

bachelor's and master's degree structure. And the French and Italians needed the others to convince their publics of the need for reform of their higher education systems, something that had previously always been blocked by massive protests.

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***Europe is heading for a period of major change in education and working conditions, to a diversification of courses of professional careers, with education and training throughout life becoming a clear obligation.***

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Of course, intensive debates followed, complicated by discrepancies between the French and British versions of the declaration. However, the Sorbonne Declaration was surprisingly well received, both in the political arena and in the higher education community of the four countries and in the rest of Europe. Andris Barblan of the Confederation of European Union Rectors' Conferences (CRE) gave the following explanations for this positive response during a meeting of the Santander Group:

- The process was initiated from unexpected quarters, the European role of the Commission being taken over at the national level by the education ministers.
- Politicians were calling for the fulfillment of a process they had entrusted earlier to the people primarily responsible for higher education—namely, academics.

- The discussion at the Sorbonne was an extremely rare constellation of users, providers, and political leaders.

The positive response to the Sorbonne Declaration set the stage for a broader initiative. On the invitation of the Italian minister of education, a meeting was convened in Bologna. The debate was based on the Sorbonne Declaration and on a study prepared by the Association of European Universities and the CRE on "Trends in European Learning Structures." The study showed the extreme complexity and diversity of European curricular and degree structures. Whereas the Sorbonne Declaration spoke of harmonization, both the prepared study and the resulting Bologna Declaration avoided this word—due largely to the potential negative interpretations. Instead, the study speaks of "actions which may foster the desired convergence and transparency in qualification structures in Europe."

What effect will the two declarations have on higher education in Europe? First of all, they reconfirm trends under way in Germany, Austria, and Denmark to introduce a bachelor's and master's degree structure. Second, they have stimulated similar movements in countries such as the Netherlands, where several universities have started to develop bachelor's and master's degrees, with the support of the minister of education. But most of all, a strong incentive has been given to the realization of an open European higher education environment. The declarations, in themselves an attempt to keep a political grip on developments in the higher education sector, will work as a catalyst for reform of higher education throughout Europe. There is still a long way to go, particularly in Germany, France, Italy, and the United Kingdom, the four countries that initiated the Sorbonne Declaration. ■

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## Australia and Foreign Student Recruitment

### **Barbara B. Burn**

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Australia's universities have unquestionably gained a reputation for aggressively recruiting foreign students. Using vocabulary from the world of business (e.g., "marketing" higher education or "diversifying international student recruitment into new markets") reinforces their perceived commercial orientation. So, also, have the universities' "hard-sell" efforts, as at the annual conferences

of NAFSA: Association of International Educators, where Australian university contingents appear among the most active in foreign student recruitment efforts.

On a recent two-week visit in Australia, a country on whose higher education system I earlier published two studies, one of my interests was to explore the universities' motivation and strategies for attracting more foreign students to their institutions. With Chancellor David Scott of the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, I arranged visits to six universities, met with administrators and faculty, collected information, and discussed the foreign student situation.

The active, even aggressive, foreign student recruiting started after the Commonwealth government announced a policy of full-cost fees in 1985, following the 1984 Jackson Committee review of overseas aid programs. The number of foreign students increased from 15,000 in 1984 to 75,000 in 1998, and is projected to reach 89,000 by the

year 2000. The universities have not recruited as actively. Leading are the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology University, the University of New South Wales, and Curtin University of Technology. A recent study carried out by Curtin's Institute for Research into International Competitiveness showed that Curtin generates AUST\$700-870 million in annual revenue for Western Australia, close to half from international student fees. Overall, international students now constitute 10 percent of all university students nationally, close to 20 percent at the universities with the largest numbers, not including international students enrolled at off-shore campuses that the Australian universities are developing through twinning and other linkage arrangements.

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International student recruitment has brought interesting transformations. The universities' publications for recruiting are outstanding in design and content. However, some tend to highlight, in addition to academic quality, such attractions as Australia's Gold Coast and surfing at Manly—so that when some American students seem to neglect the universities' excellent academic offerings in favor of more hedonistic pursuits, this may be a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy.

That fact that some of Australia's universities have been zealously recruiting international students for the added tuition revenues that accrue should be viewed in the context of the drastic cuts in government support of higher education, from 77.2 to 53.8 percent of costs between 1989 and 1997. This has encouraged, and even driven, the universities to obtain funds from other sources. For example, the government now allows them to charge tuition from graduate students (Australian as well as foreign) and to accept Australian undergraduates who pay full tuition for up to one-fourth of enrollments in a course. The universities are now also seeking extra funding through research earnings, privatization, summer programs, and overseas campuses. However, international student tuition will continue to be an important revenue source, and Australia hopes to double its share of international students who study in English-language countries—currently a 10 percent share (the United States now has 68, the United Kingdom 17, and Canada 5 percent). Moreover, the financial situation of Australia's universities needs to be appreciated in relation to other issues affecting it. Relevant here are the cur-

rent efforts of university academics to secure substantial salary increases with strikes and cancellation of classes at a number of universities in July. This should be looked at in the context of the 12 percent salary increase obtained in 1997, after which the universities were forced to cut more than 3,000 positions.

When they began recruiting foreign students, Australian universities claimed that this was in the interest of internationalizing their institutions. Now more and more of them are making genuine efforts in that direction. In a recent paper, "Outcomes of Student Exchange," Fiona Clyne and Fazal Rizvi speak of a shift in policies away from "narrow commercialism" to a concept of internationalism that includes cultural and economic concerns. These efforts include international faculty contacts and scholarly collaboration, giving their students a global experience (traditionally Australian students attend university in their home state), making curricula much more international, and working with industry, research laboratories, and other entities abroad.

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An important step taken by the Australian universities in connection with international student recruitment was the development, beginning in 1989, of codes of ethical practice, culminating in the adoption in August 1998 of a "Code of Ethical Practice in the Provision of Education to International Students by Australian Universities." Like the publication of NAFSA: Association of International Educators, "Guide to Ethical International Recruitment," the AVCC code relies on the higher education institutions to monitor and enforce compliance. The code and the universities' increased attention to internationalizing their institutions using multiple strategies should help improve the image and the practices of the Australian universities relating to international student recruitment. Much wider awareness in the United States of those efforts and goals by the Australian universities is overdue. This brief piece may help expand that awareness. ■

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