

Coordinated German Internationalization: Broadening Perspectives

BERNHARD STREITWIESER, JENNIFER OLSON, SIMONE BURKHART, AND NIELS KLABUNDE

Bernhard Streitwieser is an assistant professor of International Education at George Washington University, US. E-mail: streitwieser@gwu.edu. Jennifer Olson is a post-doctoral fellow in the Department of Education at the University of Oslo, Norway. E-mail: j.r.olson@iped.uio.no. Simone Burkhardt leads the Strategic Planning Division at the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD). E-mail: burkhardt@daad.de. Niels Klabunde is a research consultant at the Humboldt Universität zu Berlin, Germany. E-mail: nklabunde@gmx.de. This paper is an abridged version of "Internationalization in Germany," in the Research Study on Internationalisation of Higher Education (IP/B/CULT/IC/2014-002) for the European Parliament: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2015/540370/IPOL_STU%282015%29540370_EN.pdf.

Over the past decade, through efforts at the federal, state, and institution levels, Germany has steadily defined its goals and aligned its priorities for successfully promoting the internationalization of its higher education system. These efforts have primarily aimed at increasing Germany's institutional rankings, participating in the global circulation of talent, developing a stronger sense of European identity among citizens, and diversifying a population challenged by a low birth rate and a rapidly aging population. More recent discussions in Germany have focused on assessing the economic benefits of the growing internationalization of the country's higher education institutions, and the potential impact this will have on local and national economies.

A SHIFT IN FOCUS

In a newly released report from the Stifterverband and McKinsey organizations, the focus is on the current and anticipated impact that international students will have on the German economy. The report advocates looking more closely at how universities deal with issues of retention—currently, there is a 41 percent drop-out rate before graduation in undergraduate courses; in master's level courses it is much lower, at only 9 percent—and how to improve completion rates as a way to retain a talent pool that Germany will need in the future, not to mention the 4.3 billion euros international students may add to the economy in the coming decade. More recently, the arrival of hundreds of thou-

sands of Syrian refugees, many with advanced educational credentials and training, has further sharpened the question of how best to utilize and integrate skilled migrants. Several dozen German universities have recently announced plans to accommodate Syrian refugees by granting permission to audit courses, while their refugee status is processed.

By directly addressing the beneficial economic impact of international students in Germany, a long-dormant debate about charging international students tuition may also re-emerge, although the Stifterverband-McKinsey report only touches lightly on this question. According to the study's survey of 230 businesses, 45 percent supported the idea of charging tuition to foreign students, while 30 percent rejected it—a finding somewhat higher than the results from polls of state voters, who have continuously rejected charging higher education tuition for any students, including those from abroad. An important question is how sustainable tuition-free higher education in Germany will be in the long term.

MOBILITY AND BEYOND

Germany today is the world's fifth most attractive host country for internationally mobile students, and its higher education landscape is quickly diversifying as its population of foreign students continues to rapidly expand. Since 2010, the number of foreign students at German universities has grown substantially and now stands at 319,283, up from 244,775 five years ago. This figure combines both categories of foreign students in Germany: the so-called *Bildungsinländer*—i.e., foreign students who have generally studied in Germany and lived in the country before entering university—and *Bildungsausländer*, who are foreign students who earned their higher education credentials outside of the country before entering a university in Germany.

Germany now also sends one third of its students abroad each year, although this figure has remained somewhat stagnant over the past decade. Today, more than half (57 percent) of Germany's higher education institutions offer master's programs taught in English and aim directly at bringing international students to Germany. The government follows this up by offering attractive incentives for foreign students to stay on for longer-term employment. The most headline-grabbing element of German internationalization, however, continues to be the tuition-free higher education it offers, not only for domestic students but also international students seeking full degrees in Germany. The continued belief in education as a public right in Germany appears steadfast at a time when other countries are either introducing tuition systems or, if they already exist, increasing tuition year by year.

DEFINING GOALS AND ALIGNING PRIORITIES

Internationalization in Germany can be characterized as being a more coordinated process than in most of the other education systems in Europe and beyond. This is due to the leadership and support of five powerful promoters of German internationalization: the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the German Research Foundation, the German Rectors Conference, the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD), and the Alexander von Humboldt Foundation. Over recent decades, the primary internationalization agendas have been set by these five federal-level players who have defined broad goals, which have then been carried out at state and local levels by agencies, research institutes, foundations, and academic institutions.

FEDERAL, STATE, AND INSTITUTIONAL POLICIES AND PRACTICES

The joint strategy to internationalize German higher education institutions, declared in 2013 by the federal and state-level ministers of education and science, continues to play out today in important ways. That strategy identified 9 common goals that addressed themes related to student mobility, internationalization at home, staff development, international research cooperation, increased student services, strategic frameworks for action, and targets for transnational education. At the institution level, many German universities then subsequently developed or revised their own international strategies to focus not only on national priorities—such as increasing mobility, fostering international research cooperation, and internationalizing the curriculum—but also on expanding the international profile of their own administrative staff or improving services for incoming international students and outgoing domestic students. To assist in the implementation of these strategies, in 2009 the German Rectors' Conference, with the financing and collaboration of the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, created the "Audit Internationalisation of Universities" process. This audit is a 12-month service that brings together an external expert commission with an institution-appointed team to jointly evaluate the institution's internationalization process and formulate concrete recommendations tailored to its unique profile, needs, and interests.

THE EXCELLENCE INITIATIVE

Over the past decade, large amounts of public funding allocated to specified target groups for clearly defined activities have further helped to accelerate the pace and perception of German higher education internationalization. The most internationally visible of these efforts has been the multi-billion euro German *Excellence Initiative* launched in 2004 and renewed in 2012. In its second wave, this competitive grant awarded an additional 2.7 billion euros across 45

graduate schools, 43 clusters of excellence, and 11 institutional strategies to support increased internationalization activities toward developing "world-class" institutions in the international educational market. While some critics have lamented that the *Excellence Initiative* is overly responsive to the pressures of global rankings and international competition and ignores institutional diversity and access, few have questioned the initiative's success at identifying a cadre of top-level research institutions that have influenced the international perception of Germany again offering a globally competitive higher education system.

INDICATORS OF SUCCESS

According to a recent British Council report assessing 11 countries' progress in internationalization of their higher education systems, Germany was listed as the top country, with 8.4 points out of a total of 10 in the combined criteria of openness, access and equity, quality assurance, and degree recognition. The *European Quality Charter on Mobility of 2011/2012* listed Germany as the only country, among 36, that met all four goals of its scorecard: 1) national and regional strategies and initiatives and government-based or publicly-funded bodies devoted to providing information and guidance on learning mobility; 2) publicly supported internet-based information resources; 3) publicly supported personalized services for counseling, guidance, and information; and 4) involvement of publicly supported "multipliers" to further provide information and guidance. The January 2014 Eurydice report, *Towards a Mobility Scoreboard: Conditions for Learning Abroad in Europe*, which rates the 28 EU member countries' policies of promoting higher education mobility, singled Germany out along with the Netherlands, Italy, and Austria for providing the best financial support and closest monitoring of students from disadvantaged backgrounds seeking opportunities to engage in mobility.

FINANCIAL AND THEMATIC CHALLENGES

As a federal higher education system, however, Germany faces definite challenges to its continued promotion of international education. Whereas its national initiatives have done much to advance the pace of internationalization domestically, there is currently no clear indication that state support for universities will continue to ensure the self-sustainability of international activities at the institutional level. The imbalance of high rates of third party funding on the one hand, and declines in basic funding for university research and teaching on the other, jeopardizes certain long-term internationalization activities. In addition, in some cases basic funding by federal states is insufficient to render a significant impact on internationalization efforts. Also, as noted, the sustainability of tuition-free university

education remains a significant open question.

Apart from these financial issues, other challenges identified by the DAAD and other observers remain to be addressed. These include ensuring that standards for quality research, instruction, and study are maintained in the face of increased competition; ensuring that the curriculum and learning experience for students who are unable to study abroad substantively incorporates elements of internationalization; adjusting the higher education admissions process in order to open up new and more diverse educational pathways for incoming students; and taking advantage of novel learning opportunities presented by new media and innovative technologies. In institutions in more rural locations, the distribution of resources necessary for attracting foreign talent and increasing services for mobility of faculty also remain unevenly distributed. Finally, the development of virtual mobility through massive open online courses and the development of satellite campuses and joint and double-degree programs have not yet made significant headway into various federal policies. Creating additional monitoring systems and research chairs for internationalization may be one way to further develop the process of internationalization in Germany, much as has been done in other large higher education systems. ■

India's Emergence as a Regional Education Hub

MONA KHARE

Mona Khare is Professor at the Centre for Policy Research in Higher Education and in the Department of Educational Planning, at the National University of Educational Planning and Administration, New Delhi, India. E-mail: monakhare@nuepa.org; mona_khare@rediffmail.com.

India's move from being a North-South recipient to being a South-South, North-South, and triangular cooperation nation is seen as the result of increasing globalization and internationalization of education worldwide. However, increasing South-South cooperation is being seen more as a fallout from the formation of regional blocs, such as the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC); the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN); BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa); the trilateral agreement between India, Brazil, and South Africa (IBSA); and the E-9 (education) initiative, whereby 9

member countries (Bangladesh, Brazil, China, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Mexico, Nigeria, and Pakistan) have come together with support from UNESCO, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund, and the World Bank to promote joint commitment toward strengthening educational ties. Initiatives—such as India's "Look East" policy, and many others—have further consolidated and strengthened relations between India and its neighboring countries with similar backgrounds and facing similar challenges. As a result, India is not only emerging as an economic leader in the region but its potential as an academic leader is also being recognized.

The post-1990 liberalization policy in India had a profound influence in opening up the education sector via greater collaborations and increased academic mobility of students, researchers, teachers, and academicians. In order to provide greater impetus to internationalization, regulations have been liberalized to allow twinning arrangements with foreign universities and opening campuses abroad. There is also an increasing desire and practice in Indian education institutions of hiring professionals from foreign education systems on attractive remunerations for short-term engagements. One result of this has been a conscious drive toward harmonization of curricula, assessment methodology, and standardization and accreditation mechanisms to encourage mutual recognition of degrees and credit transfer. This move has been an influencing factor in India emerging as a regional education hub in recent years.

INDIA: AN HISTORIC DONOR

India's involvement in education cooperation with South Asian and African countries can be traced back to several initiatives. Examples include its educational aid program to Nepal in the 1950s, the Technical Co-operation Scheme (TCS) under the Colombo Plan, the Indian Technical and Economic Cooperation Scheme (ITEC) that has been functioning since 1964, and the Special Commonwealth African Assistance Program (SCAAP) through which India has provided assistance to more than 150 countries in Asia, East Europe, Africa, and Latin America. According to the Ministry of External Affairs, India spends around Rs500 million (US\$111million) annually on ITEC scheme activities, training around 3,000 people in the South each year. Funding through ITEC and SCAAP together has amounted to nearly US\$2 billion since their inception.

Both ITEC and its sister program, SCAAP, use the same aid modalities, but whereas ITEC reaches 142 countries across Asia, Africa, Eastern Europe, Latin America, the Caribbean, the Pacific as well as some small island nations, SCAAP targets only African countries in the Commonwealth (currently 19). ITEC and SCAAP aid comprises five