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CONTENTS

15

"International offices must apply their accumulated expertise in cross-border bridge building with regional and international stakeholders"

HOLDING ON TO STRONG TIES

18

"Countries near each other often realise that if they want to be able to compete on a global stage, they have to work together"

IN CONVERSATION WITH MANJA KLEMENČIČ

25

"The discourse about the importance of the knowledge economy and society has paved the way for increased higher education regionalisms around the world"

IS EUROPE THE GOLD STANDARD?

31

"The relationship between regionalisation and internationalisation of higher education must, by definition, be a complex and multi-layered one"

THE GEOGRAPHY OF MOBILITY

EDITORIAL

In the concentric circles of our lives as international educators, we are connected to many spaces: our own institutional environments, the national context where live, and of course, the global environment that frames so much of the way we think about and elaborate our work. But what about some of the 'middle spaces' we occupy? From my perspective, one of the most interesting among these has to do with the realm of 'regions'.

Regions are fascinating in the way many of them provoke such a strong sense of affinity, while often defying clear consensus as to what exactly defines their contours. Europe easily stands out as a case in point. Europe is a clearly recognized region – or is it? As with many other world regions, 'Europe' can be defined 'regionally' in multiple ways, and it is also correctly understood as a complex, multi-layered region of regions. So, what is regionalisation and what does it mean to our work?

Our interview with Manja Klemenčič provides an excellent starting point for this discussion by highlighting some of the key rationales for, and complexities surrounding, regional cooperation in European higher education circles. Additional articles in this issue help us to explore regionalisation through other lenses. To mention a few: Gabriele Suder offers a financial and economic perspective by considering the effects of free trade agreements and regional trade agreements on international higher education. We gain insights into the regional experience of a border-spanning initiative between universities at the crossroads of France, Germany and Switzerland, thanks to Hans-Jochen Schiewer and Janosch Nieden. And Susan Robertson helps us consider the big-picture scope and variety of a world of 'global regionalisms'. Other authors take us in a variety of different directions.

An undercurrent in our discussion on regionalisation is the rise of nationalism seen in many quarters around the world today. This is challenging not so much because of the primacy it gives to nations (already front and centre in the notion of 'internationalisation' itself), but more so because of the accompanying blanket rejection of all interests beyond the national. There is no question that regionalisation is fraught with possibilities and pitfalls. However, given that the very name of the EAIE speaks to a regional orientation ('European'), and in light of the very special nature of the European project undertaken in the decades since the Second World War, which has been deeply influential around the world as a model for regional peace and prosperity, exploring some of the many dimensions of the phenomenon of regionalisation is surely worth our time.

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THE COST-REDUCING EFFECT

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The days in which international trade agreements were only of importance for the manufacturing industries are long gone. Trade agreements between regions are increasingly important for facilitating internationalisation. From combining resources to visa provisions, working together is important.

Regionalisation holds much promise to the well-informed organisation, and to those who know how to derive strategic advantage from it. Regionalisation is shaped by an increasing number of regional trade agreements (RTAs) that consist mainly of free trade arrangements. They are of great interest to higher education (HE) because they reduce the direct and indirect hidden costs of studying and working abroad, and hinder or facilitate research and other collaborations and income. Regionalisation drives internationalisation, while internationalisation drives strategic renewal, innovation and long-term prevalence for the HE provider.

THRIVING REGIONALISATION

Despite Brexit and the Trump administration's rejection of the Trans-Pacific Partnership, regionalisation is omnipresent, evolving at a faster and faster pace when countries reciprocally grant favourable conditions of trade and investment, with provisions ranging from ease of mobility to impartiality, from attracting talents more easily, to conditions facilitating investments in transnational education. The World Trade Organisation records more than 635 regional trade agreements, with 423 in force on 1 July 2016.

The majority of RTAs take the form of bi- or pluri-lateral free trade agreements (FTAs), *ie* relatively basic forms of market integration that sometimes include reciprocal investment and service provisions. A number of East Asian countries, for instance, have removed tariffs between them, yet maintain import quotas. Turkey's regionalisation with the EU is an example of a customs union. Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, and Switzerland – though also in Europe – are part of the European Free Trade Association, which does not harmonise economic policies in the way the EU does; yet through the European Economic Area Agreement, three of its members participate in the EU's Internal Market. The EU itself constitutes the most advanced form of market integration between sovereign countries in the world, which boasts a Single Market, harmonised policies and joint international negotiation powers. Serbia, Macedonia, Albania are just some of the countries lining up to join the EU.

RTAs can also take the shape of common markets, which is where ASEAN is working to integrate 630 million consumers, expecting to double its combined economy of almost US$2.6 trillion by 2030 with an increasingly education-savvy middle class. Large-scale regional trade and investment agreements (RITA), such as TTIP are newer RTA forms to influence the internationalisation of higher education and market access. RTAs constitute a network of free trade agreements so extensive and multi-layered that it was nicknamed a 'noodle bowl', reaching beyond notions of 'regional' as determined by geographic distance.[1]

BEYOND CLASSIC 'TRADE'

The belief that free trade agreements focus on the international transactions of goods and only concern the manufacturing sector is past and erroneous. RTAs have become rather comprehensive in nature, in scale and scope, and hence increasingly shape market access in the higher education sector. Here are some indications. While most often exempt from import tariffs, our services primarily benefit from being unbound from non-tariff barriers and from investment barriers, for example through investment agreements or clauses.

INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION

Higher education providers typically invest in foreign activities in some form of internationalisation – from agents to alliances to own campus developments

and more – because they serve the host market, or recruit for their home market. Yet they need to have the capabilities to do so, through assets and resources, managerial and organisational knowledge. These capabilities need to be shaped by a coherent international investment strategy and its regular renewal. These capabilities, adapted to the business environment in home and host country, then shape decisions within the organisation's international path.

This is where RTAs are important, holding the potential to foster favourable conditions to do business abroad, aiming for higher productivity, competitiveness and performance (rankings, recruitment, research grants, *etc*). They may impact location choice and investment strategy. In particular, they can reduce the hidden costs of studying, working and doing research abroad that stem from visa and other administrative procedures, red tape and a range of non-tariff barriers. Inward-facing benefits include students or researchers coming into the country to bring in knowledge, tuition and innovation.

Regional trade agreements increasingly include provisions to reduce administrative, transaction and compliance costs in addition to barrier-free trade. They include the recognition of diplomas and education standards (important for service provision as much as mobility), intellectual property rights and competition policies (including procurement rules and dispute settlement mechanisms), access to funding (think Erasmus+), the simplification of investment into physical and online ventures, the abolition of restrictions on repatriation of earnings, capital, fees or royalties, and more.

VISAS AND REGULATIONS

To illustrate the savings, let's take visa conditions as an example. The simplicity or abolition of visa constraints is important for students, academics and professional staff, it enhances recruitment and mobility opportunity, reduces cost, and allows talent to travel and get established. For researchers, ease of mobility consequently helps accelerate research output and increases productivity and employability potential, as well as university's research ranking and income, often jointly with partner institutions.

The removal of regulatory barriers for the delivery of education and training services by education providers abroad also deserves attention. This includes, inter alia, regulatory conditions for staff to work on offshore campuses for long- or short-term assignments, encompassing favourable provisions for salary provisions, revenue repatriation, and staff's social security and retirement conditions. Also, the harmonisation of quality assurance schemes between the partners yields value.

ALIGNMENT AND STANDARDISATION

In Australia, quality assurance schemes such as the Education Services for Overseas Students (ESOS) framework remain a potential issue of negotiation in partnerships, requiring specific explanation, incurring delay and sometimes renegotiation. ESOS protects the rights of international students studying in Australia, guaranteeing students specific, accurate information on studies here and fees, services provided, the refund policies, and more. Further alignment between schemes through RTAs is desirable, along the lines of similar schemes developed in the UK or other partner countries.

In the same context of illustration, the free trade that Australia and the EU will negotiate now may set the path to some standardisation of the recognition of professional qualifications of lawyers, accountants, engineers and others. This again reduces cost, opens opportunity, and in addition fosters education, skilled migration and vocational training and skill development.

As a final example of many more, transnational education and the various forms of educational exports (online or in-country) are facilitated through harmonisation efforts and their resulting cost reduction effect. In times when tertiary education is exposed to uncertainty coupled with the reduction of governmental funding, regionalisation provides the possibility to seek, sense and explore alternative and joint sources of income to reduce important yet hidden costs that previously hindered effective internationalisation of students, staff and the organisation as a whole.

In Europe alone, the cost savings to industry as a whole from regionalisation was calculated to be €300 billion per annum.[2] The reduction of cross-border red tape halves the costs of trade across the EU. For the well-informed HE provider, regionalisation allows for significant opportunity to address the rapidly changing international higher education business environment.

— GABRIELE SUDER

1. Baldwin, R. & Low, P. 2009. *Multilateralizing Regionalism: Challenges for the Global Trading System,* World Trade Organisation, Delhi/New York: Cambridge University Press.

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COMPETING
IN A GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION MARKET

Regional cooperation is nothing new. It's a trade staple and has long had a peace-building character. For higher education, however, regionalisation became particularly relevant once the sector began to be seen as part of a global market. With recent world events like Brexit, where does that leave regional cooperation in higher education? ▸

Illustration: Shutterstock

Over the past two decades, a growing number of researchers have focused their attention on the recent rise of supra-national regions, and the role of higher education in this process. And whilst the centre of their attention has largely focused on the expansion of Europe (and possibly more recently its potential decline), the European Higher Education Area, the European Research Area, and the Bologna Process, other quite fascinating regional initiatives have also emerged in Asia (ASEAN Higher Education Area), Latin America (Mercosur, ALBA, CARICOM), Africa (African Higher Education Research Area and Space) and the Gulf Region (Gulf Cooperation Council) all with their own distinct development trajectories.

National states have been key actors in promoting region-building

REGIONS

So what are regions? At its simplest, regions are often viewed as a means of managing the consequences of unleashing global forces (better together than alone) on national states. Administratively, they are understood to be the outcome of formal and/or informal arrangements to cooperate on economic, political and cultural affairs. Dent defines regionalism as the "structures, processes and arrangements that are working toward greater coherence within a specific international regime in terms of economic, political, security, socio-cultural and other kinds of linkages".[1] And while national states have been key actors in promoting region-building – such as with France, Germany, Italy and the United Kingdom in relation to the Bologna Process – they are often joined by other actors who have a strategic interest in overcoming the limits of nation-state boundaries.

WAVES

Regional forms of cooperation and their agreements seem to have come in waves. A first wave began in the period immediately after the Second World War in Europe, to be followed in the 1960s with the rise of Asia. However, their expansion and extension faltered until the 1990s, where they can be seen as a response to the globalising of neoliberalism and its commitment to freer movement of trade over national boundaries (*eg* the rise of the North American Free Trade Agreement [NAFTA], the Asia Pacific Economic Partnership [APEC] and Mercosur in Latin America). Regional relationships also expanded and most recently as a response to the collapse of the World Trade Organization's trade and services negotiations, where a huge number of bilateral preferential trade agreements have also been negotiated that include higher education as a services sector.

Much of the early work on regions in the mid-1950s focused upon two things, Europe and integration, and building the region as an endogenous process through institutions aimed at using trade as a means for creating post-war security. Hettne coined this the 'old regionalism' in contrast to a 'new regionalism' which he argues has characterised the state of the world in the last decade of the twentieth century onwards.[2]

NEW REGIONALISM

What are the differences between old and new regionalism? For Hettne, they refer to differences in the state of world order (bipolar versus multipolar), the move from government to governance, from closed to

open economies, from narrow regionalism to multidimensional regionalisms and from concerns over relations between nation states to new forms of global structural transformation.

In short, they reflect the collapse of the post-World War II rapprochement amongst Westphalian nation states and their commitment to (mostly) state-led Keynesianism or developmentalism, to a post-Soviet, post-Cold War, neoliberal, globally competitive world order. This shift to the 'new regionalism' has had huge implications for higher education. Once the basis of post-war nation building projects, universities and higher education systems more generally have increasingly found themselves hitched as economic engines to a nation's strategies for economic survival. Since 2008, however, and most recently with Brexit, Europe appears to be retracting as a regional project and it will be interesting to see the effect this has on the EHEA.

The rise of new regional structures has also given rise to inter-regionalism. Once a regional agenda and architecture is constructed (*eg* the EU), regions often reach out to other regions to facilitate the development process via the building of linkages. Examples of inter-regionalism linkages are the European Union–Gulf Cooperation Council (EU-GCC), European Union–Latin America and the Caribbean (EU-LAC) and Asia-Europe Meeting (ASEM).

And while it is evident that there is a great deal of borrowing and learning across the different regional initiatives, nevertheless, higher education regional projects also vary enormously across space and time. All signs point to a continued relevance of regional engagement and cooperation. However, the shape and scope of these arrangements (and their effects on matters related to the internationalisation of higher education) will surely be affected in short to medium term by the widespread resurgence of nationalist agendas.

— SUSAN L. ROBERTSON

Universities generally have increasingly found themselves hitched as economic engines to a nation's strategies for economic survival

Europe appears to be retracting as a regional project and it will be interesting to see the effect this has on the EHEA

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EUROPEAN REGIONALISATION IN AN AGE OF ANTI-REGIONALISM

Illustration: N. Nguyen

Regionalisation and globalisation are linked in many ways. National populism of the kind we've seen in much of the world recently (and Europe in particular) has been particularly sceptical of regional collaboration agreements. Will regional cooperation continue to grow under hostile circumstances?

The link between globalisation and regionalisation have been well-established and much discussed. Katzenstein, for example, describes globalisation as the emergence of a 'world of regions', characterised by the "decline of classical notions of the sovereignty and the rise of alternative forms of governance".[1] With challenges to national models of sovereignty, the region has provided a new locus of collectivity that mitigates the risks of global competition and provides a forum for competition. For this reason, literature on 'new regionalism' describes how many functions and responsibilities of the nation state have now been scaled up to the level of the region, including trade, foreign policy and higher education.[2]

Regionalisation has become a defining characteristic of international higher education. Inter-regional student mobility (*ie* students who leave their home country but remain within their geographic region) constitute a growing share of global mobility flows, and many regional organisations (*eg* ASEAN, Mercosur) have undertaken initiatives on regional standardisation and cooperation. European regionalisation has been particularly notable. From the beginning of the Erasmus programme in 1987 to the formal launch of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 2010, European regionalisation has been 'deeper' than in other regions, including not only mobility but also research funding, credit transfer and degree cycles.

GLOBALISATION

It may be a sign of how deeply intertwined regionalisation has become in global processes that the backlash against globalisation has mainly targeted regional organisations. Whether the European Union or the North Atlantic Free Trade Agreement, populist nationalism has taken issue with regional integration far more directly and vociferously than it has denounced globalisation. If regionalisation has been largely coterminous with globalisation, then what do increasing fragmentation and tensions at the regional level mean for globalisation?

Populist nationalism has taken issue with regional integration far more directly and vociferously than it has denounced globalisation

In the most extreme scenario, is it possible that regional fragmentation spells a high-water mark for global higher education, and that coming years will see a retreat from current levels of internationalisation? Conversely, these changes could signal a shift to a new *modus operandi* for global higher education, one that is less institutionally facilitated (*ie* less supported by regional organisations) and more dependent on bilateral and institutional links. In either scenario, the rise of populist nationalism and 'post-truth' politics poses a threat to the normative foundations of global higher education: universalism and the pursuit of knowledge.

POST-BUREAUCRATIC ORGANISATIONS

I believe that current regional initiatives in European higher education are relatively well-positioned to adapt to the current wave of national populism that specifically targets regional integration because it has employed a more flexible and decentralised understanding of the region. It is useful to employ Heckshcher's concept of the 'post-bureaucratic organisation' in understanding the trend of European regionalisation.[3,4] According to Heckscher, while traditional organisations relied on formalised roles and organisational structures, post-bureaucratic organisations are characterised by continual self-organisation and flexibility. In the absence of a central coordinating authority, activity among members is coordinated by a combination of protocol and self-interest. In short, the organisation ceases to be structural and instead becomes systemic in nature.

The advent of a post-bureaucratic turn in European regionalisation is evident in several respects. First, those

programmes that are centrally coordinated, for example Erasmus Student Mobility and the Horizon 2020 research framework, have mechanisms for the participation of countries outside the European Union and the single market. Horizon 2020 Associated Countries can apply and participate under the same terms as European Union members, and reach as far afield as Armenia and Israel. Similarly, the Erasmus+ programme includes partner and programme countries, which can participate in Erasmus+ activities although they are not members of the EU.

OPEN AND FLEXIBLE

Membership to the European Higher Education Area has been, in many ways, far more open and far less coordinated by the European Commission, although the commission played a key role in supporting its formation. In essence, the EHEA is more concerned with interoperability or compatibility in systems than with centralised governance and coordination. Although membership of the EHEA entails recognition of the European Cultural Convention, its operation is more concerned with reforms that implement its systems of degree cycles and associated credit system. Its 48 members include many non-EU countries, and participation in the organisation occurs more through domestic reform – embedding the region within the state – than through scaling up powers to the regional level.[5]

The emphasis on self-regulation and compatibility means that 'echoes' of Bologna, voluntary adoption of EHEA standards and references, have taken place in higher education systems around the world.

Membership to the European Higher Education Area has been far more open and far less coordinated by the European Commission

By taking a flexible and decentralised understanding of the region, current approaches to regionalisation create the possibility for substantial engagement and cooperation beyond those provided by formal regional organisation, *ie* the European Commission. This form of regionalisation offers both a model and a platform (although by no means a guarantee) for continued regionalisation even in the context of anti-regional populism.

The possibility of continued regionalisation does not entail that the consequences of populist nationalism and regional disintegration will not be real

THREATS AND CHALLENGES

The possibility of continued regionalisation, however, does not entail that the consequences of populist nationalism and regional disintegration will not be real. On the contrary, the impending exit of Britain from the European Union seems likely to severely disrupt and diminish student enrolment, research funding, and recruitment of talented academics. Additionally, both regionalisation and globalisation are likely to face increasing challenges in the external environment.

Ironically, the biggest challenges to European regionalisation are not from the specific threat of anti-regional populism, but rather from systemic threats. In this respect, issues associated with climate change, energy, and global security may pose a bigger challenge to European regionalisation than specific anti-regional sentiments, as they are more likely to shape the social and economic contexts in which regionalisation occurs. In these challenging times, the post-bureaucratic organisation can provide a feasible and realistic model for regional cooperation in higher education. Concentrating on systems and protocols that allow a open platform for self-organising collaboration are likely the most fruitful approaches to continued regionalisation in Europe.

— ROBIN SHIELDS

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2. Schirm, S. 2002. *Globalisation and the New Regionalism*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

3. Shields, R., 2016. From the "imagined" to the "post-bureaucratic" region: the search for Europe in higher education policy. In: Solana, J. et al (eds). *The Search for Europe*. Madrid, Spain: BBVA OpenMind, pp. 288–301.

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HOLDING ON TO STRONG TIES

It is assumed that higher education and its stakeholders embrace the many benefits and forms of internationalisation. Yet in times of rising nationalism and growing scepticism about regional cooperation, international officers must take matters into their own hands. ▸

Photo: Shutterstock

Today, the work of internationalisation professionals at institutions of higher education around the world is challenged more than ever. The current turbulences in the global geopolitical landscape make the idea of a connected and internationalised world unattractive to some. At the recent Brexit referendum in the United Kingdom and presidential election in the United States, voters have given clear signals that traditional national and regional boundaries must not be ignored. This trend is also present in continental Europe, where governing parties in both Poland and Hungary are protectionists, whereas there are many unknowns about the upcoming elections in France and Germany this year.

INTERNATIONAL AGENDA

Despite these occurrences, most stakeholders in the field of higher education continue to express great interest in internationalisation and global exchanges of knowledge. For example, a survey, in which 175 European institutions of higher education participated, shows that 99% of respondents are strategically working towards making their universities international.[1] In 86% of the surveyed institutions, there is a developed strategy for internationalisation, whether as a separate document or part of the institution's overall strategy; and 13% of the respondents' institutions are in the process of designing such a strategy. Another recent survey that evaluated satisfaction with the Erasmus+ programme found that 73% of respondents believed that the programme provides better opportunities for collaboration and exchanges with partners outside Europe than its predecessor.[2] An interest among European universities to engage with the broader world was also demonstrated by the respondents' high evaluations of the programme's Key Action 1: Student mobility. Sixty-nine percent agreed that Erasmus+ provides attractive opportunities for non-EU students to study in Europe, whereas almost a half (48%) believed that the programme also serves as a gateway for European students to study outside Europe.

Today, internationalisation is embedded in everything that universities do

Internationalisation has been on university agendas and has become an integral part of their core missions since the 1980s. Today, internationalisation is embedded in everything that universities do, be it learning, research, student services, community outreach or knowledge production. Removing international influxes would be disruptive to the overall existence of universities.

FRAGMENTATION

It is important to note that regionalisation in the field of higher education is not a new phenomenon and until recently it has successfully co-existed with internationalisation. Scholar Jane Knight provides an extensive list of region-based higher education initiatives, among them the Bologna Process in Europe, African Quality Rating Mechanism and Pan-African University in Africa, the Asia Pacific Quality Assurance Network and ASEAN University Network in Southeast Asia, Latin America and Caribbean Area for Higher Education and IberoAmerican Network for the Accreditation and Quality of Higher Education in Latin America. Although these initiatives cover certain regions, they are aimed at international connectivity and compatibility.[3]

An aspect recently added to the current debate about regionalisation is scepticism about the benefits and value of the regionally and internationally connected world. Brexiters want to withdraw from the region, from the European single market. Trumpists long for a disconnection from various global initiatives. The current environment is becoming suffused with the desire for fragmentation in which countries are supposed to function as separate units rather than regionally coherent networks aimed at international compatibility.

CULTIVATING RELATIONSHIPS

Universities are part of the larger system, therefore, this new global climate is also shaping them, including international offices. The aforementioned long list of regionally-based international initiatives suggests that, over time, universities have acquired knowledge on how to successfully build partnerships and collaborate within the regions and across the regions. These initiatives in the internationally-minded world have allowed universities, especially international offices, to develop expertise in international partnership building.

To overcome fragmentation, international offices must apply their accumulated expertise in cross-border bridge building with regional and international stakeholders. To succeed, international offices must demonstrate full awareness of the university's stakeholders and their needs and concerns by engaging in long-term relationship cultivation with them. These relationships must be strategic, goal-oriented and beneficial to all involved parties.

International offices must apply their accumulated expertise in cross-border bridge building with regional and international stakeholders

KEY STEPS FOR THE INTERNATIONAL OFFICER

1. **Know your stakeholders.** You will need to have a comprehensive understanding of the institution's key groups – their needs, concerns, fears and aspirations related to internationalisation. Although a majority of academic publics disapproved of Brexit and Trump, it should not be taken for granted that all groups of stakeholders are positively disposed towards internationalisation. The concerns of sceptics should be addressed in order to engage all strategic stakeholders and ensure that they support efforts for universities to continue to serve as centres of knowledge and innovation that attract and share the best talent and practices from around the world.

2. **Understand the value of internationalisation.** The ever changing environment of international education requires up-to-date knowledge and multidimensional skills by the staff at international offices. To better understand the complex world that universities and their stakeholders currently inhabit, senior international officers must become international affairs experts who are proficient in multiple languages. They must develop extensive research, analytical and strategic-thinking skills, and excel as communicators who successfully connect with their diverse stakeholders both via modern technologies and interpersonally. This multidimensional and expended knowledge base must be used to comprehend the value that internationalisation adds to the institution in ways that enhance the well-being of each institutional stakeholder. The conflicting interests of various stakeholder groups must be acknowledged and reconciled to successfully lead universities towards internationalisation.

3. **Advocate the value of internationalisation.** In addition to educating others about internationalisation, international officers in this turbulent environment must serve as lobbyists for internationalisation. Education and advocacy must go hand-in-hand and address various stakeholder dispositions towards internationalisation.

4. **Cultivate long-term relationships.** An ongoing effort to maintain ties with all strategic stakeholders who are involved in and benefit from internationalisation, must be made. These ties should be interactive and based on reciprocity. All parties (*eg* local students, academic and research staff, administrative employees, *etc*) must see the mutual benefits of engaging in international initiatives.

5. **Evaluate the quality of strategic relationships.** In order to substantiate the need for internationalisation, it is crucial to measure the outcomes of internationalisation that result from ties with strategic stakeholders. Concrete achievements provide the best evidence for the crucial role that internationalisation plays today and will continue to play in the development of universities.

— BAIBA PĒTERSONE

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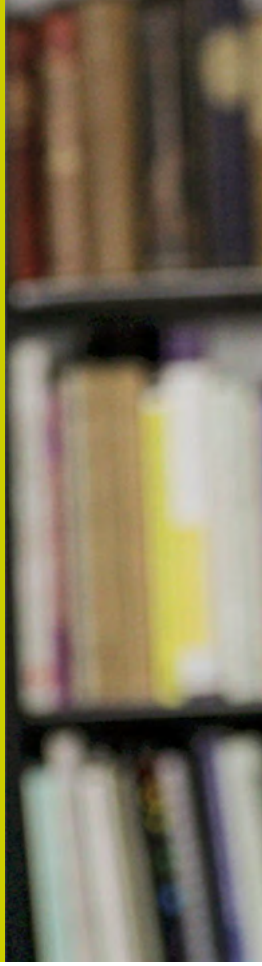

IN CONVERSATION WITH MANJA KLEMENČIČ

Manja Klemenčič is Lecturer in Sociology of Higher Education at Harvard University. She is a researcher, teacher, and consultant in higher education policy and practice with many years of experience in several parts of the world. Manja is also Editor of the *European Journal of Higher Education*. Regionalisation in higher education is one of her many areas of expertise. In this interview, Manja discusses the rationales for countries and higher education institutions to collaborate regionally, the tensions that exist in these arrangements, and the future of regional cooperation in the face of trends towards more closed societies.

LAURA MESQUITA
EAIE

Manja, could you tell us a little bit about your research interest in regionalisation?

MK: My PhD research was on the role of regional alliances in EU negotiations. I decided to push this topic further to explore regional cooperation in the area of higher education. I specifically focused on regions in Europe and the most formalised regional alliances: the Benelux, the Nordic cooperation, the Visegrád Group, the Franco-German cooperation, the Western Balkans, and the Baltic Cooperation. What is really interesting to me is the tension between cooperation and competition among higher education institutions within European sub-regions. I would even argue that these tensions are amplified in the case of countries and institutions from the same region.

Higher education institutions in countries in the same region tend to be similar in many ways, since they are located in similar socio-economic contexts, and often have shared histories and cultural affinities. Given the geographic proximity, the social networks between academics tend to be more developed. These networks are key for regional cooperation. Institutions within the same region cooperate to promote the visibility and attractiveness of their region. They also cooperate to develop world-class excellence in research and educational provision. Jointly, they can be more successful in

Photos courtesy of Manja Klemenčič

attracting research funding and can pool resources to develop world-class study programmes. At the same time, similarities and geographic proximity also make these institutions competitors – for talent and for research funding from the EU. The competition may be even fiercer between regional partners than between partner institutions in other international partnerships, since regional partners are more similar to one another. In my research I focused in particular on intergovernmental cooperation within European regional alliances. I found that many incentives exist for cooperation. Both internal and external. Externally, there is funding available from the EU for intra-European cooperation. Internally, countries near each other often realise that if they want to be able to compete on a global stage, they have to work together. It's a way for them to pool their resources for building world-class study programmes and research centres.

Is this the definition of regionalisation in higher education today?

MK: One of the main rationales for regional cooperation in higher education today is pooling resources in order to be visible and competitive at the global level. Another, more political rationale is coalition building to influence policy decisions in favour of a region's interests – for instance, in EU or EHEA policymaking. Governments from the same region in these kinds of political settings tend to work together. They may not always vote the same or have the exact same interests, but they often think alike because they come from similar contexts and face similar challenges. This happens also in policymaking in other supranational organisations, such as the European University Association (EUA) or the European Student Union (ESU), where regional blocks of universities or unions work together to influence policies. The third rationale, very much related to the first two, is that countries work in regions in order to capture resources that specifically favour regional cooperation, for instance from the EU. The EU actively promotes intra-European cooperation, of which regional cooperation is an important part.

> The EU actively promotes intra-European cooperation, of which regional cooperation is an important part

Why does the EU promote regional cooperation?

MK: The European communities were built on the notion that bringing the countries to the same table to work together will prevent wars. This belief has always been the backbone of European cooperation. More relevant for present-day challenges is what I've mentioned before: the pooling of resources to enhance global competitiveness. Many European countries are small and as individual countries cannot really compete on a global level. That is even the case for larger countries, such as Germany and France. The European Union therefore tries to prompt cooperation ventures in

higher education policy that would make regions globally competitive.

You've mentioned smaller sub-regions within Europe. Is the European Higher Education Area not also a region in itself?

MK: That's an interesting question, because it all comes back to your definition of a region. From a global perspective, Europe is definitely a region. Due to various instruments of the European Union, such as Erasmus, the EHEA, the policies of consolidation of quality assurance systems, and the standardisation of degree systems, Europe is globally identifiable as a region. But it's also a meta-region of all of these sub-regions that we've been talking about. These European sub-regions are political entities, they are sub-systems within the larger political entities of the EU and the EHEA. These sub-regions share historical experiences and cultural affinities and often have shared regional concerns. In a similar vein, Europe, as the EU or the EHEA, has shared cultural affinities, historical experiences and regional interests when acting in a global context with other world regions.

In the same way that cooperation and competition coexist within the European sub-regions, it also does so within Europe as the larger political entity. However, the differences between countries within Europe are larger than those within European sub-regions. In Europe we have countries that are hubs for international students and that actively develop their higher education as an export, such as the Netherlands, the UK or Spain, and those that are not in the same playing field when it comes to education export.

Clearly, there are a lot of formal incentives for regional cooperation in Europe and many motives for countries to embrace this kind of collaboration. Is regionalisation always a positive force?

MK: This is not an easy question to answer. In terms of the pooling of resources, I would say that regionalisation is definitely positive. In this day and age, with major powers like China investing heavily in higher education to create world-class universities from scratch, the only way for European universities to compete in global higher education markets is to work together. That's just a reality. The exceptions are the few established European global university brands. Last year I worked a lot in Central Asia, doing a 'health check' of higher education systems. There, governments are struggling with the question of whether to channel resources into a single flagship world-class university or distribute resources across universities to raise the quality of the entire higher education system. This is a very real and very difficult challenge for governments. In these countries, I think that building regional 'world-class' consortia of universities could be a solution. Pooling resources among the universities via strategic partnerships, joint research centres, and joint research programmes could tip the scales to achieve both objectives: having world-class universities and lifting the quality of higher education provision across the national systems.

Where I worry about the effects of regionalisation is when countries in the same region begin to imitate the most successful ones among them without carefully considering whether the reforms will work out within their specific context. These challenges are similar to the potential pitfalls of the influence of global league tables on university strategies, whereby

universities imitate the most successful universities. Doing so they often forget to consider whether the same practices also help them to be nationally and locally relevant, and whether they also improve the communities that gave them life and purpose. In deciding on regional cooperation, universities have to ask themselves what specific regional interests they have in common that they can pursue together. But as with any cooperation, they also need to think about asymmetries in resources and prestige, which inevitably affect the purpose and terms of cooperation.

Higher education has been one of the main forces trying to resist the closing of societies

In the current political climate, where national interests appear to be again on the rise, is regional cooperation in higher education at any risk of extinction?

MK: So far, higher education has been one of the main forces trying to resist the closing of societies. Universities have been vocal in affirming that they have benefitted from internationalisation, and that their countries, through higher education, have benefitted from being international. But I do wonder whether and how some forms of de-internationalisation of higher education might take place due to political circumstances. Will countries be turning further inwards and closing borders? Will universities follow suit? Or will they continue to fight for the free movement of researchers and students? We've seen it recently with the executive order in the United States that universities lobbied together to ensure that their students and faculty from countries under visa restrictions were able to obtain visas.

You have young children. Looking at their generation, further down the line than our immediate political reality, how do you think regionalisation will shape their education experience and outlook on the world?

MK: It can go either way. One option is that globalisation continues to develop as we have seen in the last decades, and national borders will become increasingly permeable and our societies increasingly multicultural. In such a scenario, students will choose to study anywhere in the world, and perhaps universities within the same region will work together to be more recognisable. This scenario can also mean that every country charges tuition fees and that there are no special benefits in terms of tuition fees or scholarships for native students. This scenario might also mean that, apart from a few globally recognised university brands, employers will no longer care about where students have studied. They will care about what they know and are able to do.

The other scenario is the other extreme. Countries might begin saying that they've been too open and let too many people from different cultural backgrounds in, and have invested too much in international cooperation without getting enough out of it. The governments might then decide to protect national and local interests through measures which give preferential treatment to native students. In this scenario, internationalisation would not be perceived as advantageous or necessarily desirable. National borders would be very visible, and students would not travel as freely as they do today. Regional cooperation – as other forms of international cooperation – would be impaired. Institutions and countries in the same region would be perceived more as competitors than collaborators.

It is difficult to foresee in which direction the sentiments of governments and the citizenry will go in the coming years. While the trajectory of globalisation is difficult to unwind, governments with specific policies can make internationalisation of higher education more difficult and de-internationalisation of some areas of higher education possible. Multiculturalism has long been embraced uncritically in Europe, perhaps much more so than in many other world regions. Now there are signs that the tide may be turning. When it comes to critical societal questions, universities, I think, have to engage politically. They have to be at the forefront of political and public debates. They have to contribute to these debates and enlighten them with sound research, equipping their graduates with sharp critical thinking skills and informed social observation.

FOSTERING REGIONAL DIALOGUES

Since 2007, there has been a greater effort to situate the Bologna Process in a global context. The Bologna Policy Forum, responsible for intensifying the dialogue between the EHEA countries and regions and those outside it, has been looking for ways to better work with other higher education areas elsewhere in the world. This process is far from complete, but the ambitions are great.

Since developing the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) at the 5th Ministerial conference of the Bologna Process in 2005, Ministers have asked the Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG) to integrate the Bologna Process in a global context. The 'Strategy for the EHEA in a Global Setting' was adopted in 2007. As an element of this strategy, the Bologna Policy Forum (BPF) was created in 2009 in order to intensify policy dialogue in higher education with non-EHEA countries and regions.

NEW CHALLENGES

After four Bologna Policy Forum meetings, it has become clear that the dynamics of the international cooperation context in higher education have

Photo: Daniel Vegel

changed. Now, possibly influenced by the success of the EHEA, many regions (ASEAN, Africa, Latin America) are actively engaged in the development of regional higher education areas – or at least in the design of specific integrative instruments compatible with the main EHEA tools. These include qualification frameworks, credit systems, quality standards, and higher education cycles.

Influenced by the success of the EHEA, many regions are actively engaged in the development of regional higher education areas

At the same time, international strategies were also developed at national and institutional levels, mainly with the objectives of recruiting international students and attracting the best global staff and talent. As a result, a dynamic of cooperation at the European level, and of competition at national and institutional level, developed.

In this new situation, there is still a role for the Bologna Follow Up Group. It can enhance international cooperation at the supranational and institutional levels, revisit how the Bologna Policy Forum concept brings added value to existing policy dialogues, mobilise Ministers on concrete actions relevant to facing common challenges for higher education, and ensure a sustainable international partnership policy.

OTHER REGIONS

In this context, and within the new structure of the Bologna Follow Up Group for the period 2015–2018, an Advisory Group on EHEA International Cooperation (AG1), co-chaired by France, Spain and United Kingdom, was created with two main mandates: (1) to define a roadmap and engage in a policy dialogue with non-EHEA partners, in order to carry out a cooperation strategy based on shared issues and identifying concrete topics; and (2) to define the scope of the Bologna Policy Forum in general and prepare the 2018 meeting in Paris.

Since its creation, the AG1 has reflected on the mechanisms for successful inter-regional dialogues and the possible topics for these dialogues. It has become increasingly clear that, although policy dialogue normally takes place through other bilateral, institutional or individual mechanisms, there is still an important role for the EHEA to play in setting a framework for common policy dialogue and good practice. This will lead to a stronger policy dialogue and framework for interregional cooperation on issues of common concern.


Photo: Daniel Vegel

At its last meeting in December 2015 in Bratislava, the Bologna Follow Up Group approved a proposal from AG1 to organise structured dialogues with higher education representatives from other regions of the world – such as the Mediterranean countries, Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

In this ongoing dialogue, participants are brought together in structured round tables and are asked to identify: main topics for collaboration with the EHEA and recommendations to the main higher education stakeholders; main activities needed to implement real and effective international cooperation between the EHEA and the specific region; challenges, benefits, and risks of the inter-regional cooperation in higher education.

Specific instruments to enhance international cooperation between the EHEA and other regional higher education areas and systems have been proposed, such as the creation of a form of associated membership for non-EHEA members in order to jointly define goals and progress collaboration on tools and areas of common interest and to address global challenges.

While the details of this new vehicle will need to be agreed upon by the Bologna Policy Forum, it could develop the EHEA from an interregional dialogue into an international alliance of regional higher education systems or areas, thus contributing to a more real and effective international cooperation at inter-regional level.

Some agreed-upon principles have already been achieved regarding the format and structure of the next Bologna Policy Forum in 2018. The most significant is that it will be prepared in advance, through ongoing interregional dialogues, rather than being just a single event every three years subordinated to the EHEA ministerial conference.

— LUIS DELGADO, PATRICIA POL & ELLA RITCHIE

> There is an important role for the EHEA to play in setting a framework for common policy dialogue and good practice

NEXT STEPS

AG1 is presently revisiting the format and content of the next Bologna Policy Forum and to achieve this, it is essential to listen and learn from other regions of the world.

IS EUROPE THE GOLD STANDARD?

Those who study regionalisation of higher education have a tendency to see Bologna and other EU programmes such as Erasmus as the ultimate model for cooperation. These programmes certainly have a lot of brand recognition. Elsewhere in the world, however, there are other models to consider. ▸

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There is an assumption among scholars of regionalism and European higher education studies that Europe's Bologna Process is the model to emulate for regional cooperation in the higher education sector. This assumption is not without context. 'Bologna' is indeed a very well recognised brand, both within and beyond the borders of Europe; the cooperation achieved thus far for constructing the European Higher Education Area is unparalleled. But does this mean that other regions should embrace the Bologna Process as the Gold Standard for how to 'do' higher education cooperation? The short answer is: no.

In my ongoing research comparing higher education policy cooperation in Europe and in Southeast Asia, I found very little support for the 'Bologna Process export thesis'.[1] I derived my conclusion after interviewing policy actors in Southeast Asia and Europe (more than 50 in-depth interviews have been completed), participating in two policy dialogues for the project 'European Union Support for Higher Education in ASEAN Region' (SHARE), and analysing policy documents and published academic studies on policy cooperation in the two regions. I focused on identifying and explaining the features of the two regional higher education policy cooperation.

SIMILAR, BUT DIFFERENT

This is what I found: both regions shared similar policy ideas of how to 'do' higher education cooperation – increasing political cooperation in the higher education sector, deepening networks between tertiary institutions, and promoting student mobility.[2] But they did so very differently. In Southeast Asia, participating states concentrated on allocating authority to distinct institutional venues, which involved generally different audiences (*eg* policymakers, university administrators). By contrast, participating states in Europe focused on discussing and selecting aspects of regional higher education policy cooperation they considered legitimate for action. What this amounted to were substantive policy measures which the members were invited to implement.

> Existing models of regional cooperation are very influential in how the policy actors pursue higher education policy cooperation

Similarly, I found that existing models of regional cooperation are very influential in how the policy actors pursue higher education policy cooperation. This was the case even though many of the initial political decisions to start such cooperation were taken outside of the existing regional institutional framework. For instance, efforts to relaunch European integration in the 1980s gave birth to the Erasmus programme. The new European governance approach defined how the Bologna Process would be put into practice. For Southeast Asia, the 'ASEAN Way' instilled the principle of non-interference on national affairs and non-confrontational consultation, which ultimately led to the establishment and endurance of two distinct platforms for higher education cooperation in the region: the ASEAN University Network (AUN) and the SEAMEO Regional Centre for Higher Education and Development (RIHED).

KNOWLEDGE ECONOMIES

My findings offer two insights to understanding regionalism and internationalisation in other world regions. First, they confirm that the discourse about the importance of the knowledge economy and society has paved the way for increased higher education regionalisms around the world. While the European Commission and the European Union have often been identified as the amplifiers of this knowledge discourse, I saw

> The discourse about the importance of the knowledge economy and society has paved the way for increased higher education regionalisms around the world

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actors in both regions, inside and outside of the higher education sector, with or without policymaking powers, championing this discourse. While the policy actors did interpret and use the knowledge discourse differently – some emphasising the economic aspects, others stressing its social inclusion potential – the discourse was never ignored. In Europe, the knowledge discourse enabled the bringing together of the Bologna Process and the Europe of Knowledge (including developments concerning the European Research Area), both espousing different aspects of this discourse. In Southeast Asia, the knowledge discourse was the hook on which higher education policy cooperation was made feasible in a region where non-intervention was the norm.

> While the Bologna Process may not be the gold standard for higher education cooperation elsewhere, policy actors around the world are certainly attentive

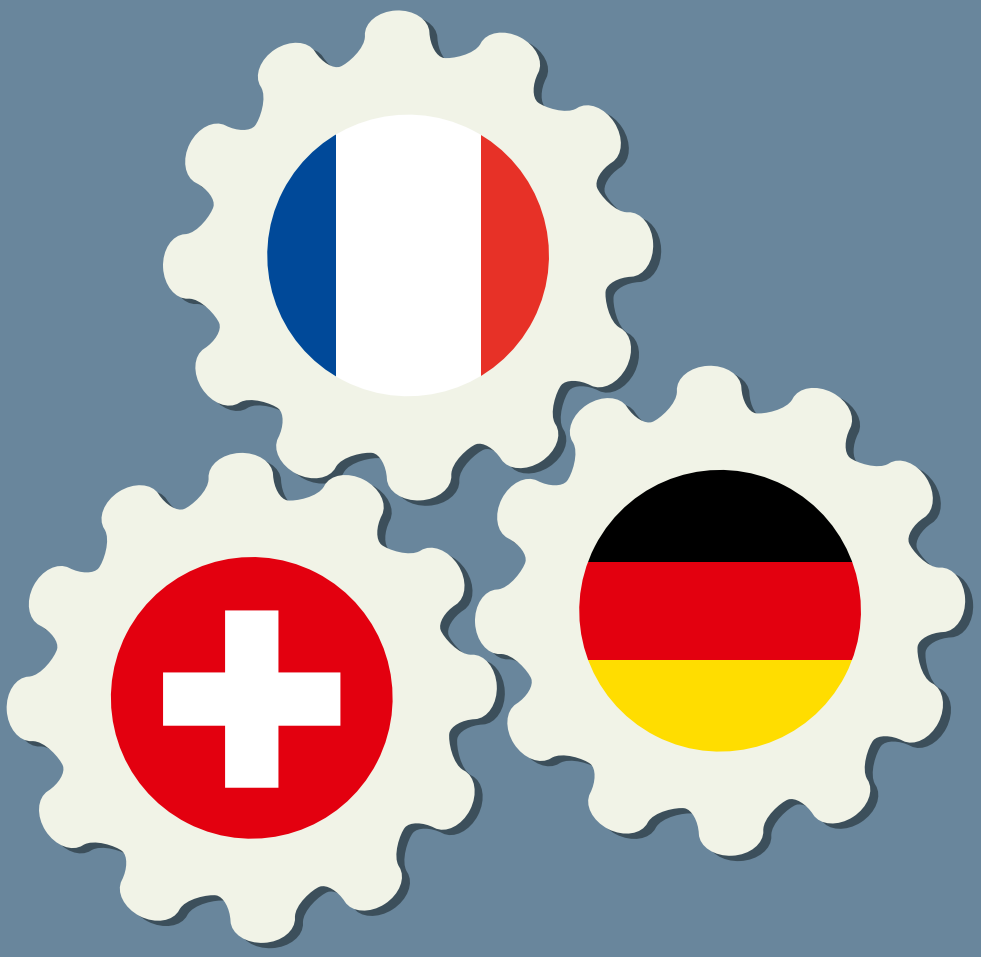
REGIONALISM IN PRACTICE

Second, my findings revealed the different ways in which policy actors in both regions decided to translate ideas of higher education regionalism into practice, which ultimately affect how their cooperation is perceived inside and outside of their geographical regions. For instance, when European actors use the term 'higher education area' and 'Bologna', they are generally referring to further building upon agreed objectives. The implication of this approach is brand recognition: my interviewees easily invoked 'Erasmus' or 'Bologna' when asked about the policy vision of European higher education regionalism. By contrast, the more recent usage of 'common space' in Southeast Asia is an attempt to articulate and make sense of the long-standing differences between regional policy actors. Specifically, 'common space' refers to the multiplicity of existing higher education regional measures and governance structures rather than their simplification. This final observation indicates that, while the Bologna Process may not be the gold standard for higher education cooperation elsewhere, policy actors around the world are certainly attentive and informed about its evolution.

— MENG-HSUAN CHOU

1. See Chou, Meng-Hsuan and Pauline Ravinet (2017) 'Higher education regionalism in Europe and Southeast Asia: Comparing policy ideas', *Politics & Society.* 36(1).

2. What led me to refute the 'Bologna Process export thesis' is that some states in Southeast Asia were already trying to implement these ideas before the Bologna Process was launched, and there was also an explicit rejection to follow the Bologna 'method' when the states sought to deepen their cooperation in the higher education sector.



REGIONAL COOPERATION

AS A CATALYST FOR INTERNATIONALISATION

Illustration: N. Nguyen

Are regionalisation and internationalisation opposing concepts? It depends on how each is done. In the case of Eucor – European Campus, located in the Franco-German-Swiss region of the Upper Rhine area, internationalisation has flourished through coordinated regional cooperation efforts.

The title of this spring issue of *Forum* magazine might suggest that regionalisation and internationalisation represent two opposing trends for higher education institutions (HEIs) in modern times. That is probably true for the majority of HEIs, except those located in a border region. In the latter case, regionalisation can automatically lead to more internationalisation, since the neighbouring universities happen to be dependent on the higher education system of a different country and a different language of instruction.

BORDERLESS

That is the case in the tri-national Upper Rhine area, which includes HEIs from France, Germany, and Switzerland. The main driving force of HEI cooperation in this region is 'Eucor – The European Campus', a European Grouping of Territorial Cooperation (EGTC) founded by the universities of Basel, Freiburg, Haute-Alsace, Strasbourg, and the Karlsruhe Institute of Technology (KIT) in 2016. The vision behind it is to become a real European campus without borders, where students and researchers can commute freely.

The facts: All together these five universities have about 115,000 students, 15,000 researchers and 11,000 PhD candidates. Taken together, ours is a research region with the potential to challenge important metropole regions like Berlin, Paris, Munich, and even the Boston area. However, the fact that the five universities depend on three different higher education systems makes the cooperation a little more complicated.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

On the organisational level the universities are structured differently and the working procedures and administrative cultures also differ a lot between the systems. The pathways scientists usually choose vary significantly, as well as the level of the salary. Erasmus and the Bologna Process have certainly helped to harmonise some of the procedures for the set up of common study programmes, but many differences remain. Last but not least, the treatment of statistical data differ a lot, which makes the identification of baseline information, benchmarking, quality assurance and thus the establishment of a common strategy for research and education quite complicated.

The vision behind it is to become a real European campus without borders

With the creation of the European Campus, the member universities of Eucor wish to overcome these administrative obstacles in order to deepen their cooperation. The goals of Eucor – The European Campus are:

- Joint planning for strategy, structure and development
- Defining a shared research profile and shared procurement of funding
- Establishing joint research infrastructures
- Joint appointment of high-ranking academic personnel
- Further development and marketing of study programmes
- Developing innovative and internationally-competitive pilot study programmes
- Improving the cross-border transition of Eucor university graduates to the regional employment market
- Facilitating the mobility of students and researchers
- Establishing a joint corporate image of the European Campus.

CREATING A HUB

This 'international regionalisation' is internationally motivated: adding up all the students and scientists creates a hub of five universities. This allows Eucor to be as competitive as possible with regard to the major higher education and research bodies in Europe and beyond. More than that, the member universities

believe that they might attract more gifted international students and highly qualified researchers, especially those coming from other continents. By promoting their strengths under the umbrella of the European Campus, they can make the Upper Rhine valley the leading research hub in continental Europe. Even for universities like Basel, Freiburg or Strasbourg, which have a certain notoriety due to their long standing tradition and excellent scientists, the joint presence at international events as a European Campus can help them achieve an even better visibility on-site in Asia, Australia, or North-America.

The university of Freiburg had this experience when setting up a programme with Harvard University. For the first time, Harvard University has chosen a European university to send a group of students abroad to learn about actual challenges from a European perspective. Freiburg, as part of a tri-national region, was a decisive advantage in the competition with other universities in Europe. The programme foresees not only site visits in Germany, but also the opportunity to attend courses and lectures in France and Switzerland. The learning environment takes place between two other major European countries – and the whole higher education experience takes place only within a one hour's drive. Member universities discover more and more the added value of their tri-national environment. University of Basel recently welcomed a delegation from a key North American partner university and guided them to visit the city of Strasbourg and meet researchers and staff. The KIT also proposes, through their welcome programme for international researchers, excursions to Strasbourg and the Alsace-region. The attractiveness of the whole region has also been proven lately by the joint appointment of an international top-level scientist in supramolecular chemistry. A joint offer from the University of Strasbourg and KIT gave the scientist in question the opportunity to work in two different universities with top-level research infrastructures and experienced staff.


Photo: Shutterstock

COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE

Outside of our specific European Campus project, we have observed a general trend towards combining the strengths of regions and creating synergies between HEIs. This is highly promoted through politicians in all three countries of our region. On the German side, for instance, the KIT has deepened collaborations with other HEIs and the business sector by cooperating in the Karlsruhe Technology Region. The university of Freiburg has set up a comprehensive agreement with the five Fraunhofer Institutes in order to foster technology and knowledge transfer in a joint centre for sustainability research. On the French side, the universities of Strasbourg and Mulhouse have signed a contract with other regional HEIs in order to strengthen the Alsace site and mutualise the infrastructures. More generally, the French Ministry of Higher Education and Research promotes the creation of so-called *Communautés d'universités et établissements* (Associations of universities and higher education institutions), which aim to coordinate the teaching and training offer as well as the research strategies within a defined territory.

With the European Campus we will have the unique opportunity to follow this trend. Infrastructures, experiences, and expenditures will be shared. At the same time, due to cooperation across borders, we learn a lot about different political and administrative cultures and strengthen our intercultural knowledge. In this way, our universities will be in a much better position in the competitive international market of higher education and research.

We have observed a general trend towards combining the strengths of regions and creating synergies between HEIs

European Campus is a twofold example: it highlights how regionalisation might lead to more internationalisation, both at home and abroad; and it shows how other border regions can benefit from this model. The European Campus sees itself as a pioneer in this trend, as the former iteration of the Eucor association was created in 1989. Since that time it has developed student mobility and many other projects in the field of research and education. The European Campus can serve as a real role model for other border regions looking to strengthen their positions in competing for the smartest minds and best ideas.

— HANS-JOCHEN SCHIEWER & JANOSCH NIEDEN

THE GEOGRAPHY OF MOBILITY

That student mobility has grown in the last decade is a widely accepted fact. Students are now increasingly seeking their full education abroad. But where do degree-seeking international students move to? Closest to home, within their own regions? Or do they mostly seek degrees on other continents? ▸

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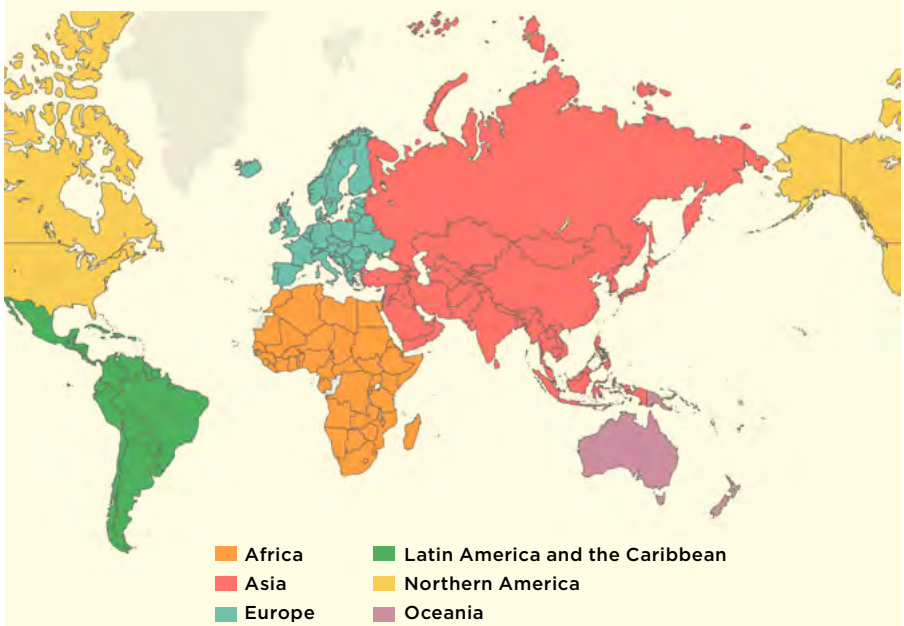
The relationship between regionalisation and internationalisation of higher education must, by definition, be a complex and multi-layered one. Internationalisation is made up of the intertwined and interacting triad of international, intercultural and global dimensions in post-secondary education. Regionalisation is also most often used as a similar type of umbrella term. Furthermore, internationalisation consists of multiple and often overlapping activities, such as student mobility, internationalisation at home, and transnational education. Measuring the degree or impact of regionalisation on international education would be near impossible.

MOBILITY

As a more modest endeavour, however, one can assess whether international student mobility streams take place within or across certain regional boundaries. This article will establish the extent to which global degree mobility of students in post-secondary education is 'regionalised', and the extent to which this has been a stable situation over the period 2000–2013.[1] How the regionalisation of degree mobility has developed depends first and foremost on the level of geographical detail that you would employ. This enquiry looks at two levels. First, the six geographical continents. Second, at the 21 subcontinental regions, both based on by the UN geographical classification for country indicator data analysis.[2]

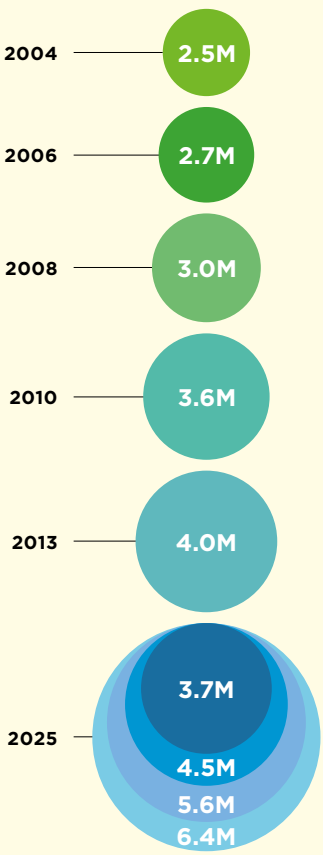
1. UN CLASSIFICATION OF CONTINENTS AND SUBCONTINENTAL REGIONS
Source: UN /UNSD



ABSOLUTE GROWTH, RELATIVE STABILITY

In the period 2000–2013, global degree mobility in absolute terms doubled from about 2 million international degree students in 2000, up to 4 million in 2013. In relative terms, however, it remained remarkably stable at around 2% of the world student population. Different predictions for 2025 range from 3.7–6.4 million.

2. DEGREE-SEEKING STUDENTS WHO ARE INTERNATIONALLY MOBILE, ACCORDING TO OECD/UNESCO
Source: EAG 2016

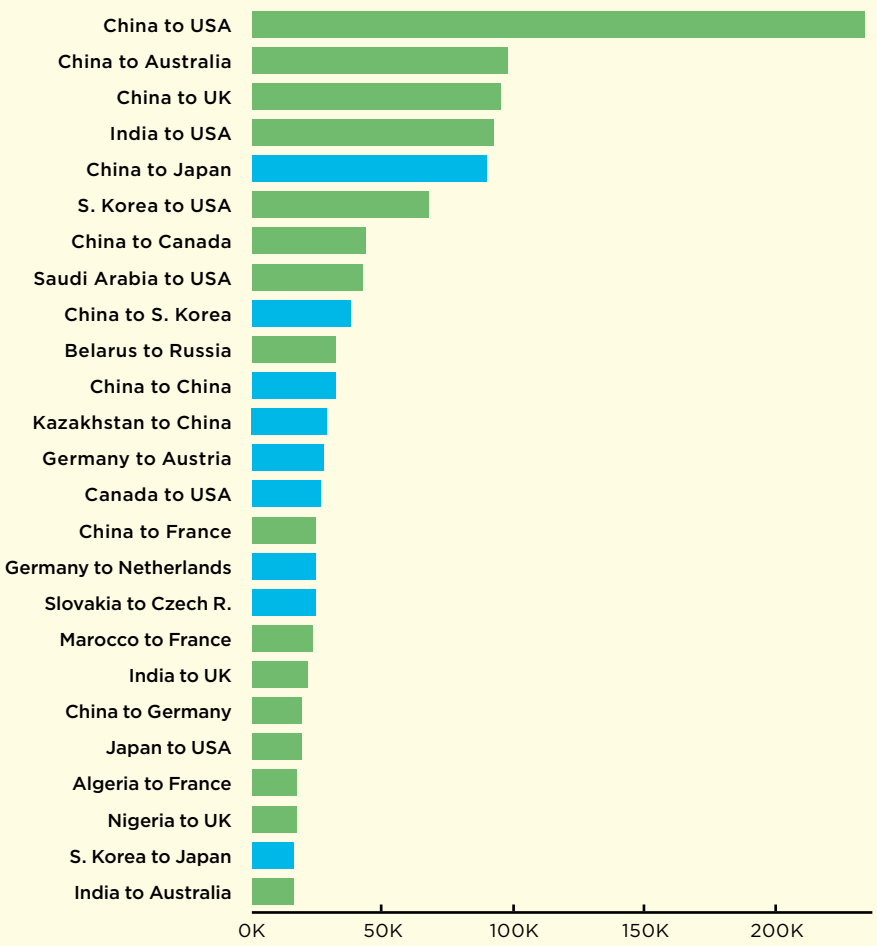


INTER- VS INTRA-REGIONAL MOBILITY

A look at the 25 largest degree mobility streams in 2013, which are in effect the largest international student populations, gives a good first indication of the status of mobility within the region versus mobility that crosses regional and continental borders.[3] The nine largest student populations all originate from the three Asian countries with most degree students abroad: China, India and South Korea. Only two of these nine largest populations are both intra-continental and intra-regional: the Chinese student populations in Japan and Korea. The other seven are all intercontinental, mostly from Asia to the USA and UK. In fact, of the largest 25 mobility streams, only nine take place within the same region, and all of those are instances of border mobility – cases where international students enrol for a degree in a directly neighbouring country. This indicates that, in 2013, most degree mobility took place between regions and continents rather than within them, and that when degree mobility does take place within regions, it is often a case of direct cross-border mobility with a neighbouring country.

3. THE 25 LARGEST DEGREE MOBILITY STREAMS IN 2013

Source: UNESCO

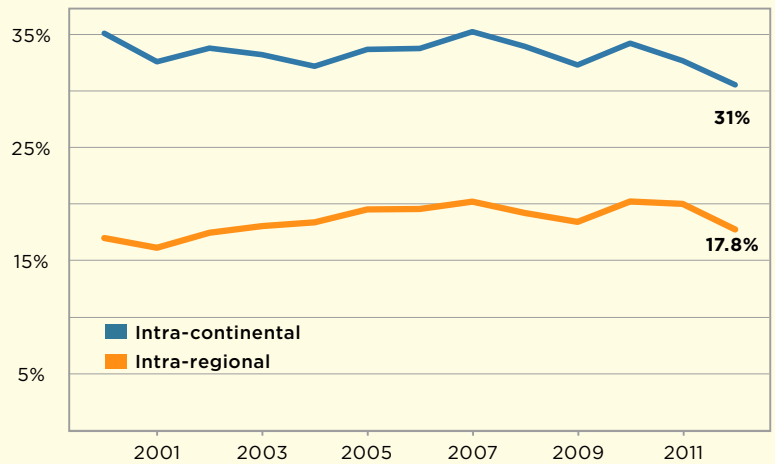


REGIONALISATION AS A TREND

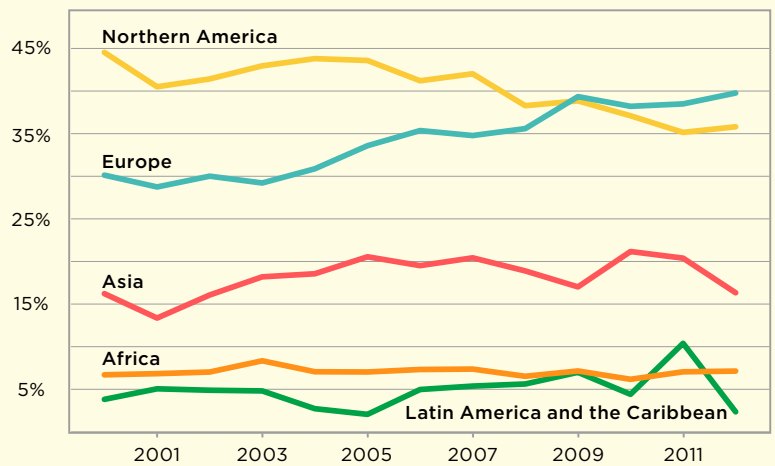
To back up these first impressions, one has to look at only two crude measures, applied to the UNESCO data set of international degree mobility from 2000–2013. The first is the share of global degree mobility, in any given year, in which a sending and receiving country belong to the same continent, as a part of all registered degree mobility. This would be the extent to which degree takes place 'intra-continentally'. The second is the share of global degree mobility, in any given year, in which sending and receiving country belong to the same subcontinental region, as a part of all registered degree mobility. This would be the extent to which degree takes place 'intra-regionally'.

As can be seen from Figure 4, the share of intra-continental degree mobility is very stable over the 2000–2013 period, with a slight decline since 2007. This means that since 2007, a slightly larger share of the increasing number of degree students worldwide moved across continental borders for study purposes, rather than within them. From the same Figure 4, it can be seen that intra-regional mobility has been also relatively stable, slightly increasing throughout 2000–2007, and flattening after that. Thus, at the same time that the share

4. TREND LINES BASED ON GLOBAL DEGREE MOBILITY. Source: UNESCO



5. DEGREE MOBILITY, PER CONTINENT WHERE THE SENDING COUNTRY IS LOCATED, WITHIN THE SAME SUBCONTINENTAL REGION



of intra-continental mobility has been slightly decreasing, the share of intra-regional mobility slowly increased.[4]

CONTEXT

Finally, to not overstate the conclusions drawn first from the biggest mobility streams, and second two relatively crude measures, it is as always important to look at context. As can be seen from Figure 5, degree mobility from Africa and Latin America is the least regionalised, followed by Asia.[5] Whereas degree mobility from North America has in effect become less regionalised, degree mobility from Europe has seen a stable and quite strong increase in regionalisation in the 2000–2013 period.

Degree-seeking students from the four different European regions that do enrol abroad thus increasingly choose to move to a country in their own region.

STABLE TRENDS

Despite a doubling of the number of international degree students from 2 to 4 million between 2000 and 2013, relative trends are remarkably stable. Still only 2% of the global student population is mobile for a degree. At the higher levels of geographical detail, regionalisation is also relatively stable. The share of intra-continental mobility has been slightly decreasing since 2007, and the share of intra-regional mobility has been slowly increasing from 2000 onwards.

Differentiating between different continents, the only significant increase in regionalisation of outbound degree mobility has been taking place in Europe since 2000. In effect, outbound degree students in Europe have increasingly chosen to study abroad within their own region. It is likely that this regionalisation of European mobility is related to the success of the Bologna Process, the Erasmus programme and the Schengen zone. More research on this topic is needed.

— DAAN HUBERTS

1. The focus on degree mobility and the delineation of this period is made based on data quality and availability. Credit mobility is not sufficiently captured in register data sources, and the most complete set of UNESCO data on global student mobility is only directly comparable from 2000–2013.

2. See for extensive coverage of UN geographical classification for all country level statistics by UNESCO: http://unstats.un.org/unsd/methods/m49/m49regin.htm and Figure 1 for a visual depiction of these regions.

3. These 25 international degree student populations make up over one third of all degree mobility worldwide in 2013.

4. The sudden drop in both measures in the latest reporting year 2013 is most likely due to data quality issues, such as unusually large international student populations with unknown countries of origin. This has to do with the introduction of a new classification for international education country data.

5. It is important to note that these regions are also the least proficient at collecting reliable system level data, which in turn translates to some data quality issues with OECD and UNESCO indicators on these countries. It is also safe to say that as these higher education systems are also less developed, these countries may not be particularly attractive to international students.

A NORDIC-BALTIC COOPERATION

Universities from different countries in the Nordic-Baltic region (Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Latvia, Lithuania, Norway, and Sweden) have been working together to teach their students about the differences in business cultures in the region, setting them up for professional success. The network grew from just three universities in 1993 to eight today. Through hard work and shared values, partnerships thrive. ▸

Photo: Shutterstock

The NordBiz network (part of the Nordplus Higher Education Programme) has long roots of cooperation in the region. It started as early as 1993, when three institutions of higher education in Finland, Sweden and Denmark thought that an international context would contribute to a wider perspective, mutual understanding for the Nordic identity, and enhancement of learning and teaching through new methods and pedagogical solutions in the network schools. Soon the network started expanding, and today it consists of eight higher education institutions (HEIs) in the eight Nordic–Baltic countries. The gradual enhancement of the network enabled the partners to acquaint themselves properly with each new member, their educational offerings and the differences each presents in terms of national requirements as well as in learning cultures. Having a common historical and cultural background and sharing the same human rights values, democracy and business ethics has also proven to be a good base for cooperation.

A common historical and cultural background and sharing the same human rights values, democracy and business ethics has proven to be a good base for cooperation

PROJECTS AND ACTIVITIES

The extensive experience between the network schools over the years has helped us plan activities and understand dissimilarities in administration, organisational rules and hierarchy. In the end, the similarities are greater than the differences. Our respective countries seem to operate according to the same principles and systems.

This partnership has resulted in a successful and thriving cooperation in many fields, *eg* intensive courses held annually at one of the network universities, a double degree programme, student and teacher exchanges, dean meetings, and working groups for various development projects. In one of the projects, a group of teachers gathered to discuss the possibility of developing the digitisation of business education, and disseminating good practices and methods. The seminar covered various viewpoints: technical, pedagogical, administrative, and the challenges of online courses. As a key outcome, the group agreed to continue discussions and cooperation, and to pursue joint project proposals if suitable funding is available.

Another working group met to compare the different ways of carrying out work placement in the network schools. Internships, especially international placements, are important for the future careers of students in terms of intercultural experience, development of a global mind-set, and gaining professional competences. These include market-specific issues and career-readiness skills such as 'soft' skills that employers look for in entry-level employees. As some schools in the network are in early stages of implementing university-level placements, and as there are differences in the ways internships are organised, the experiences shared within the network proved to be of great value. The work placement project has proceeded to a practical level, with a pilot to be implemented in May of 2017. In this pilot, students from all of the network schools will gather for a one-week internship trial at two Lithuanian companies.

Photos courtesy of authors

Cooperation with industry has also stimulated the participation of companies by giving them insights into the advantages of Nordic–Baltic cooperation at different levels – in terms of sourcing, logistics, management, and the Nordic welfare models as part of macroeconomic considerations.

INTENSIVE COURSES

The objective of the intensive courses organised by the network is to familiarise the students with cultural and business practice differences of the member countries. Students gain practical experience working in multicultural groups, create their own network of future business colleagues, develop their personal competences in Nordic-Baltic understanding during the course, and also enhance their communication and presentation skills. The themes are different each year, and the groups not only produce country

reports and cross-national analyses, but also develop actual solutions to problems brought to the forum by participating companies.

The Nordic-Baltic Perspectives on Marketing intensive course started from the idea that it was important to raise Nordic marketing thinking to the same level of the dominant Anglo-American approach. The student groups produced country reports and cross-cultural assignments covering the fields of furniture, brewery, tourism, banking, the textile industry, and the 'experience economy'.

Inspired by the success of the first intensive course, two more were planned and implemented: Business Strategies for Sustainable Development and Business Ethics and Entrepreneurship. The topics have changed from year to year because the field of business ethics is wide and requires a spectrum of approaches to be relevant and understandable.

As multicultural intensive courses enable valuable cooperation not only between our network and its students but also between each university, its local community and business life, our aim is to continue on this track in future. We have created flyers and detailed course information about our intensive courses and projects, which we distribute among students at our respective home institutions. For further sharing experiences, we use social media.

CONTINUITY AND TRUST

Students participating in the intensive courses complete a course evaluation every year for the purpose of improving course content and practical implementation, and they also act as ambassadors for the upcoming recruitment cycle for new students. Our main priority in the network is to create exchange opportunities for students and teachers to gain international experience. We are also committed to ensuring that the quality of all our activities within the network is consistent by cooperating actively in sharing knowledge, and disseminating transferable ideas, best practices, and new pedagogical approaches. Also, the deans of the partner institutions participate in the continuous network development.

Creating a network of schools is not accomplished overnight; it requires regular meetings and continuous dialogue with all levels of the institutions involved, especially at the beginning, and the support of administrative staff at each school. This is best done by inviting representatives to visit each school, arranging meetings with representatives of each subject, and comparing syllabi, curricula and degree requirements to ensure that the continuation of the network is guaranteed. These steps will offer common reference points for quality assurance. When planning network activities, it is also good to bear in mind that, in some countries, national regulations imposed on education can restrict the cooperation to some extent.

The outcome of this long-standing cooperation is active and genuine relations exist between teachers, students, and deans from all partner institutions. This has enabled us to develop and promote cross-cultural and interdisciplinary courses, and also add value to the existing education of the network schools in an ever-changing global environment.

— RAILI EKHOLM & CHARLOTTA EDLUND

Creating a network of schools is not accomplished overnight; it requires regular meetings and continuous dialogue

THE NORDBIZ NETWORK

Denmark: Aarhus University, School of Business and Social Sciences

Estonia: Tallinn University of Technology

Finland: Lahti University of Applied Sciences

Iceland: Reykjavik University

Latvia: The Stockholm School of Economics in Riga

Lithuania: ISM University of Management and Economics

Norway: UC of Southeast Norway, School of Business

Sweden: Mälardalen University

01

ANDALUSIA

A REGION OF DIVERSITY, TALENT, AND CREATIVITY

For the 29th Annual EAIE Conference in Seville, you will be visiting Andalusia, a region that stretches across the south of Spain. Bathed by the waters of the Atlantic Ocean and the Mediterranean Sea, Andalusia is home to immense diversity in its history, natural world, and activities. In your downtime from the conference, take the opportunity to immerse yourself in the riches of this popular cultural and tourist destination.

Andalusia once welcomed cultures from the East, such as the Phoenicians, who settled along the coastline. An important part of the Roman civilisation, Emperor Trajan and the philosopher Seneca came from this land. Andalusia, or Al-Andalus, has always been a region of coexistence between three faiths: Muslim, Jewish, and Christian. It was from the shores of Andalusia that ships set sail destined to a then unknown land: America.

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE

Our rich history has given us a legacy of exceptional architectural heritage. Road and rail links from Seville allow participants to organise trips to any number of sights within just a few hours' journey time. Andalusia is home to important historical jewels such as the Alhambra in **Granada** – the most visited monument in Spain – as well as the historic quarters of cities such as **Cadiz**, where Spain passed its first ever Constitution; **Huelva,** where the ships commanded by Christopher Columbus set sail to America; World Heritage Cities such as **Cordoba**, home to a masterpiece of Caliphal art, the Mosque-Cathedral; and the towns of **Ubeda and Baeza** in the province of Jaen, with important palaces and churches from the 16th and 17th centuries.

As for the city of **Seville,** a stroll around its historic quarter is an absolute must. Take in the Moorish Giralda, the bell tower of the second largest Cathedral in Europe after St. Peter's in Rome, and a World Heritage Site. See the royal residence of the Alcazar fortress and its magnificent gardens. Explore the narrow streets of the Jewish Quarter, the Archive of the Indies, which contained information about commerce with that part of the world, and which continues today to house all the documentation and maps from that period. Stroll down the Plaza de España, the emblematic building of the 1929 World Exhibition, and the adjacent María Luisa Park, gifted to the city by the princess after whom it is named. Visit Seville University, located on the site of the former Tabaco Factory; and the Monastery of La Cartuja.

02. Old narrow street in town of Osuna

03. Sierra Nevada

04. Doñana National Park

05. Tapas delights

06. Performance of flamenco dance

PICTURE PERFECT

Some of our historical monuments have drawn international film directors to Andalusia, turning our region into a film set. Hundreds of films have been made here, from the classic 'Lawrence of Arabia', filmed in **Almeria,** and 'Doctor Zivago' in Granada, to the modern 'Knight and Day' shot in Seville. Star Wars filmed a scene at Plaza de España in Seville. The series 'Game of Thrones', filmed in the town of **Osuna,** in **Almeria,** at the Roman ruins in **Italica** and in Seville's Alcazar fortress. 'Die another Day' from the James Bond saga, shot in **Cadiz,** and 'The Girl with the Dragon Tattoo' was more recently filmed in **Malaga.**

This region is home to numerous museums and interpretation centres, but we shall mention just two essential ones to visit: **Seville's Museum of Fine Art,** the second largest art gallery in Spain, and the **Picasso Museum in Malaga**. If you are looking for a different experience, try the **Granada Science Park,** an interactive museum dedicated to the dissemination of science.

TICKLE THE SENSES

Andalusia pervades the soul through the eyes, but also the ears: music, song, and dance become Flamenco, an art form recognised as the intangible heritage of humanity by UNESCO since 2010. You can enjoy its more popular versions or its purest forms at festivals, numerous 'tablao' flamenco restaurants and bars, as well as in **Seville's Museum of Flamenco Art.**

Speaking of the senses, gastronomy is an essential part of anyone's enjoyment of this region. The tapas approach to eating out is a hallmark of Andalusia that has become international. The quality of food served at any establishment is usually excellent. Typical dishes in Seville include cured ham, good cheese, salmorejo and gazpacho, stews such as braised pork cheeks, and fried fish. For anyone who is able to take a mini-break, why not head to Huelva, which this year holds the title of Spanish Capital of Gastronomy?

NATURAL BEAUTY

Andalusia, however, is much more than its cities. This region is also home to great natural wealth, and 18% of its land area is protected to conserve its incredible jewels such as the **Doñana National Park,** declared a biosphere reserve. It also offers exceptional beaches and waters, stretching from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, good weather almost all year round, and a wide range of activities from water sports to skiing at the southernmost ski resort in Europe, **Sierra Nevada.**

In sum, it is this wealth of cultural, historical, and natural heritage, in addition to first-class tourist infrastructures that, in 2016, helped 28.2 million travellers take wonderful memories home with them. Yet it's not only tourists who benefit from Andalusia, where knowledge is promoted as an essential tool for enhancing the competitiveness of our businesses and generate quality employment.

Andalusia is heavily invested in innovation and cutting-edge technology and is a leading hub in the aeronautical industry, in the development of renewable energy, in the production of top quality agrarian produce that reach Europe from Huelva and Almeria. It is also an region for pioneering research in different areas, reflected in the businesses operating out of its 10 technology parks, and in its research and development network comprising 11 universities and various technology centres. Our region has many faces, but they all have one this in common: talent, diversity, and creativity.

— ANTONIO RAMÍREZ DE ARELLANO, REGIONAL MINISTER FOR ECONOMY & SCIENCE, GOVERNMENT OF ANDALUSIA

Photos: Daniel Vegel (01, 05), Shutterstock (02, 03, 04, 06)

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http://ow.ly/lX0N309FbEr

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01 MAR

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