

quality and progress, the sense of successful engagement in the internationalization process among their staff is more palpable.

HAVE WE FOUND THE MAGIC FORMULA? NO, BUT...

It is a commonly accepted truism that there is no “one size fits all” model for internationalization of HEIs. Our analysis does not intend to contradict that notion, but it does point to some possible commonalities when it comes to approaches taken by European HEIs that consider themselves to be in relatively strong positions with respect to internationalization. Of course, “signposts of success” may point us in a general direction, but the specifics of why an institution thrives—or not—with respect to its internationalization performance remains a complex question. Still, operating from a starting point that aligns squarely with institutional mission, positioning strategy and its supporting actors purposefully within the institution, and implementing agendas that are both expansive and meaningfully resourced seems to add up to a recipe for (self-reported) success. ■

Is Strategic Internationalization a Reality?

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The full report of the 5th IAU Global Survey will be published by DUZ Academic Publishers in the coming months.

The internationalization of higher education is a phenomenon that has implications far beyond the domain of higher education; it impacts society at large. According to the definition of Jane Knight, updated in 2015 by de Wit and others, internationalization is “an intentional process undertaken by higher education institutions in order to enhance the quality of education and research for all students and staff, and to make a meaningful contribution to soci-

ety.” Assuming that internationalization is an intentional process, the question arising is: how strategic is this process? In other words, is internationalization at HEIs supported by a defined strategy, with clear objectives, actions, and point persons, framed within a realistic timeline, and supported by the necessary (human and financial) resources? Is this strategy monitored and are outcomes evaluated? And in the current political climate of antiglobalization, anti-immigration, and increasing nationalism, to what extent is this strategy still relevant and up to date? The results of the 5th Global Survey on Internationalization of Higher Education, an online survey conducted by the International Association of Universities (IAU) in 2018, help us address these questions.

The survey was based upon replies from 907 HEIs across 126 countries worldwide. For that survey, HEIs were asked to state whether internationalization was mentioned in their mission/strategic plan. A clear majority replied that it was. This is a sign of how internationalization has become widespread among HEIs around the globe, but it does not reveal how strategic their approach is.

HAVING A STRATEGY DOES NOT MEAN HAVING A STRATEGIC APPROACH

The presence of a strategy does not necessarily align with a strategic approach to internationalization if there are no activities to implement it and support structures in place, if the strategy is not monitored, and if progress is not evaluated. The IAU survey indicates that the internationalization policy/strategy is institution-wide in almost all HEIs that indicated having elaborated one. The presence of an office or a team in charge of overseeing the implementation of the policy/strategy is widespread, as is the inclusion of an international dimension in other institutional policies/strategies/plans. The presence of a monitoring framework and of explicit targets and benchmarks is slightly lower, but still present at almost three-quarters of the responding institutions, and a budgetary provision is present at two-thirds of them.

These results seem to indicate that a strategic approach to internationalization is indeed common at the majority of HEIs in the world. However, previous IAU Global Surveys included the very same questions, and an analysis of the evaluation of results over time unveils additional information. A clear growth of the presence of a policy/strategy at HEIs can be identified. The same is true for the percentage of HEIs having a dedicated office or team to implement the policy/strategy. In the present survey, this percentage reaches 89 percent, an increase of 25 percentage points in 15 years.

The percentage of HEIs having a dedicated budget has grown in the first three editions of the Global Survey, from 50 percent at the time of the 1st Global Survey (2003) to 73 percent at the time of the 3rd Global Survey (2009), then dropped to 61 percent at the time of the 4th Global Survey (2014) and slightly increased again to 64 percent in the 5th Global Survey (2018). The decrease of the presence of a dedicated budget between 2009 and 2014 can be interpreted as an effect of the global financial crisis and of related funding cuts at HEIs. The changing political climate of the past years does not seem to have had a negative impact. Still, overall, in the last 15 years as many as one-third of respondent HEIs have not had a dedicated budget for internationalization.

Regarding the percentage of HEIs indicating that they have a monitoring framework, the 5th Global Survey indicates a new record with 73 percent. However, the increase seems to have happened between 2005 and 2009, while in the last eight years the figure has stabilized. Almost one quarter of the responding institutions do not have monitoring framework in place.

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INCREASING INEQUALITY

The results of the 5th IAU Global Survey show that the presence of an institution-wide policy/strategy for internationalization, as well as the presence of a dedicated office or team to oversee its implementation, are becoming the norm at HEIs around the world. However, in terms of financial resources and monitoring and evaluation, the results, although encouraging, show that there is still room for improvement. While the allocation of dedicated financial resources may have been hindered by the consequences of the global financial crisis, the stagnation in the development of a monitoring framework in the last nine years suggests that there is a group of HEIs for which strategic internationalization is not yet a reality.

The majority of the respondents to the survey attach a high level of importance to internationalization, which is an increase over the last three years. However, this increase

has happened mainly at HEIs where the level was already high. This might signal a growing inequality between HEIs, and is further reflected in the risks of internationalization identified by survey respondents. Indeed, the main institutional risk cited by respondents is “international opportunities accessible only to students with financial resources.” This expresses a concern among HEI representatives that disadvantaged students may be left out as a result of globalization, and that institutions should be more inclusive.

The question is: does this matter, and if it does, how? According to the results of the EAIE Barometer of 2018, there is a positive correlation between the presence of a strategic approach to internationalization and its perceived success. The definition of “success” in internationalization is controversial, but the benefits of having a strategic approach and the reasons why it is a reality at some (but not all) HEIs is worth further thought and investigation. It will also be interesting to see in the coming years, as well as in future surveys, whether the current global political climate has an impact on inequality. ■

What Do We Know about Student Mobility in Mexico?

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Patlani—which means “to fly” in Nahuatl—is a survey of student mobility in Mexico published biannually since 2012 by the National Association of Universities and Higher Education Institutions (ANUIES). It presents information on international outgoing and incoming credit mobility, as well as on incoming degree-seeking mobility. It gathers data through an online questionnaire sent to Mexican higher education institutions (HEIs), with responses integrated in each report. It constitutes to this day the only publicly available source of statistics on student mobility in Mexico. It has survived changes in administration and funding during the last decade and its reputation and reliability have grown consistently over the years. Since the base survey is only sent to ANUIES members, its answers represent approximately 10 percent of Mexican HEIs; although it often includes data on outbound degree-seeking mobility from other sources, that data point cannot be seen as comprehen-