



Expert Workshop: Selective Internationality? Baseline Study and Counteractive Measures

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Short report

On 16 November 2018, an international expert workshop on the internationalisation of the university took place at the University of Konstanz. The Zukunftskolleg, together with the University's International Office, invited six experts from Germany and abroad to discuss the issue of selective internationalisation.

Background

The skewed internationality at the Zukunftskolleg was impressively demonstrated and challenged for the first time in a lively written discussion on a poster depicting the countries of origin of the Zukunftskolleg's fellows. This ad hoc debate was continued as part of the Zukunftskolleg Jour Fixe titled "How international is Academia?" in January 2018. The Jour Fixe brought together Fellows of the Zukunftskolleg and the Cluster of Excellence as well as representatives of the International Office. During the workshop it became clear that not only the Zukunftskolleg does have a selective geographical pattern of internationalisation but the University as whole. Subsequently, this expert workshop was initiated in order to deepen the conversation with the help of external expertise.

Mapping Internationality at the University of Konstanz and the Zukunftskolleg

Johannes Dingler demonstrated the internationality at the University of Konstanz empirically in various areas such as student exchanges, allocation of scholarships, institutional partnerships and co-authored publications. Even though the internationalisation at the University of Konstanz is very strong and pronounced, white spots are visible on the world map. Are these white spots the result of a selective pattern? Is there a strategy behind a selective pattern? Johannes formulated normatively driven hypotheses to further develop on a systematic approach of selective internationalisation. He also pointed to other selection criteria that are not linked directly to a geographical distribution, such as social status and gender.

Geographical distortions are also visible at the Zukunftskolleg of the University of Konstanz. Daniela Kromrey showed that although the Zukunftskolleg receives applications from more than 100 countries worldwide, the 107 fellows have only come from 25 countries. In order to enrich its cultural diversity, the institute is currently developing countermeasures aimed at recruitment and selection processes. She addressed several challenges and asked the experts to share their experiences and best practices.

National Strategies for Engagement

The first presentation from an external expert was given by Susanne Klöpping. She gave an introduction to internationalisation of Baden-Württemberg's science landscape. The Baden-Württemberg International (bw-i) mission seeks to promote the internationalisation of business and science by means of appropriate events in Germany and abroad. While bw-i has a clear strategic approach, Susanne is interested to learn how useful and desired the formulation of strategic goals for the university level is.

Jenny Kopsch-Xhema offered an insight into the grantees side and introduced the Food Security Center (FSC) of the University of Hohenheim/ Germany. Funded by the German DAAD programme, the FSC provides innovative and effective scientific contributions to achieve food security. Given the thematic scope that clearly relates to more than one of the Sustainable Development Goals of the UN (SDGs), the centre is highly international. It also has strategic partners around the world and has already attracted 162 scholars from 42 different countries - mainly from the global south.

Internationalisation of Partner Institutions. Perspectives and Strategic Approaches

Peter Scott's contribution started the discussion at the international level. The internationalisation process at Warwick University/UK combines bottom-up and top-down activities. At Warwick, intercultural opportunities, awareness and respect are fundamental values, as the University considers the challenges of the world to be international and therefore needs international perspectives. Warwick thus aims at attracting the best talents from all over the world. As Director of IAS Warwick, Peter also explained how internationalisation is inter-university and in line with the university's International Strategy & Relations Office.



Peter Sundin presented the International Science Programme (ISP) of the University of Uppsala/Sweden. The ISP supports academic development in non-OECD countries through a scholarship programme. In order to avoid a brain-drain effect, the ISP has established a sandwich model in its doctoral programmes that has proven to be very effective. In addition, the programme shares the focus on SDGs of the Food Security Centre, not addressing a thematic issue as such, but rather supporting young researchers from the global south in general.

International Recruitment/-ing in Academia. Future Visions and Best-Practices

Vivian Tos Lindgaard presented the International Staff Mobility (ISM) concept of the University of Copenhagen. The ambitious programme combines administrative support with cultural awareness courses. Vivian highlighted the idea of the One-Stop-Shop, which brings together all important contact points from university serviced to taxation and city administration in one building. At the heart of the ISM is the attempt to be a knowledge hub for international recruitment and to continually evolve to adapt to the emerging needs of users. She also presented a spouse network and promoted the EURAXESS projects for dual career and integration services.

Isabelle Halleux presented the international programmes at the University of Liège, highlighting the university's institutional partnerships – many of which are situated in the global south. Liège is very successful in attracting international EU programmes and supports institutions in developing countries. Isabelle also introduced the HRS4R strategy of the European Union that is implemented at the university. The HRS4R strategy promotes open, transparent and merit-based recruitment but also focusses on training, career development and seeks the involvement of researchers.

Concluding Plenary Discussion and Summary

Many of the discussions between the experts and the audience, which had already been stimulated after the individual presentations and during the breaks, could be deepened in the concluding panel. It became clear that there is no blueprint for internationalisation. Much more, there is a multitude of decisions that shapes internationalisation at universities. A thematic-content orientation can be of importance here, as can a central, normative perspective that can and should be defined. Thus internationalisation moves between social responsibility and a competition to attract the best



talents from every corner of the world. These two agendas, however, do not have to and cannot be mutually exclusive.

In many cases, selection must simply be made because of limited resources. The priorities in selectivity, however, must be set for each institution individually - but can be stimulated by higher-level, e.g. governmental, bodies. Internationalisation in higher education is also a jigsaw puzzle of recruitment, grass-root research cooperation and strategic positioning. Internationalisation strategies should thus probably best offer a fixed frame for internationalisation that is flexible enough to be fed by bottom-up demands and top-down agenda-setting strategies. The question of how to deal with other selection patterns outside the geographical perspective - namely social, gender, academic age and disciplinary biases in internationalization - remained open.

Online version of report – [here](#).

