partnerships for capacity building, create educational "hubs," encourage domestic institutions to

establish campuses and programs abroad, and more effectively regulate cross-border activity in practice.

Type 4: Internationalization at home (IaH). IaH is rapidly emerging critical point for internationalization. Few policy documents currently address it overtly. The European Commission's 2013 strategy for internationalization, European Higher Education in the World, is a notable exception.

Type 5: "Comprehensive internationalization" policies. We can find a small number of initiatives that present a rather sweeping set of rationales, action lines, focus areas, and/ or geographic orientations, rather than being singularly focused on specific action lines.

Do these policies positively impact the direction and progress of internationalization in their respective higher education systems? In the longer term, do they succeed in furthering the academic, economic, political, social, and/or cultural goals they set out to achieve? As is often the case when it comes to education-related issues, determining the effectiveness of internationalization policies is challenging. Often, efforts to do so focus on easily measured, clearly quantified outputs. Did country A's policy achieve its goal of recruiting X number of new international students to the country's universities in the specified timeline? In addition to participant numbers, financial analyses—another easily quantified measure, and one that often appeals to policy-makers—may come into play as an evaluation tool.

When it comes to the longer-term outcomes, and impact of such policies, studies by the British Council/DAAD, the European Commission, and the International Association of Universities have made some inroads in delineating impacts of different policies, using various methodologies. Overall, though, specific data and clear answers about issues of impact are fairly scarce. In part, this is due to the newness of many of the internationalization policies now in place around the world—it is simply too soon to tell what their ultimate impact will be. In many other cases, evaluation of impact simply appears not be built into policy implementation structures. Having examined a large number of such policies and the available data on effectiveness, however, it is clear that

there are a number of key factors—both inherent to the policies themselves, as well as external factors impacting implementation—that affect policy effectiveness (positively or negatively). Funding is of primary importance. Not surprisingly, policy effectiveness may be directly affected by issues such as the level at which policies are funded, the ways in which funding is distributed, and the degree to which funding is sustained over time. How policies are implemented, and by whom, is also crucial. It is common knowledge that "one size fits all" is not a useful way to think about internationalization policy or practice. So, national policies may be implemented in a wide variety of ways—for example, involving many actors or just a few. The ways that policies are implemented can have a major effect on issues such as efficiency, and raise important questions about the capacity of policy implementers to advance their agendas and manage their work well. Looking beyond individual policies themselves gives rise to the issue of policy interplay and alignment.

For most countries, the national policy environment is complex and interlocking. Initiatives undertaken in one area can have a direct influence on efforts being undertaken in other policy spheres. Classic examples in relation to internationalization include the intersection between national objectives to attract international students and scholars, and visa and immigration policies that control access to the country. If policies are developed and implemented in isolation from one another, or directly at cross-purposes, policy effectiveness will suffer. Finally, the level of convergence between policy objectives and institutional priorities impacts effectiveness of national-level initiatives. Internationalization of higher education is a phenomenon most directly experienced by higher education institutions themselves. For this reason, national policies for internationalization must be grounded in an understanding of institutional realities. Will individual countries' internationalization policies ultimately achieve their short- and long-term goals? Only time will tell. But, perhaps the more interesting question is what the overall impact of such policies will be on higher education worldwide.

The growing number of countries that are committing—in very concrete, formal, and resource-intensive ways—to internationalizing their higher education systems suggests that the time is right to collectively take our efforts to the next level, and turn our attention to the "internationalization of internationalization." The impact of country-level policies will be maximized when we find the synergies among them—i.e., when our policies are mutually supportive and reinforcing. This is not necessarily an easy task—it requires broad awareness of policies in place, and dialogue at the national policymaking and institutional levels [7].

As for the prospects for the development of the internationalization of higher education, we are impressed by the thought of L. Rumbley, who argues that one of the most important challenges facing higher education around the world is the need for "intelligent internationalization." "Intelligent internationalization" requires the expansion of the interaction between those who are engaged in internationalization. The latter must have access to new ideas, information and new educational programs in order to learn to better orient them in a changing educational environment [8, p. 17].

Below we provide an overview of the 10 key developments for EU emerging from the reports and the literature review.

1. Growing importance of internationalisation at all levels. Overall, there is a clear trend towards more internationalisation of higher education, one that covers a broader range of activities and is more strategic in its approach. Its importance is growing everywhere as a response to the challenges that universities and countries face. All reports call for greater effort towards internationalisation in the belief that it can make a difference and bring about necessary change. There is a trend towards more national strategies for internationalisation. Governments begin to see it as part of a bigger strategy to position their country, improve economic standing, reinvigorate the higher education system or bring about necessary change.

2. Effects on institutional strategies for internationalisation. There is a clear trend towards a policy cascade from the national to the institutional level, and in Europe this starts at regional level. However, even when national strategies are not yet in place, HEIs are developing their own

responses. However, when national strategies for internationalisation use the same targets and performance-based indicators across the system, this can lead to a homogenisation of institutional strategies, as institutions tend to adhere closely to national guidelines rather than develop their own agendas. Moreover, when indicators are being used, they tend to focus on quantitative rather than qualitative results, which puts pressure on the institutions to focus on increasing numbers rather than looking at the outcomes of internationalisation in terms of enhancement of education, research and service. In many countries, governments and HEIs are still struggling to find a balance between autonomy and accountability, and this is reflected in internationalisation as it takes on greater importance in the higher education agenda. This creates particularly strong challenges in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as in emerging and developing economies.

3. Insufficient funding. Funding remains a challenge, but there are a number of countries and institutions which are in the fortunate position of being well-supported in their internationalisation efforts by their national governments, or in the case of Europe, by the European Union. However, some Central and Eastern European countries and institutions are strongly reliant on funding from the European programmes (including structural funds) and do not have any substantial investment in internationalisation from their own national and institutional resources. The level of importance attached to internationalisation impacts on the range of funding mechanisms available and stakeholders involved. These can include a variety of public bodies that provide funding such as government agencies, regions and cities, but investment can also come from private stakeholders such as businesses and foundations. In the emerging and developing economies, there is still a tendency to depend on external international development funds for internationalisation in the absence of regional, national or institutional investments.

4. Increasing privatisation. The trend towards privatisation of higher education is apparent in internationalisation. Internationalisation is increasingly seen as a means to replace shrinking public funds through revenue generation from international students and thus contributes to a privatisation of higher education. The need to generate income is a general trend, and even in well-supported systems, universities are being encouraged to develop new income streams through commercial activities. Although this is more apparent in some regions than others, there are increasing trends towards privatisation in continental Europe, and in particular in Central and Eastern Europe.

5. Effects of globalisation. All higher education systems are dealing with the competitive pressures of globalisation, the pace of (unexpected) change it is generating and the expectations that are being placed on its institutions to make a key contribution to national development in terms of employable graduates and transferable knowledge. However, while all countries had different starting points, the same trends are apparent everywhere, and there is increasing global convergence in aspirations, if not yet in actions. In Europe, ERASMUS and the Bologna Process opened up opportunities, but countries in Central and Eastern Europe had to struggle with the upheaval of the post-communist period and many of the challenges are still there.

6. Growing competition. There is an evident shift from (only) cooperation to (also) competition: from an almost exclusive focus on co-operation and exchange to a broader understanding of internationalisation that includes the race for talent, international student recruitment, strategic partnerships, income generation, rankings and institutional positioning. In Europe, we see three main approaches: internationalisation as soft power with long-term economic goals. However, demographic decline and shrinking national funding mean that increasing numbers of HEIs are shifting their focus to short-term economic gain. Beyond Europe, this trend is even more manifest, although in the competition for talent, rankings and positioning there are substantive risks, such as brain drain and dependency in developing countries. The successes and failures of internationalisation are linked to the strengths and weaknesses of the national higher education system, which is, in turn, embedded in the economic, political and social development of each country.

7. Growing regionalisation. There is an evident trend towards regionalisation, often taking inspiration from the European model. European influence in other regions is also apparent but to varying degrees. This often depends on the EU programmes and level of funding made available, but there has also been careful attention paid to how European models (mobility programmes under Erasmus+, ECTS, Diploma Supplement and so on) might be adapted to enhance internationalisation in other countries and regions.

8. Rising numbers. The numbers are still rising everywhere. The increase may be fast or slow, large or small, but the numbers for all international activities and, in particular, student mobility whether credit- or degree-seeking, show a clear upward trend, and more countries are becoming involved. Moreover, major sending countries of degree-seeking students are increasingly becoming receiving countries as well. However, in developing countries there is imbalance between outgoing and incoming students and scholars, resulting in brain drain and decreasing quality and reputation. Development of strong quality assurance mechanisms for internationalisation is increasingly perceived as key to providing a high level of education and service to students and in creating transparent institutional standards for all aspects of internationalisation.

9. Insufficient data. Despite the increasing requirements to produce evidence of impact, there is often the perception that there are still insufficient data about internationalisation to carry out accurate analysis and comparison and inform decision making. In Europe, data on European programmes and European mobility trends are collected regularly, and studies on their impact and outcomes are made freely available. While some countries have sophisticated tools for data collection, others produce only limited information on international activities. Beyond data collection, there is a need for more impact studies that can demonstrate outcomes of internationalisation. The level and usefulness of data on internationalisation is clearly linked to the importance attached to IoHE as a component in broader national policies.

10. New areas of development. There is much discussion about internationalisation of the curriculum (and of learning outcomes) and the need to pay greater attention to developing an international dimension for all students, not just the mobile minority. In some countries, the question has not yet been addressed as a strategic priority, while in others it is understood as teaching in another language, predominantly English, or offering joint and/or double programmes. Such programmes are clearly growing in number and importance in many countries as a key tool for internationalisation, despite the many legal, financial and quality assurance constraints that still prevail. While less widely discussed, there is also a clear growth of transnational education with a range of different models developing out of the opportunities offered to different national systems from their historical ties, languages offered or the presence of diaspora. While this has traditionally been a sector for English- speaking countries, a number of European and non-English speaking countries elsewhere are now entering the field. Host countries are often interested in opening up their system to foreign providers as a means to cope with higher education demand and/or to accelerate the pace of reform. On the other hand, digital learning and in particular MOOCs have been at the centre of many higher education debates, and yet the question can be asked whether HEIs seek to develop digital learning as part of their internationalisation strategy [9].

Most national strategies, in Europe as well as elsewhere, are still predominantly focused on mobility, short-term and/or long-term economic gains, recruitment and/or training of talented students and scholars and international reputation and visibility. This implies that far greater efforts are still needed to incorporate these approaches into more comprehensive strategies, in which internationalisation of the curriculum and learning outcomes as a means to enhance the quality of education and research receive more attention. The inclusion of 'internationalisation at home' as a third pillar in the internationalisation strategy of the European Commission, 'European Higher Education in the World', as well as in several national strategies, is a good starting point, but it will Policy Department B: Structural and Cohesion Policies require more concrete actions at the European, national, and in particular, the institutional level for it to become reality. The development by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA) of a 'Certificate for Quality in Internationalisation'

(CeQuInt) (ECA, n.d.) is a positive example of an instrument that assists institutions and programmes in enhancing the quality of their international dimensions [9, p. 283-284].

Conclusions. Study of the basic documents on the issues of European internationalization of higher education allows us to draw the following conclusions:

- the internationalization of higher education is one of the key tasks of the European Higher Education Area up to 2020;
- the main emphasis in the internationalization of higher education is on real communication ("real" mobility);
- to strengthen the processes of inclusiveness and through the development of information and communication technologies, the spread of "virtual internationalization";
- the strategic documents of the internationalization of higher education in the EU are na-

tional and are the basis for the development of specific institutional strategies;

- national support and broad university autonomy contribute to finding new convenient forms and approaches to the internationalization of higher education at the university level.

In our opinion, the future development of the internationalization of higher education in the EU depends on the extent to which all participants can maintain an open dialogue about the forms and means, the advantages and disadvantages, opportunities and challenges of this process. The questions of European experience in the internationalization of higher education leave many unexplored aspects and require a more in-depth analysis in line with global change. The development of recommendations for the improvement of public policy in the field of internationalization of higher education is a prospect of further research.

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