have implemented reforms aimed at changing tuition fees for international students. Evidence from national reforms implemented in Denmark, New Zealand, and Sweden shows that tuition fees and the number of new international entrants are strongly related.

In 2006, New Zealand introduced a policy that aimed to attract international students to join PhD programs by subsidizing their tuition fees, similarly to national students. Attraction and retention of international students were also promoted by granting them and their partners some rights to work in the country. This policy proved effective the same year of its implementation, as the number of new international entrants to PhD programs more than doubled in 2006 and continued growing steadily from 2007 onward.

On the other hand, Denmark (in 2006) and Sweden (in 2011) introduced tuition fees for foreign students in short-cycle tertiary programs (bachelor's, master's, or equivalent degree programs). While national students and students from the EEA did not have to pay tuition fees, new entrants from outside the EEA had to pay over US$11,000 in Denmark and over US$13,000 in Sweden. The year in which the reform became effective saw the number of national and EEA students increase in both countries, while the number of international students fell by 20 percent in Denmark and, even more dramatically, by 80 percent in Sweden.

Higher Tuition Fees for Foreign Students: All Good?

Available data shows that foreign students can be made to fund a substantial amount of a tertiary education system's expenditure. They have been called the "cash cows" of tertiary education, in this publication and in other authoritative sources. This has motivated many governments to charge foreign students higher fees than national students.

However, international students can afford to be selective: they are willing to move and have many options. Available evidence shows that the number of international students coming to a country can decline dramatically following an increase in tuition fees.

A reduction in the number of international students can potentially harm a tertiary education system, as international students do not only bring their financial contribution, but also a diversity of perspectives and cultures that improves the educational experience of all students. Discrimination by nationality can also harm the student experience by creating divides between students.

Perhaps because of these reasons, a few months ago, both national and international students in Belgium enrolled at the Free University of Brussels and the Catholic University of Leuven protested strongly to oppose plans to increase tuition fees for international students—and these protests were successful. Charging tuition fees to foreign students can be a tool to boost the funding of tertiary education, but governments must keep in mind that this tool is, essentially, a double-edged sword. ■

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"One Belt One Road" and Central Asia: A New Trend in Internationalization of Higher Education?

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In his speech at Nazarbayev University, Astana, in 2013, the Chinese president Xi Jinping proposed the "Silk Road Economic Belt." The proposal, together with the "Maritime Silk Road" venture, has evolved to become the "One Belt One Road" (OBOR) strategy. The Belt covers a vast area along the ancient Silk Road, stretching from China to Europe through Central Asia. Critics see this strategy as the latest projection of China's economic ambitions in the world and another form of its soft power policy. The five Central Asian Republics, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan, responded to OBOR differently. Kazakhstan's *Nurly Zhol* (Lighted Path) initiative directly tied into OBOR, reflecting the country's ambition to be more than a transit zone between China and Europe. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan are cautious about Chinese labor force expansion, and have therefore restricted the number of Chinese employees that can be hired for projects in their countries. In higher education, OBOR has made a real impact on Central Asia. Four years on, several questions have arisen regarding the strategy's implications for higher education in China and Central Asia.

China's Investment in Scholarships

OBOR's emphasis on fostering relations has inevitably led to connecting the region through education. In his speech, Xi announced a 10-year plan to provide 30,000 scholarships to students from the member countries of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) to study at Chinese universities, and to invite 10,000 teachers and students from the region's Confucius Institutes to participate in training programs in China. Since four out of eight SCO members are Central Asian Republics, such a generous proposal has

led to speculation that China is leveraging higher education as a means to influence Central Asia.

In fact, China has been providing scholarships for students from Central Asia since the republics became independent in the early 1990s. The scholarships range from government scholarships at various levels to institutional scholarships, the funding of Confucius Institutes, as well as full or partial scholarships provided by private entities. These scholarships often reflect China's national policy orientation. For example, with OBOR being a current focus, the numbers of scholarships for Central Asian students are on the rise, as reflected in the increased number allocated to SCO member countries.

In 2013, more than 20,000 students from Central Asia studied in China, of whom approximately 2,200 were recipients of Chinese government scholarships. The latest figures released by China's ministry of education reveal that Kazakhstan is among the top ten countries receiving Chinese government scholarships, particularly under OBOR's policy support.

China's initiatives to attract Central Asian students come as no surprise. Higher education has been an approach of China's cultural diplomacy to win hearts and minds around the world. At the practical level, a productive and sustainable relationship between China and Central Asia needs to be supported by well-trained professionals. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Russia remains the first choice of Central Asian students when it comes to study abroad. Historically, Central Asian elites are educated in Russia and they keep strong cultural and political ties with Russia. Whether the increasing number of Central Asian students in China would shift this connection remains a question.

The Confucius Institute

The Confucius Institute is another important institution that facilitates higher education exchanges between Central Asia and China through language training as well as awarding "Confucius Institute Scholarships" to students, scholars, and Chinese language teachers of other countries to study in selected universities in China.

It has been long argued that, apart from raising awareness of Chinese language and Chinese culture, the Confucius Institute is also a vital component of China's soft power policy. Xi's speech on allocating scholarships to students and teachers from the Confucius Institute in the region precisely captures this role.

Currently, there are 12 Confucius Institutes in Central Asia, excluding Turkmenistan. They are considered as an important facilitator of OBOR. Compared with Confucius Institutes in Europe and North America, those in Central Asia have experienced a shortage of teachers, and a lack of textbooks in the national languages of Central Asian Republics.

Until today, Russian remains the common language in Central Asia, reflecting Russia's extensive and deep influence. The rise of the Chinese language, supported by the Chinese government, may be seen as a competitor to Russia's cultural influence in the region.

Internationalization at China's Frontier

A less visible consequence of these frequent exchanges is their impact on the internationalization of higher education in Xinjiang, China's northwestern frontier. Geographical proximity has been a reason why Central Asian students favor Xinjiang as a destination. In addition, well-developed infrastructure, low costs of living and tuition, and the increasing quality of programs are making Xinjiang an ideal destination. Policy support has also contributed to the increase of student enrollments from Central Asia. Since 2008, 100 Chinese government scholarships have been specifically allocated to Xinjiang annually to attract international students, focusing on students from Central Asia. This inclination is explicitly stated in the Mid- and Long-Term Educational Reform and Development Plan of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region 2010–2020. By the end of 2013, there were almost 7,000 international students studying in Xinjiang, an increase of nearly three times compared with 2010. In 2014, almost 80 percent of international students in Xinjiang were from Central Asia.

OBOR's emphasis on fostering relations has inevitably led to connecting the region through education.

Xinjiang also plays an important role in the growth of the Confucius Institute in Central Asia. Among the 12 Confucius Institutes there, seven are partnered with Xinjiang universities. In Kyrgyzstan, all four Confucius Institutes have Xinjiang partners. The partnerships echo the priorities of developing western China through higher education cooperation with Central Asia, and Xinjiang has a unique role within this national policy.

Xinjiang may be in a disadvantageous position in recruiting students domestically. However, it presents a regional advantage in recruiting students from neighboring countries. At the national policy level, these advantages are expected to assist higher education development on China's frontier.

Where Is This Leading?

Three issues can be observed from OBOR's impact on higher education relations between Central Asia and China. First, education sector developments follow China's cultural diplomacy discourse, emphasizing building people-to-people relationships through education. However, it is still uncertain whether China's educational investment will contribute to the economic transformation of Central Asia, e.g., help the region move from dependency on extractive industry to a diversified economy. Second, China's frontier regions appear to be "quiet achievers" in internationalization of higher education under OBOR, and further development can be expected in Xinjiang. Third and most importantly, China's growing presence in Central Asia's education sphere may challenge Russia's dominant role in the region. There is much research regarding the competition between China and Russia for economic and political influence, but little is known about the competition in the educational sphere and its implications for the economic, political, and cultural transformation of Central Asia. ■

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Training Administrative Staff to Become Key Players in the Internationalization of Higher Education

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As definitions of internationalization have evolved over the last 25 years or so, they have typically excluded—or made only scant reference to—the administrative function. However, in the more recent definitions that advocate a comprehensive approach, there is increasingly evident reference made to support functions in the university context, and yet the role of administrative staff is rarely discussed. To a large extent, this trend is reflected also in the practice of internationalization, where, although administrative staff have always been involved, the focus has been placed principally on academic activities and hence on students and teachers.

While they have often been left in the background, at times invisible actors, administrative staff have nevertheless been expected to adapt to the changing institutional needs and provide the requisite levels of service, with or without the appropriate training. A current Erasmus+ project, Systematic University Change toward Internationalization (SUCTI), seeks to play a part in addressing this oversight by recognizing the fundamental role these staff play, and by enabling them to become active participants in the internationalization processes at their institutions through the provision of dedicated training.

In order to better understand their needs and the context in which they operate, the SUCTI team undertook a two-part survey, which included a questionnaire to international directors at universities in the European Higher Education Area and interviews with a range of administrative staff (from junior to senior levels) in the six universities that make up the project consortium. A number of key findings emerged that will inform the development of the training provision to be delivered within the project, but they also have broader implications for the management of internationalization.

Building Commitment

As is to be expected, universities surveyed declare internationalization to be increasingly important or even essential to their development, and the majority note that a strategic plan is in place. Naturally, these strategies come in a range of forms and degrees of effectiveness, and having a strategic plan does not always mean that it is reflected in institutional policies and everyday practices. The study revealed that where there is a comprehensive approach to internationalization, it is more likely that the institution is also seeking to build a shared understanding of, and sense of commitment to, internationalization. On the other hand, weaker processes tend to divide the administrative community into two groups—those who are committed and convinced versus those who feel distant and disengaged from internationalization, may have limited understanding, or resist involvement.

A commitment to internationalization requires a carefully thought-out strategic process that takes into consideration the development of the whole institution. This inevitably implies a long-term change process, and the study highlighted that the more open and future-focused the university is, the more likely it will be willing to engage in organizational change as an essential component of its internationalization strategy.

Shifting Roles

Furthermore, a more comprehensive approach leads inevitably to an increasing volume and scope of international activity and this requires the involvement of a more profes-