

FORUM

MEMBER
MAGAZINE

Discussing international education

REGIONALISATION

15 HOLDING ON TO STRONG TIES

18 IN CONVERSATION WITH MANJA KLEMENČIČ

25 IS EUROPE THE GOLD STANDARD?

31 THE GEOGRAPHY OF MOBILITY

CONTENTS

Published by

European Association for International Education
PO Box 11189, 1001 GD Amsterdam, The Netherlands
TEL +31-20-344 51 00
E-MAIL info@eaie.org, www.eaie.org

Editor

Laura Rumbley
Publications Committee Laura Rumbley (*Chair*),
Jill Archer, Irina Ferencz, Jos Beelen, Han Aarts, Sara
Lopez, Elise Kuurstra

Head of Marketing & Communications

Elise Kuurstra
Editorial Coordinator Laura Mesquita
Graphic Designer Nhu Nguyen

*The EAIE would like to express its appreciation
and thanks to outgoing Editorial Coordinator,
Laura Mesquita for her contributions to Forum
during the past years.*

E-MAIL publications@eaie.org

Advertising

Contact info@eaie.org for more information.
The EAIE welcomes requests for advertising space from
companies and organisations whose aims and values
are compatible with those of the Association and its
members. Acceptance of advertising does not imply
endorsement by the EAIE.

Printed by Drukkerij Raddraaier, Amsterdam

Copyright © 2017 by the EAIE

All rights reserved. Extracts from *Forum* may be
reproduced with permission of the EAIE. Unless stated
otherwise, opinions expressed by contributors do not
necessarily reflect the position of the EAIE.

ISSN 1389-0808

Cover photo: shutterstock

04 EDITORIAL

05 CONTRIBUTORS

06 THE COST-REDUCING EFFECT

The economic motive for regionalisation

09 COMPETING IN A GLOBAL HIGHER EDUCATION MARKET

The importance of regional agreements

12 EUROPEAN REGIONALISATION IN AN AGE OF ANTI-REGIONALISM

Will regionalisation continue to grow?

15 HOLDING ON TO STRONG TIES

What the international office can do

18 IN CONVERSATION WITH MANJA KLEMENČIČ

A Harvard scholar of regionalisation discusses
present and future trends

22 FOSTERING REGIONAL DIALOGUES

How the Bologna Policy Forum has been intensifying collaboration

25 IS EUROPE THE GOLD STANDARD?

There are other regions in the world

28 REGIONAL COOPERATION AS A CATALYST FOR INTERNATIONALISATION

The Franco-German-Swiss border region way

31 THE GEOGRAPHY OF MOBILITY

Where do degree-seeking students go?

35 A NORDIC-BALTIC COOPERATION

Setting students up for success

38 ANDALUSIA, A REGION OF DIVERSITY, TALENT, AND CREATIVITY

A closer look at the Spanish region of Andalusia,
host of EAIE 2017

41 EAIE BLOG SPOT

43 EVENTS CALENDAR



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 we 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.

— LAURA RUMBLEY, EDITOR
PUBLICATIONS@EAIE.ORG

CONTRIBUTORS

Gabriele Suder

Director International Relations, University of Melbourne and Principal Fellow, Melbourne Business School, Australia

Gabriele is serious about international education: she has written 10 books and countless academic and media articles on the subject!

Susan Robertson

Professor of Sociology of Education, Cambridge University, UK

When Susan isn't studying regions, global institutions or knowledge and service economies, she likes to spend her time cooking, cooking and cooking some more!

Robin Shields

Senior Lecturer in Higher Education Management, University of Bath, UK

Robin may specialise in higher education management, student mobility, sociology of education and more, but her free time is spent tickling the ivories.

Baiba Pētersonē

Director, International Department, Rīga Stradiņš University, Latvia

Baiba, like many of her compatriots, spends a great part of the year indoors. In summer, she steps out of the international office and can be found galloping through the country.

Luis Delgado

Executive Advisor, General Secretariat of Universities, Ministry of Education, Culture and Sport, Spain

Forum readers may recognise Luis' name from the winter issue. Being featured twice in a row is very uncommon, but his collaboration with Patricia and Ella was just that interesting!

Patricia Pol

Emerita Professor of Political Science and Former Deputy Vice-Chancellor Newcastle University, UK

Patricia has a long history and extensive expertise in international education. Her hobbies? Oh, just Egyptian belly dancing and jewellery design. Talk about multi-talented!

Ella Ritchie

Vice-Chair of the Bologna Follow Up Group, Ministry of education, higher education and research, France

Ella has been working in international education since the 1980s, but like her co-author Patricia, she has special skills in the arts. Rock and roll dancing, anyone?

Meng-Hsuan Chou

Assistant Professor of Public Policy and Global Affairs, Nanyang Technological University, Singapore

Many *Forum* authors have studied abroad. Hsuan, having studied in the USA, the UK, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy, and France, certainly takes the cake for most international of all.

Hans-Jochen Schiewer

Rector of the University of Freiburg, Germany and President of Eucor – The European Campus

As President of Eucor and Rector of a border city university, Hans-Jochen is a strong believer in the power of cross-border collaboration for forging intercultural understanding!

Janosch Nieden

Director of the Coordination Office of Eucor – The European Campus

A German national now living in France, Janosch very much appreciates the local pastry culture, but still misses the 'Gemütlichkeit' (or friendliness) of German coffee houses.

Daan Huberts

Data analyst at EP-Nuffic, the Netherlands

Daan, whose academic background is in the humanities and social sciences, still finds the label of 'data analyst' a little weird.

Raili Ekholm

Senior Lecturer, Nordplus Coordinator, Lahti University of Applied Sciences, Finland

Raili names 'work' among her passions, but in her free time what she really enjoys doing is going to a cottage by the lake, growing potatoes and harvesting mushrooms.

Charlotta Edlund

University Lecturer and Program Coordinator, Mälardalen University, Sweden

Charlotta is an organisational mastermind, and enjoys adding structure to any project she touches. In her downtime, she can be found 'Netflixing' and singing her heart out.

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

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

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.

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

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

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

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)



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.

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

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.

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

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