Chapter Four: The European Agenda

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4.1 Introduction

4.1.1. It is possible to identify historical examples of international scholarly links amongst European universities going back hundreds of years. The creation of the first European universities around eight hundred years ago attracted scholars from many places, and this actually predated the creation of nation states, which is often linked to the Treaty of Westphalia in 1648 at the end of the thirty years' war. Hence, prior to even having an idea of nation states, the concept of *inter-nationalisation* of education would have been difficult to grasp.

4.1.2. This chapter, however, will focus on the current European dimension of international collaborations, and in order to contextualise this it will briefly recount what can be thought of as the main areas of activity since the Second World War. The issues raised in this chapter, with this specific reference to Europe, will touch on issues discussed more widely in other chapters, for example 'Chapter One: Institutional Internationalisation Strategies' and 'Chapter Three: Quality Assurance in International Collaborative Courses'. The case study concerning the National Union of Students 'CS 5: National Union of Students' further illustrates several of the issues discussed. The majority of sources consulted for this chapter are online materials, which are referred to in footnotes.

4.1.3. One main element of the European dimension of internationalisation mostly concerns mobility of students and staff between institutions, rather than collaborative activities amongst institutions, although one part of the ERASMUS programme (which will be seen is the main programme relating to mobility) does support co-operative activities. Moreover, mobility schemes of students and staff often complement other forms of collaborative activity, so it is necessary to consider mobility within the overall discussion of collaborations.

4.1.4. The second predominant element of the Europeanisation process concerns growing recognition of, and then attempts to achieve harmonisation among, the different European systems of higher education. This is the intention of the Bologna process, which includes 47 countries and goes far beyond the European Union. Birtwistle (2007) points out that historically each country had developed

its own understandings of what higher education should be and how it should be structured, resulting in substantially different systems.

4.1.5. This chapter will firstly examine some of the key issues concerning higher education within what can be thought of as the grand project of increasing Europeanisation generally, and then will go on to give an overview of these two key components within this: the ERASMUS programme, and the Bologna process.

4.2 The general project of increasing Europeanisation of higher education.

4.2.1. Various key dates concerning European-level internationalisation are given in the following timeline:

1949; the Council of Europe formed, the start of drives for recognition of other countries' qualifications, encouragement of student mobility; hence various related conventions agreed throughout 1950s.

1950s; around 200,000 foreign students world-wide.

Late 1970s; more than 500,000 foreign students world-wide.

1987; the ERASMUS programme started.

1987; 1.2 million foreign students world-wide.

1989; the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) started.

1995; The ERASMUS programme incorporated as part of the Socrates programme.

Mid 1990s; European attention began to shift from encouraging mobility within Europe to include more global plans for mobility.

1997; Convention on the recognitions of Qualifications Concerning Higher Education in the European Region.

1998; the Sorbonne declaration.

1999; the Bologna Declaration, a vision for 2010 of an internationally competitive and attractive European Higher Education Area.

2000; TUNING Educational Structures in Europe started.

2004; 2.5 million foreign students world-wide.

2007; The Lisbon Declaration, aimed at further building of the European Higher Education Area.

2007-2013; The ERASMUS programme became part of the European Union Lifelong Learning Programme.

2009-2013; The ERASMUS Mundus programme: to give a global dimension to student mobility and institutional cooperation, particularly concerning postgraduates.

2010; The Budapest-Vienna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area.

2010: Launch of the 'Europe 2020' Strategy, an 'overarching policy initiative which brings together all areas of EU competence and activity in order to prepare the EU economy for the next decade'. Related to this is 'The Higher Education Modernisation Agenda'.

2012; the European Commission target of three million students having benefitted from ERASMUS**.**

2020; European Higher Education Area target of 20% graduates to have trained or studied abroad.

4.2.2. Taken together, the documents which set out this process of Europeanisation of higher education can be considered as a grand narrative firmly within the modernisation tradition; the process is presented a success story of directed, possibly inevitable, harmonisation and improvement.

4.2.3. The reality, as any examination of any grand narrative reveals, is rather more messy, and certainly more contested. A report of the European Students Union, assessing the impact of the Bologna process of reform, states that it is: 'at the same time respected, blamed, loved and hated by academic communities and governments alike' (p1)[1].

4.2.4. Scott (2008) states that a major initial motive for harmonisation of higher education in Europe was to enable free movement of labour around Europe, an employability agenda which necessitated recognition of equivalence of qualifications. This pragmatic initial intention then allowed more idealistic motivations to become established.

4.2.5. It is interesting to note that there seems to be a difference between Scott (2008) and Teichler (2008) concerning motivations: whether idealism

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[1] http://www.esib.org/documents/publications/ESU_BAFL_publication.pdf

(enhancing peace and understanding) came before or after pragmatism (enhancing employability), so it is perhaps best to assume that both these drivers have been present in the minds of different actors in the internationalisation process throughout the period. The Bologna Declaration (1999)[2] refers both to the role of an internationalised European higher education area providing 'competences to face the challenges of the new millennium' and also to 'strengthening of stable, peaceful and democratic societies'.

4.2.6. The impetus for harmonisation itself then led to reforms, and debates about reforms, as the Bologna process became the opportunity for attempts to improve the quality of European higher education (Scott 2008). Quality became associated with modernisation, particularly given the increasing competition in higher education worldwide, both for the recruitment of students (Scott refers in particular to graduates in the STEM subjects[3]) and also for the recruitment of talented academic staff from emerging nations.

4.2.7. The aim of this first section, therefore, is to encourage a more critical reading of the documents produced by agencies concerned with the Europeanisation project, to counterbalance the overly enthusiastic telling of the narrative they present. For example the common 'cycles' of higher education which the Bologna process envisages, (initially covering bachelors and masters levels, with the doctoral level added later), have certainly not been universally welcomed.

4.2.8. Similarly the initial intention of having all participating countries certifying by 2010 that their own quality assurance processes were compatible with the 'Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area' has not been achieved. Hence the Budapest-Vienna Declaration[4] on the European Higher Education Area (which was issued in 2010, the initial target for completion) still had to report that:

> *While much has been achieved in implementing the Bologna reforms, the reports also illustrate that EHEA action lines such as degree and curriculum reform, quality assurance, recognition, mobility and the social dimension are implemented to varying degrees.*

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http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/MDC/BOLOGNA_DECLARATIO N1.pdf

[3] Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics, see this site for a discussion concerning these: http://www.hefce.ac.uk/aboutus/sis/stem.htm

[4] http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/2010_conference/documents/Budapest-Vienna_Declaration.pdf

4.2.9. It is worth recalling that the UK has itself a diversity of HE systems (Birtwistle 2007), and in fact Scotland declared its compliance with the European Higher Education Area framework in 2007, a year before the rest of the UK.

4.2.10. Scott (2008) discusses four levels of drivers for European internationalisation: European, national, institutional, and individual. At the European level he supplies 'three clusters of intentions'. The first cluster concerns the increasing integration of university systems within Europe, largely focussing on the harmonisation of course structures into the common 'cycles' mentioned earlier.

4.2.11. The second cluster is associated with the Lisbon Declaration, which was aimed at strengthening the competitiveness of European economies to compete with the rest of the world, stressing advanced technologies. The Lisbon Declaration[5] was adopted in 2007, and is discussed later in this chapter.

4.2.12. The third cluster of intentions is around 'enhancing the global influence of Europe' (p 4) which Scott identifies as being outward looking, more related to culture and education than economic competitiveness.

4.2.13. At the national level there are extra drivers related to the financial advantages that can come by developing new income streams in the higher education sector. This can be accompanied by garnering the benefits resulting from recruiting high quality teachers and researchers, often with the intention of enabling institutions to climb the ladders of 'world class' universities.

4.2.14. Achieving this was often associated with a drive to modernise the higher education system, and indeed the Europeanisation narrative often collocates increased Europeanisation with the modernisation of higher education systems. Hence such modernisation is presented as both a motive for, and something to be achieved by, increased Europeanisation. As with any other desire for root and branch reform, though, resistance to some of the changes should be expected.

4.2.15. At the institutional level the motivations are largely nestled into the higher level drivers already identified: increased recruitment; enhanced reputation; reform of quality.

4.2.16. At the individual level, which Scott (2008) identifies as the most important of the four levels, there is a balance of extrinsic pragmatic factors, for example graduates' increased employability as 'global knowledge workers', and intrinsic idealistic factors such as having international experiences, and becoming 'global citizens'.

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[5] http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/Lisbon_Convention/Lisbon_Declaration.pdf

4.2.17. Both global citizenship and enhanced employability are connected to the internationalisation at home agenda discussed in 'Chapter One: Institutional Internationalisation Strategies'. Internationalisation at home is often given as a reason for encouraging outward student mobility, as well as for welcoming an inward flow of international students who can offer global perspectives for those home students who are not themselves internationally mobile.

4.2.18. Radical restructuring creates opposition, so the intended harmonisation has not in fact always been achieved harmoniously, with protests from students and academics in many countries in the Bologna area who are resisting the imposition of change. The above extract from the Budapest-Vienna declaration goes on to state that:

> *Recent protests in some countries, partly directed against developments and measures not related to the Bologna Process, have reminded us that some of the Bologna aims and reforms have not been properly implemented and explained. We acknowledge and will listen to the critical voices raised among staff and students. We note that adjustments and further work, involving staff and students, are necessary at European, national, and especially institutional levels to achieve the European Higher Education Area as we envisage it.*

4.2.19. From the mid 1990s, according to Teichler (2008), European attention began to shift from encouraging exchanges within Europe to include more global plans for mobility, partly due to recognition from continental European universities that they were missing out on the increased flow of students from developing countries who were already going to the UK and elsewhere.

4.2.20. There is an interesting distinction in Teichler (2008) between what is described as *horizontal* mobility within Europe and *vertical* mobility of students from developing to developed countries; in addition the horizontal mobility is often characterised by shorter stays, whilst vertical mobility is more likely to be for full degree programmes.

4.2.21. Birtwistle (2007) refers to horizontal and vertical mobility in a slightly different way: the typical movements of undergraduates within ERASMUS is horizontal, being temporary stays within the first cycle, whereas students choosing to move to a different location to complete a full Masters programme is vertical, that is they become mobile to undertake a second cycle programme.

4.2.22. One of the remaining difficulties in relation to the common cycles identified by a European Students' Union report[6] is that students have difficulty in accessing the second cycle due to lack of recognition of their first cycle qualification.

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[6] http://www.esib.org/documents/publications/ESU_BAFL_publication.pdf

4.2.23. As the new cycles for higher education were largely congruent with the system already in place in the UK, the Bologna process has not caused the same high level of interest in the UK as elsewhere in Europe, where at times there has been heated debate.

4.2.24. Similarly with ERASMUS, student mobility has not created a balanced flow of students into and out of the UK, and as no tuition fees are supplied by the programme this can be a financial burden, so the enthusiasm of some UK institutions seems to have waned.

4.2.25. On a separate topic, in 2003 there was a published intention that every student would, as from 2005, be entitled to a Diploma Supplement, allowing for easy recognition of their achievements whilst a mobile student. However the Europe Unit reported that in 2007 only 60% of UK HEIs were complying.[7] In several ways, therefore, the engagement of UK institutions with these Europeanisation measures is perhaps less than the engagement elsewhere, whether supportive or contesting.

4.2.26. More generally, within the documents which relate the process of Europeanisation it is possible to identify a series of tensions:

> 4.2.26.i. Concerning the over-arching motivation for such steps, there is a tension between pragmatic and idealistic motivations; for example at times the logic emphasises increased employability whilst at times the focus is on creating peace and harmony, a sense of oneness, amongst European citizens.

> 4.2.26.ii. The second tension relates to a centralising and homogenising desire, in contrast with a need to recognise and accept some levels of national and institutional autonomy and diversity. At times there is what seems to be forced denials of any intention to remove diversity, hence the Tuning project which relates to implementation of the Bologna process claims: 'The protection of the rich diversity of European education has been paramount in Tuning and in no way seeks to restrict the independence of academic and subject specialists, or undermine local and national authority'[8]. Some would contest that assertion.

> 4.2.26.iii. Concerning implementation, there is a tension between the various declarations (such as the Sorbonne Declaration; the Bologna Declaration; the Lisbon Declaration) which are largely aspirational, and the actual practical issues concerning implementation of plans. An

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[7] http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/eu_policy____education/diploma_supplement.cfm
[8] http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu/index.php?option=com_frontpage&Itemid=1

example of this is the difficulty and delay described above about harmonising standards and guidelines for quality assurance of higher education. Indeed the Tuning project can be thought of as an attempt to bridge an aspirational-implementational divide.

4.2.26.iv. A fourth tension is between taking a stance which is largely inward-looking within Europe, seeing the process as a means to encourage commonness of European identity, and an outward-looking stance concerning enhancing and projecting a single Europe in co-operation and competition with the rest of the world.

4.2.27. It is worth quoting a lengthy extract from Teichler (2008) who is discussing definitions and driving forces of internationalisation:

In fact, the European debate on internationalisation in higher education since the 1990s has a strong positive undercurrent: internationalisation is expected to serve peace and mutual understanding, quality enhancement, a richer cultural life and personality development, the increase in academic quality, technological innovation, economic growth and societal well-being. This does not mean, however, that negative elements are not also visible: additional burdens and costs for the individuals and higher risks as far as success is concerned, more efforts for academic and administrative support on the part of the institutions, misunderstandings and new mistrust, chauvinistic attitudes and – last but not least – "brain drain". But predominantly positive expectations were clearly the drivers of the debates, policies and actions addressing the internationalisation of higher education since the 1990s. (p5)

4.2.28. As with any subject area, the Europeanisation of higher education, particularly because of the numerous initiatives which have evolved, has necessitated a lexicon of terms which are used with specific meanings, and these have been collected in an online glossary[9].

4.3 The ERASMUS programme

4.3.1. The ERASMUS programme was started in 1987 as the European Commission's educational exchange programme for higher education students, teachers and institutions. The primary aim was to increase the movement of students among European countries, by giving scholarships for periods of travel of one year or less, but over time it has come to include a wider geographical area.

4.3.2. Any HE institution, or vocational institutions following on from secondary education, can participate in ERASMUS programmes. It is necessary to obtain an

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[9] http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/glossary_en.html

ERASMUS university charter each year. There is a national agency administering the programme, in the UK this is the British Council from its office in Wales.

4.3.2. Currently, according to the European Commission's Education and Training website 'more than 4,000 higher education institutions in 33 countries participate[10]'. Other strands of the programme include staff mobility, both to gain experience of teaching in other countries and also for meeting professional training needs, as well as promoting collaborative transnational projects among universities across Europe.

4.3.3. The organisation of the programme has changed several times, at one time it was incorporated as part of the Socrates programme (1995), and it is now (2007-2013) part of the European Union Lifelong Learning Programme as the programme concerning the HE sector. The other sectors of LLP are for Schools, Vocational Education and Training, Adult Education (non vocational), and Learning professionals.

4.3.4. The ERASMUS Mundus programme was started in 2009 and is scheduled to run until 2013 as a mobility programme concerning postgraduate students in higher education, and aims to open up European higher education to the wider world. This connects the **'Europe 2020'** strategy[11], which was launched in 2010, seeing education and research as central to preparing the EU economy for the next decade. Related to that strategy is the 'The Higher Education Modernisation Agenda'[12].

4.3.5. In a discussion of how the development of ERASMUS fitted into university processes, Teichler (2008) describes a series of changes from disparate to systematic institutional management of initiatives, in many ways matching the process of centralisation discussed in 'Chapter One: Institutional Internationalisation Strategies' which reviewed institutional internationalisation strategies more generally.

4.3.6. Given the lack of enthusiasm of some institutions concerning ERASMUS, particularly relating to student mobility, it is even more essential for academics considering a collaboration with mobility as an element to check their institution's strategy and its stance concerning exchanges. For example, if the institution has an aspiration to enhance the global perspectives of home students as a stated strategic aim, then it might be possible to refer to this as a way to overcome reluctance to accept incoming students; their contribution can be more than financial.

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[10] http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc80_en.htm
[11] http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm
[12] http://ec.europa.eu/education/higher-education/doc1320_en.htm

4.3.7. Concerning student mobility, Teichler (2008) identifies ERASMUS as the most significant programme for increased short-term mobility within Europe; 'the success story of the ERASMUS programme of the European Commission, … has successfully stimulated and supported the temporary mobility of students within Europe' (p2).

4.3.8. However, concerning financial support for such mobility, he also reports that although initially the grant could largely fund the full additional cost of studying in another country, the value of the grant has fallen over the years. This financial aspect of mobility is one of the major criticisms contained in the ESU report[13] which points out that without a financial support system the target of 20% mobility by 2020 is rather shallow.

4.3.9. The information supplied by the British Council for UK students wishing to participate in study or work experience through the scheme (or indeed combinations of study and work experience not exceeding a total of 24 months) explains that the non-repayable ERASMUS grant is a contribution to the extra costs they will incur in addition to other grants or loans they receive, but: 'You should not depend on it to cover your essential living costs. Bear this in mind when you are budgeting![14]' The grant for UK students recently has been around €400 per month.

4.3.10. Currently those studying abroad for a full year do not pay UK tuition fees, but if abroad for less than one year do need to pay these fees. The programmes are open to all subject specialisms 'from art to zoology', and there needs to be a subject specific agreement between the home and the other university.

4.3.11. The motivations for mobility presented on the official ERASMUS site include both the pragmatic and the idealistic:

> *Many studies show that a period spent abroad not only enriches students' lives in the academic and professional fields, but can also improve language learning, intercultural skills, self-reliance and self-awareness. Their experiences give students a better sense of what it means to be a European citizen. In addition, many employers highly value such a period abroad, which increases the students' employability and job prospects[15].*

4.3.12. Research conducted by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE 2009)[16] looks at attributes and attainments of students who participated in study abroad (4% of the total graduating) and work placement schemes abroad (8% of the total), comparing with those students without such

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[13] http://www.esib.org/documents/publications/ESU_BAFL_publication.pdf
[14] http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus-funding.htm
[15] http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc80_en.htm
[16] http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/hefce/2009/09_44/

experience. These figures include both ERASMUS programmes and other forms of mobility.

4.3.13. The report identifies characteristics of students who are more likely to participate in study abroad: having higher than average grades on entry to their courses; more likely to be female; being younger than average; not being from ethnic minorities; attending higher ranking universities; not having a declared disability.

4.3.14. The report does indicate that these mobile students are more likely to have higher grades on graduating and a higher likelihood of finding employment than others, but such findings need to be read whilst considering the already advantaged position the students had before participating.

4.3.15. It should be noted that there are mixed views about whether ERASMUS has succeeded in increasing student mobility, in particular concerning UK home students. Writing generally, rather than specifically about ERASMUS, Teichler (2008) points out: "… the two percent of those in industrial societies who were mobile as students is lower than migration of persons who never enrolled in higher education" (p7). Similarly Birtwistle (2007) points out that although by 2004 one million students had taken part in ERASMUS this was far below the initial target of 10 per cent mobility.

4.3.16. Uptake from UK students has been lower than from many other European states, but is not low in global comparisons, and a report from the Europe Unit (2004)[17] describes another HEFCE study which was carried out specifically because of the low participation of UK students in European level mobility programmes. From a maximum of nearly 12,000 UK students going abroad in 1994-1995 the total dropped to under 8,000 in 2002-2003.

4.3.17. The research found that the overall take-up of study abroad opportunities amongst UK home students had actually increased, particularly going to places where study in English was possible, although participation in ERASMUS programmes had dropped mirroring a decline in students on language degree courses. Most popular destinations were the USA[18] and Australia, and indeed over a half of outwardly-mobile UK students went to countries where English was spoken, which seems to indicate a risk-aversion strategy rather than a desire to widen horizons.

4.3.18. Indeed, according to the HEFCE study anticipated language problems came second only to financial concerns as being the prime deterrent to mobility.

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[17] http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/resources/E-04-22.pdf
[18] For details of mobility opportunities with the USA see www.butex.ac.uk

Language is also probably the main reason why the UK is the largest receiver of incoming ERASMUS students, those wishing to improve their English, and hence why it has the largest imbalance between inward and outward bound students, giving what Birtwistle (2007) calls the 'lingua franca benefit/burden' (p185).

4.3.19. Within the UK, the ERASMUS condition that host institutions do not charge tuition fees, and the large imbalance between numbers of incoming and outgoing students, has led to a luke-warm reception to the programme in some institutions, with some even withdrawing from the programme. This reduced involvement in some UK institutions, along with the reduction of language degree programmes in the UK, are two of the reasons given in the HEFCE report for the decline in UK student participation.

4.3.20. A third factor is a change in the profile and social status of UK students, resulting from the agenda of widening participation in higher education, as it was reported above that gender, social class, and ethnicity all correlate with participation on ERASMUS. Hence encouraging a broader take-up of opportunities by students beyond this base is one of the factors targeted in an NUS initiative (NUS 2010) to encourage UK students to participate more in ERASMUS, which is described in the case study 'CS 5: National Union of Students' which should be read alongside this chapter.

4.3.21. Against this, however, current internationalisation at home, employability, and global citizenship agendas which are now fore-fronted in many institutional strategies are added spurs for universities to encourage their students to take part. In order to help boost participation, the British Council ERASMUS site[19] supplies materials including a downloadable information sheet, a film relating previous participants' experiences, the HEFCE (2009) report described above, a 'fun things to do' link, and a series of case studies.

4.3.22. On a positive note Scott (2008) asserts that one result of the initial Bologna process was a growing sense of 'Europeaness' amongst young people (p6), echoing what was presented earlier in this chapter as an idealistic motivation. The British Council similarly claims that:

> *ERASMUS has developed beyond an educational programme - it has acquired the status of a social and cultural phenomenon. It gives many European university students their first chance to live and thrive abroad.*

4.3.23. Teichler (2008) also reports largely positive outcomes of ERASMUS: improved proficiency in foreign languages and cultural knowledge, a belief

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[19] http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus-benefits.htm

amongst students that their academic performance improved, and enhanced employment prospects.

4.3.24. Concerning staff mobility, the general intentions of the various staff mobility schemes related to ERASMUS are to build knowledge and to make contacts. 'In the academic year 2007/2008, some 27 200 lecturers from institutions and enterprises taught abroad and 5 000 staff received training abroad in one of the 31 participating countries'[20]. Note that some elements of these schemes are aimed at staff from private businesses as well as university teaching staff, with the expectation that such involvement will provide students they teach with fresh insights. A separate strand of the scheme allows both teaching and non-teaching staff such as librarians and administrative staff to undergo training in other participating countries, either in HE institutions or in enterprises.

4.3.25. The objectives of staff mobility are to allow *institutions* to broaden and enrich their programmes, and also to create links both with other institutions and enterprises; to allow those *students* who are not themselves internationally mobile – via what is commonly known as internationalisation-at-home – to have experiences and perspectives from foreign experts; and to allow *staff* to exchange expertise in teaching approaches. Some of these objectives connect to the modernisation and structural change agenda identified earlier in this chapter.

4.3.26. The teaching visits can be as short as one day and as long as six weeks, with five days being suggested as a suitable period to have a meaningful impact. To participate there needs to be an inter-institutional agreement, and both institutions must have an ERASMUS University Charter, and at least one of the institutions must be in an EU member state. A brief success story involving staff and institutional capacity building in an Estonia health college is given at this website[21]. Further case studies involving UK staff are at the British Council ERASMUS site[22].

4.3.27. There are various collaborative elements of ERASMUS. 'Intensive programmes' are closely defined as being short programmes of study involving students and staff from at least three countries participating in the Lifelong Learning Programme, one of which must be from a member state of the European Union, and the project must be located in an eligible Lifelong Learning state.

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[20] http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc1059_en.htm
[21] http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/success/tallin_en.pdf
[22] http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus-staff-case-studies.htm

4.3.28. Funding is given to cover the following elements of the programmes: preparation of study materials, hire of premises, field trips, travel and subsistence for students and staff. At least ten students from each of the other partners should attend the intensive programme. Research and conferences are excluded, and the students and staff must work collaboratively for between 10 days and six weeks.

4.3.29. The students' work must be credited and contribute to their degree, possibly being joint or double degrees. The programme envisages that projects might be for topics which are specialised and so might not be feasible for an institution working alone. As well as the benefits of intercultural working, other hoped-for outcomes relate to skills development and discovering and sharing new learning and teaching methods. Innovation is therefore a desirable feature of bids for funding.

4.3.30. One aspect of intended programmes which is described as being a desirable feature is: 'the ratio of staff to students should guarantee active classroom participation'[23]. This is interesting as most of the discourse related to the Europeanisation of higher education concerns what could be thought of as managerial aspects rather than to pedagogic aspects of teaching and learning activities.

4.3.31. Multi-disciplinary programmes are also considered favourably, as are programmes related to disciplines currently under-represented in the intensive programmes. Similarly there is a statement that use of ICT should be built in, to enable preparation and follow up, however the projects themselves must involve real-world rather than virtual interfacing.

4.3.32. The British Council administers the programme for the UK and an introductory presentation can be downloaded from their site[24], as well as a case study from St Mary's College, Belfast. That case study related to Special Needs Education and differing conceptualisations of inclusion, involving students and staff from eight institutions in seven European countries. The programme had a strong component of encouraging critical thinking, reflecting different opinions, backgrounds, and experiences. More case studies are linked to the European Commission site[25].

4.3.33. 'ERASMUS multilateral projects' are open to participation from higher education institutions and also enterprises, with a specific mention of SMEs (Small and Medium Enterprises), to reflect an overall desire to use these

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[23] http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc900_en.htm
[24] http://www.britishcouncil.org/erasmus-intensive-programmes.htm
[25] http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc900_en.htm

projects to be innovative and to foster enterprise and entrepreneurship. The projects must involve a minimum of three institutions from three countries, at least one of which must be an EU member.

4.3.34. The multilateral projects have five priorities. Firstly, to encourage collaboration between higher education institutions and non-academic enterprises, the intention clearly being pragmatic and to strengthen world-of-work links of academic institutions. This is closely allied to the 'New Skills for New Jobs' initiative[26], which is itself a part of the wider 'Europe 2020' strategy[27] concerning growth within the EU for the next decade.

4.3.35. The projects seem to envisage a two-way flow of benefits between academic and non-academic bodies, with business having an input into academic course design and academic institutions helping with developing and upgrading skills for employees.

4.3.35. Secondly, a social dimension to increase and improve access to higher education for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups, including using novel delivery methods such as elearning and devising flexible programmes to foster lifelong learning. Community outreach programmes are included in this dimension.

4.3.36. Thirdly, and very much linked to the main thrust of ERASMUS, activities to encourage mobility and to remove barriers to mobility. This can include provision of virtual mobility, designing programmes with 'mobility windows', and production of open access materials and virtual campuses. There is also a tacit recognition that certain aspects of Europeanisation which, according to earlier aspirational declarations should already be completed, such as credit transfer (ECTs) and the diploma supplement, are still not fully implemented.

4.3.37. Fourthly, and this links back to the conflating of Europeanisation with the modernisation of higher education systems, projects which tackle identified areas of needed reform, including curriculum reform, governance reform, and financial reform. There is specific mention of the development of jointly accredited programmes of study, and interdisciplinary and intersectoral programmes.

4.3.38. Within governance reform there is mention of compliance with European quality assurance frameworks, another indication that this aspect of the whole Europeanisation project still has to make progress. This centralising intention, however, is balanced with a mention of: 'enhancing autonomy and

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[26] http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=568
[27] http://ec.europa.eu/europe2020/index_en.htm

accountability for higher education institutions and improved strategic management systems'[28].

4.3.39. Finally there is a priority relating to excellence and innovation, which addresses ways that universities can connect the sides of 'the knowledge triangle of education, research and innovation', giving as an exemplar the creation of the European Institute of Innovation and Technology (EIT) [29]. Proposals from consortia of universities are encouraged under this priority. Other possibilities are programmes which will allow undergraduate students to experience research situations, and encouragement of student created enterprises.

4.3.40. 'ERASMUS academic networks' must involve a minimum of 25 institutions (which may include non-academic associations and enterprises) from 25 countries participating in the Lifelong Learning Programme, with one institution as the lead coordinator.

4.3.41. A network must relate to a specific subject area (and indeed to develop a European dimension to that area), and exists in order to increase European level cooperation and innovation. Networks aim to improve quality of teaching, partly by exchanging good practice, and to have a role in disseminating such innovations; hence a network must have a website, produce an annual report, and run an annual thematic meeting of some kind.

4.3.42. Networks are presented as an extension of the Tuning Process which aimed 'to offer a concrete approach to implement the Bologna Process at the level of higher education institutions and subject areas' [30]. Each year a compendium of projects funded by the Lifelong Learning Programme is published, and examples of networks in the 2010 compendium[31] include a network for tuning standards and quality of educational programmes for speech and language therapists (SLTs); dieticians ensuring education, teaching and professional quality; and landscape education: new opportunities for teaching and research in Europe.

4.3.43 'ERASMUS accompanying measures' is a miscellaneous category, covering projects 'not eligible under the main ERASMUS programme', so is rather harder to define. Projects need to be innovative, and have relevance to the European Modernisation Agenda of Higher Education. There is no stipulation of the number of partners for these projects.

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[28] http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc1071_en.htm
[29] http://eit.europa.eu/
[30]
http://tuning.unideusto.org/tuningeu/images/stories/template/General_Brochure_final_version.pdf
[31] http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/compendium2010_en.pdf

4.3.44. Examples given include awareness-raising concerning the value of cooperation in higher education at a European level, or activities targeted at groups or subject areas currently underrepresented in ERASMUS. Other possibilities are activities which span more than one sector (recalling that ERASMUS is specifically for the HE sector).

4.3.45. The category can include projects with specific social targeting, related to gender and different abilities, or to issues related to discrimination. Dissemination of achievements of other projects, but going beyond the original dissemination plan of that project, is also possible. Examples in the 2010 compendium[32] include: fostering mobility of students with disabilities; problems of recognition in making ERASMUS 2010; implementation of relevant European teaching contents in the studies of landscape architecture; consolidation and expansion of a virtual campus.

4.3.46. 'Preparatory visits' are exactly what the name implies, and are intended to allow contacts, including academic institutions and enterprises) to be made for all of the other aspects of ERASMUS already described above.

4.3.47. 'ERASMUS Mundus' can be thought of, using Marketing discourse, as an example of brand extension, where the existing value of the ERASMUS label has been used for a new programme which is separately administered:

> ***ERASMUS Mundus*** *is a cooperation and mobility programme in the field of higher education that aims to enhance the quality of European higher education and to promote dialogue and understanding between people and cultures through cooperation with Third-Countries. In addition, it contributes to the development of human resources and the international cooperation capacity of Higher education institutions in Third Countries by increasing mobility between the European Union and these countries.[33]*

4.3.48. The Programme is set to run from 2009 until 2013 with a world-wide remit. One element is for institutional collaborative partners and consortia to develop and offer joint programmes at the post-graduate level. This includes research bodies and enterprises as well as higher education institutions, and is not restricted only to European institutions.

4.3.49. The programme also offers scholarships for students, and fellowships for doctoral candidates and academic teachers and researchers, aimed to allow them to participate in such joint programmes.

4.3.50. The programme is described under three 'Actions': Action 1 covers the creation of joint programmes and scholarships relating to them; Action 2

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[32] http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/llp/results_projects/documents/ERASMUS_compendium_2010_en.pdf
[33] http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/programme/about_erasmus_mundus_en.php

connects to the role of higher education in the process of development and capacity building discussed in 'Chapter Five: Development and Discourse', and refers specifically to partnerships with third country institutions: 'for enhancing academic cooperation and exchanges of students and academics, contributing to the socio-economic development of non-EU countries targeted by EU external cooperation policy.[34]' The funding is both for the creation of such partnerships and for scholarships. Action 3 relates to raising the recognition and esteem of European higher education around the world.

4.4 The Bologna Process

4.4.1. This section will briefly describe two texts (out of a substantially larger number) which set out the aspirations of the harmonisation process which has been referred to throughout this chapter: the Bologna declaration of 1999, and the Lisbon declaration of 2007.

4.4.2. Building on the Sorbonne declaration of the previous year, the Bologna declaration[35] set out a vision for higher education to become a wider dimension to the existing European Union (a 'Europe of Knowledge') by creating an internationally competitive and attractive European Higher Education Area, which was to be achieved by 2010. The declaration described the competences which would be necessary for people to acquire for the new millennium (a pragmatic motivation), while stressing an idealistic outcome of the European process, 'an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space'.

4.4.3. Ten action lines[36] were developed over several years relating to this process:

> Action lines stablished in the Bologna Declaration of 1999:

> 1. Adoption of a system of easily readable and comparable degrees

> 2. Adoption of a system essentially based on two cycles

> 3. Establishment of a system of credits

> 4. Promotion of mobility

> 5. Promotion of European co-operation in quality assurance

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[34] http://eacea.ec.europa.eu/erasmus_mundus/programme/action2_en.php
[35] http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/documents/MDC/BOLOGNA_DECLARATION1.pdf
[36] http://www.europeunit.ac.uk/sites/europe_unit2/bologna_process/10_bologna_process_action_lines.cfm

6. Promotion of the European dimension in higher education

Action lines added after the Prague Ministerial summit of 2001:

7. Focus on lifelong learning

8. Inclusion of higher education institutions and students

9. Promotion of the attractiveness of the European Higher Education Area

Finally, added after the Berlin Ministerial summit of 2003:

10. Doctoral studies and the synergy between the European Higher Education Area and the European Research Area

4.4.4. As described earlier, there is a tension in the declaration between a centralising homogenising desire on the one hand, and the individual institutional desire for autonomy and recognition of diversity on the other. The declaration acknowledges the importance of independence and autonomy of universities, whilst at the same time identifying a need for 'greater compatibility and comparability' of European higher education systems.

4.4.5. It is, in comparison with the Lisbon Declaration which was to come eight years later (see below), a comparatively inward-looking document, its stance mostly looks towards an increased Europeanisation; the only outward-looking element being a brief description of a need which should be addressed: 'We need to ensure that the European higher education system acquires a world-wide degree of attraction equal to our extraordinary cultural and scientific traditions'.

4.4.6. The specific objectives it identifies relate to ensuring comparability of degrees (for which it identifies pragmatic employability motivations); the creation of the two cycles of study described earlier in this chapter (to which the doctoral cycle was added later); promoting student mobility via transferable credits; promoting staff mobility via a valorisation of the periods spent mobile; cooperation in quality assurance; and promotion of European dimension to higher education, including: 'curricular development, inter-institutional cooperation, mobility schemes and integrated programmes of study, training and research'.

4.4.7. The Bologna process was time-limited; hence a follow-on process was presented in The Lisbon Declaration in 2007[37]. 'Europe's Universities beyond 2010' is best thought of as an aspirational document, offering a daunting list of challenges for the 21st century: 'climate change, energy issues, increased

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[37] http://www.eua.be/fileadmin/user_upload/files/newsletter/Lisbon_declaration.pdf

longevity, the rapid pace of technological change, growing global interdependence and rising economic inequality' (p2). This is a much more outward looking set of objectives.

4.4.8. According to this declaration the preceding Bologna process is undoubtedly a story of success; it describes 'the immense success of the rapid introduction of a three cycle higher education structure across Europe', and assumes that conformity with the common European qualifications framework is something already achieved.

4.4.9. In contrast a report from the European Students Union 'Bologna At the Finish Line: an account of ten years of European higher education reform'[38] begins with this statement:

> *The 'Bologna at the Finish Line' publication could be seen as somewhat of a paradox. It is in fact an anniversary publication, but rather than celebrating ten years of the Bologna Process, it instead points out the remaining work to be done for the fulfilment of the comprehensive package of Bologna action lines underpinning the process' major goals. It also talks about a 'finish line', when in fact the real finish line has been pushed back by at least ten years.*

4.4.10. According to the ESU report the three cycle system is indeed largely in place, although with some difficulties remaining for students wishing to move from first to second cycle programmes, and the third cycle still presents unresolved problems.

4.4.11. In addition, some countries still retain their previous systems alongside the new three cycles, causing confusion. It reports that only seven national qualifications frameworks have been set up and self-certified as complying with the overarching framework of the EHEA, describing this as 'cumbersome and ineffective'.

4.4.12. It reports that Europe is moving towards wider use of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS), however superficial implementation of ECTS and lack of proper implementation of the diploma supplement is still a barrier to mobility.

4.4.13. Other outstanding issues include recognition of prior learning, and lack of student involvement in the process of establishing robust quality assurance procedures and other aspects of governance.

4.4.14. The Lisbon Declaration identifies the central task for universities beyond 2010 as preparing the citizens of Europe for the 'Knowledge Society', in contrast

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[38] http://www.esib.org/documents/publications/ESU_BAFL_publication.pdf

with previous agricultural and manufacturing societies. Education and training are firmly based on research, hence the university pivotal role in the extension of the 'Knowledge Society'.

4.4.15. The diversity of institutions, however, should still allow for progression routes amongst the autonomous institutions of the continent: 'it requires that each university should define and pursue its mission, and thus collectively provide for the needs of individual countries and Europe as a whole' (p2).

4.4.16. The task of further building the European Higher Education Area necessitates refocusing of goals, increased dialogue between institutions and society, and reforms. The intended reforms focus on increasing student-centred learning via the creation of supportive learning environments including support and guidance services; a raised focus on employability and increased dialogue with employers; mobility based on the European Credit Transfer System and extending this to vocational qualifications; and social inclusion.

4.4.17. As identified by Scott (2008) the Lisbon declaration adds an outward looking dimension to the Bologna process, giving Europe-wide higher education an identity, the 'Bologna Trademark' (p4) to make Europe 'the destination of choice' worldwide.

4.4.18. An anniversary event, to mark the intended end point of the Bologna process, resulted in 'The Budapest-Vienna Declaration on the European Higher Education Area'[39]. The vision of the original declaration, it reported, was:

> *… an internationally competitive and attractive European Higher Education Area where higher education institutions, supported by strongly committed staff, can fulfil their diverse missions in the knowledge society; and where students benefitting from mobility with smooth and fair recognition of their qualifications, can find the best suited educational pathways.*

4.4.19. It reported, though, that things had not always progressed smoothly, and acknowledges critical voices:

> *We note that adjustments and further work, involving staff and students, are necessary at European, national, and especially institutional levels to achieve the European Higher Education Area as we envisage it.*

4.4.20. This, then, describes a rather Janussian situation for the Europeanisation project for the present, looking both back and also to the future, both inward-looking and outward-looking, and is a suitable way to round off this chapter.

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[39] http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/2010_conference/documents/Budapest-Vienna_Declaration.p

4.5 Conclusions

The following bullet points develop the main items identified in this chapter as a series of hints which any staff members who intend to initiate collaborations with a European dimension might wish to follow. The intention of many of these hints is to demonstrate to potential partners, and European-level funding agencies, that you are embracing the European agenda, and also to demonstrate to your own institution that your project can assist in operationalising any aspirations to enhance its own Europeanisation.

- **Ch 4.1.** It is important to be aware that there are different drivers for European-level engagement: pragmatic drivers related to employability; and idealistic drivers related to global citizenship. Hence project proposals should refer to both sets of drivers, and so may demonstrate the fit of this proposal with any institutional aims concerning internationalisation at home and/or employability.
- **Ch 4.2.** If the proposed collaboration involves mobility of students (for example involving ERASMUS) it is essential to check your institution's strategy and its stance concerning exchanges. The ERASMUS condition that host institutions do not charge tuition fees, and the large imbalance between numbers of incoming and outgoing students, has led to a luke-warm reception to the programme in some institutions, with some even withdrawing from the programme. See 4.3.19.
- **Ch 4.3.** It may be possible to overcome institutional resistance to hosting non-paying incoming European students by clearly outlining their non-financial contribution to institutional strategies.
- **Ch 4.4.** It is necessary to check at an early stage that your institution has a current ERASMUS university charter.
- **Ch 4.5.** If the proposed collaboration involves mobility of staff, for example the various staff mobility schemes related to ERASMUS, it is advisable to describe these in ways which are supportive of institutional strategy aims. In 4.3.25. the aims of staff mobility schemes are given as to allow *institutions* to broaden and enrich their programmes, to allow those *students* who are not themselves internationally mobile to have experiences and perspectives from foreign experts; and to allow *staff* to exchange expertise in teaching approaches.
- **Ch 4.6.** It is advisable to use the discourse of Europeanisation when outlining this form of collaboration, for example to refer to the common 'cycles' of higher education which the Bologna process establishes, and refer to the 'European Higher Education Area'. Consult the glossary at: http://ec.europa.eu/education/programmes/llp/glossary_en.html

- **Ch 4.7.** It is advisable to refer to quality assurance processes connected to any European initiatives as being compatible with the 'Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area'.

- **Ch 4.8.** It is advisable to describe intended outcomes of any initiatives as enhancing European higher education (in general) in relation to the rest of the world.

- **Ch 4.9.** It is essential to describe collaborations as, at the same time, fostering increased harmonisation of European higher education AND respecting diversity and autonomy of partners; difficult but not impossible.

- **Ch 4.10.** It is recommended that staff developing topics which are specialised, or multi-disciplinary topics, which might not be feasible for an institution working alone, should investigate ERASMUS 'Intensive programmes', requiring collaboration from 3 countries or more. See 4.3.27. – 4.3.32.

- **Ch 4.11.** It is recommended that staff considering collaborations concerning enterprise and entrepreneurship, involving non-academic enterprises, should investigate 'ERASMUS multilateral projects'. See 4.3.34 - 4.3.39.

- **Ch 4.12.** It is recommended that staff considering collaborations concerning improved access to higher education for disadvantaged and underrepresented groups should investigate 'ERASMUS multilateral projects'. See 4.3.34 - 4.3.39.

- **Ch 4.13.** It is recommended that staff considering the development of jointly accredited programmes of study, and interdisciplinary and intersectoral programmes, should investigate 'ERASMUS multilateral projects'. See 4.3.34 - 4.3.39.

- **Ch 4.14.** It is recommended that staff considering the development of networks relating to a specific subject area, involving no fewer than 25 partners, should investigate ERASMUS academic networks. See 4.3.40 - 4.3.42

- **Ch 4.15.** It is recommended that staff considering any form of collaboration should investigate funding for preparatory visits, in order to set up contacts with both academic institutions and enterprises. See 4.3.46.

- **Ch 4.16.** It is recommended that staff considering a global, rather than restricted to European, collaboration at postgraduate level should investigate Erasmus Mundus. See 4.3.47 – 4.3.50.

- **Ch 4.17.** It is suggested that staff considering a collaboration should look at the published compendia[40] to generate ideas.

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[40] http://ec.europa.eu/education/erasmus/doc/compendium2010_en.pdf

- **Ch 4.18.** It is essential that staff considering a collaboration involving student mobility check on their institution's position concerning Diploma Supplements which mobile students are entitled to receive.

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