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The Internationalisation of Higher Education: Three European Universities in Comparative Perspective

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Abstract: Over the few last decades, the competition for international students has heightened significantly. International students are said to contribute financially and academically, integrate more easily, possess host country's language skills and thus constitute ideal candidates to retain as labour migrants. While the state plays a key role in migration policy-making, non-state actors including universities are often neglected in the literature. Yet, they can be important actors in lobbying and facilitating student immigration. How do national policies and university strategies towards international students interact? Drawing on Guiraudon and Lahav's framework on shifting migration control outward to private actors, the paper argues that universities operate autonomously in a global setting, which indicates that institutions are partly disembedded from states in terms of operational functions and direct controls. But they are not outside of, or inconsistent with, state policies. Once this occurs, clashes with the state may take place, hindering their internationalisation efforts. This article examines different national and university internationalisation strategies at Charles University in the Czech Republic, Sciences Po in France and University of Oxford in the United Kingdom. The findings are based on official documents, position statements of relevant stakeholders, and are complemented by interviews with policy-makers and university officials.

Keywords: higher education, internationalisation, international students, migration, state, universities

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1. Introduction

Over the last few decades, states and universities have increasingly focused on the recruitment of international students[1] to alleviate pressures from ageing populations, to attract talented human capital and to respond to changes in the funding of universities interested in generating additional income or increasing their prestige (Kuptsch & Pang 2006, Miklavič 2011, OECD 2004, Vincent-Lancrin 2004;2008). The internationalisation of higher education[2] has become important for a variety of reasons. International students are said to contribute financially[3], integrate more easily, possess host country language skills and are thus considered 'ideal highly skilled immigration candidates to retain' (Suter & Jandl 2008:401, see also Altbach & Knight 2007, Graf 2008, Tremblay 2005). In addition, they can improve political andeconomic relations with countries of origin, promote democracy and contribute to the quality of higher education by adding to knowledge creation and transfer (Spilimbergo 2009, Suter & Jandl 2008:406).[4]

To reap the aforementioned advantages[5], states have competed fiercely for international students by changing their immigration policies (Suter & Jandl 2006).[6] As a result, international student mobility to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) area has increased substantially from 0.8 million in 1975 to estimated 4.3 million in 2011 (OECD 2013a).

According to Marginson et al. (2010:63-64), there have been three major changes in the governance[7] of education over the last thirty years. These changes are: (1) the growing role of individual agency and self-responsibility which have led to a more devolved system with delegation to individuals and institutions, (2) the spread of a business culture in education and (3) the impact of globalisation on agendas and methods of nation-states leading to partial convergence of systems and practices. These changes have influenced state-university relations regarding international student migration.

States have focused mostly on setting the correct framework conditions, enabling foreign graduates to settle and work in their countries, and have supported the internationalisation strategies of their universities through the provision of funds and technical assistance (Suter & Jandl 2008:416). International students are attracted by states, regions or cities, but also by the reputation and excellence of universities (Santiago et al. 2008). Hence universities, previously involved mainly in teaching, research and community building, play a more strategic role in the recruitment of international students. As de Wit (2010:5) notes, 'internationalisation is not developing in similar ways in higher education throughout Europe', thus 'internationalisation strategies are filtered and contextualised by the specific internal context of the universities, by the type of university and how they are embedded nationally'. However, only limited research has been carried out so far to evaluate this trend (Suter & Jandl 2008:415).

In this spirit, the paper studies the role of universities as non-state migration actors and their impact on migration outcomes. It builds upon Guiraudon and Lahav's (2000) framework on the outsourcing of migration control and examines universities as special kinds of private actors in international student migration. In particular, the article analyses in what ways university strategies interact with national policies towards international students. National policy is defined here as the approach of governments for attracting and retaining international students and positioning the country in the international competition. University strategy refers to the approach used by the university to enhance its international relations, global profile and international competitiveness.

Drawing on the literature in education, comparative politics and migration, the article argues that universities operate autonomously in a global setting, which indicates that institutions are partly disembedded from states in terms of operational functions and direct controls.[8] But they are not outside of, or inconsistent with, state policies. Once they find themselves in that position, clashes with the state may take place, which can hinder their internationalisation efforts. The internationalisation of higher education is facilitated when national policies and university strategies are in synergy.

The findings are based on position statements of stakeholders and official documents, complemented by interviews with university officials and policy-makers (see Table 1). To develop the argument, the article proceeds as follows. Section 2 presents some theoretical considerations on universities as non-state actors tasked with the internationalisation of higher education as well as different interaction types between national policies and university strategies. The theoretical propositions are examined in Section 3 through evidence from three European cases, while the last section discusses the comparative findings and offers some concluding remarks.

Table 1: List of Interviews Utilised

Author's interview	Place	Date
#1: Vice Dean of International Affairs	Prague, Czech Republic	6-April-2011
#2: Officials, Immigration Ministry	Paris, France	11-February-2010
#3: Director of European Centre	Paris, France	15-September-2010
#4: Director of PSIA	Paris, France	27-July-2010
#5: Education expert, OECD	Paris, France	20-September-2010
#6: Director of International Strategy	Oxford, UK	27-October-2010

2. *How national policies and university strategies interact*

There has been a proliferation of books and articles on the internationalisation of higher education (cf. Bartell 2003, Bok 2003, Huisman & deWende 2004, Kehm 2003, Scott 1998, Wildavsky 2010). A dominant strand in the literature focuses on the state as the main actor in migration policy (Marginson & deWende 2009, Tremblay 2005, Vincent-Lancrin 2008; 2009). As Marginson and de Wende (2009:24) note, 'the nation remains the major influence in the sector' since 'decisions about the global movement of people across and between nations continue to be made by national governments' (Marginson et al. 2010:65). Many institutions remain nationally embedded and depend on resource support and legitimation by the government (Marginson & deWende 2009). In similar vein, Luijten-Lub (2005:239) remarks that 'for internationalisation in particular, historical, geographic, cultural and linguistic aspects of the national framework are of great importance'.

Vincent-Lancrin (2008) distinguishes between four national strategies of internationalisation. The first one (used by Japan, Korea, Mexico, Spain and most developing countries) focuses on mutual understanding and relates to political, cultural, academic and development aid considerations. It is meant to encourage exchanges between countries and expects international students to return to their countries of origin. In contrast, the second strategy on skilled migration – employed by France, Germany, the UK (for EU students) and the US (for postgraduate students) - includes a more targeted recruitment of international students as they could become knowledge workers in the future. Universities adopt innovative ideas to adapt to requirements of international students.

The third strategy aims to generate income – besides skilled migration, commercial goals are pursued. International students represent extra income, and thus institutions are allowed greater autonomy. Countries with this strategy include New Zealand, the US (for undergraduate students), the UK (for non-EU students), Denmark (for non-EU students), Ireland and the Netherlands. The fourth and last strategy involves capacity building, mainly for developing countries (such as China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Dubai). It is an import-dominated strategy, and encourages the return of nationals going abroad (Vincent-Lancrin 2008)

While the state has been considered key in migration policy-making and control, debates in the comparative politics and migration literature increasingly explore whether globalisation has in fact eroded state sovereignty (Evans 1998, Keohane & Miller 1996). Some claim that migration is seen as an example of states losing control over migration (see Sassen 1996). This has allowed non-state actors to become active in migration policy-making, including organised interest groups (Freeman 1995;2002), courts (Guiraudon 1997, Joppke 1998), ethnic groups, trade unions (Haus 1999; 2002), law and order bureaucracies (Guiraudon 2000), local actors and street-level bureaucrats, private actors (Lahav & Guiraudon 2006:207), migration services companies and individual migration actors. Non-state actors have started to perform migration control functions as

the state has shifted liabilities outward to private actors such as employers, universities and even individuals such as sponsors (Guiraudon 2002, Guiraudon & Lahav 2000, Lahav 1998). This principle draws on the principal-agent model, in which the state delegates tasks to its agents who are more likely to meet the policy goals. Delegation is supposed to reduce transaction costs in situations where the agents have more information or better capabilities than the principal (Williamson 1993). The argument goes that states delegate authority in order to circumvent constraints, or seek out venues that represent their preferred outcomes (Guiraudon & Lahav 2000). In this example, states outsource migration control to universities in order to engage in the internationalisation of higher education by attracting more international students.

As internationalisation is challenging national institutions such as universities, they are 'objects as well as subjects of internationalisation. They are affected by and at the same time influence these processes' (Enders 2004:365, see also Mosneaga & Agergaard 2012). Universities, however, have been largely neglected from the migration and comparative politics literature so far. But they are increasingly the actors responsible for recruiting international students, and act as mediators and practitioners in case of conflicting policies at national, EU and international levels. Universities compete nationally and internationally for the best students (Santiago et al. 2008), and are setting the tone by shaping alliances and enhancing their global reach (see Marginson 2007, Mazzarol, Soutar & Seng 2003).

Existing studies have focused mainly on single-country examinations of university strategies (such as Mosneaga & Agergaard 2012 on Denmark; Bolsmann & Miller 2008, Toyoshima 2007 on the UK; Marginson 2002 on Australia) though exceptions include Taylor (2004) on universities in four countries, and Graf (2009) on Germany and the UK. There are considerable differences in strategies pursued among universities. For instance, Marginson (2006:21) distinguishes between five university strategies at the global level (only the three main ones will be discussed here). The first segment, 'world market of elite universities', includes the American doctoral sector and the high prestige universities in the UK (such as Oxford and Cambridge). These institutions are prestige (which rests on research reputation and global power of degree) and not profit driven. The second segment, 'exporting national research universities', are comprised of research universities in the UK, Canada, Australia, Europe and Japan. They are prestige-driven at the national level but often run foreign degrees as a profit-making business. 'Teaching-focused export institutions', the third segment, are lesser status institutions in the export nations, operate commercially in the global market and cater to a lower cost/lower quality echelon of foreign education (Marginson 2006). While this provides a useful framework, it is necessary to analyse how university strategies are part of broader national policies.

The paper contributes to this debate by exploring university strategies embedded within a national framework. Universities are in charge of student admissions and thus act as non-state actors

in control of international student migration. However, states remain important actors in controlling migration (see Freeman 1995, Joppke 1998, Lahav 1997) since the independence of universities as international actors is conditioned by national immigration policies (see also Van Damme 2001; Hénard, Diamond & Roseveare 2012). University strategies can interact with national policies to facilitate the internationalisation of higher education by creating synergies. But when strategies at the two levels are inconsistent, mismatches and even clashes are likely, which may actually hinder internationalisation (Hénard, Diamond & Roseveare 2012).

Table 2: Interactions between national policies and university strategies towards international students

State / **University**	*Facilitates* internationalisation (e.g. clear strategy, sufficient resources, autonomy)	*Hinders* internationalisation (e.g. no adequate funding, no clear strategy, lack of capacity, limited autonomy)
Facilitates internationalisation (e.g. favourable immigration policies, funding for universities, clear internationalisation policy)	(Positive) Synergy I	Mismatch/clash III
Hinders internationalisation (e.g. restrictive immigration policies, insufficient funding, no clear internationalisation policy)	Mismatch/clash II	(Negative) Synergy IV

Source: Adapted from Hénard, Diamond & Roseveare 2012.

Table 2 provides a typology of interactions between national policies and university strategies. Synergies take place when both levels facilitate (or hinder) internationalisation (quadrants I and IV), while mismatches/clashes are more likely in the case of inconsistencies between the two (quadrants II and III). For instance, this is the case when university strategies facilitate internationalisation by having a clear strategy or sufficient autonomy, funding and capacity, while the national policy hinders it through restrictive immigration policies, no clear strategy or limited funding for universities. We would expect more internationalisation in the case of a (positive) synergy (quadrant I), while the other three cases will rather hinder internationalisation. The following section examines this typology across three cases.

3. Three universities in comparison

To differentiate between the aforementioned types of interactions, the paper compares three universities in Europe: Charles University in the Czech Republic, Sciences Po in France and University of Oxford in the United Kingdom (UK). While all three cases pursue greater internationalisation of higher education, they are at different levels of internationalisation and policy developments. Oxford University in the UK can be characterised as a front-runner, Sciences Po in France as a follow-up, and Charles University in the Czech Republic as a late-comer to the internationalisation of higher education.

First, it is important to place the selected countries within a broader OECD comparison as EU member states compete with countries such as Australia, Canada, New Zealand and the United States (US) for international students. Figure 1 indicates that the number of international students has increased in many countries from 2003 to 2010. Especially Australia, Canada and the UK were successful in raising the number of international students, but other countries (e.g. Germany, Ireland, Portugal, Belgium, Denmark and Norway) experienced a decrease over this time period.

Figure 1: International tertiary-level students (2003-2010)
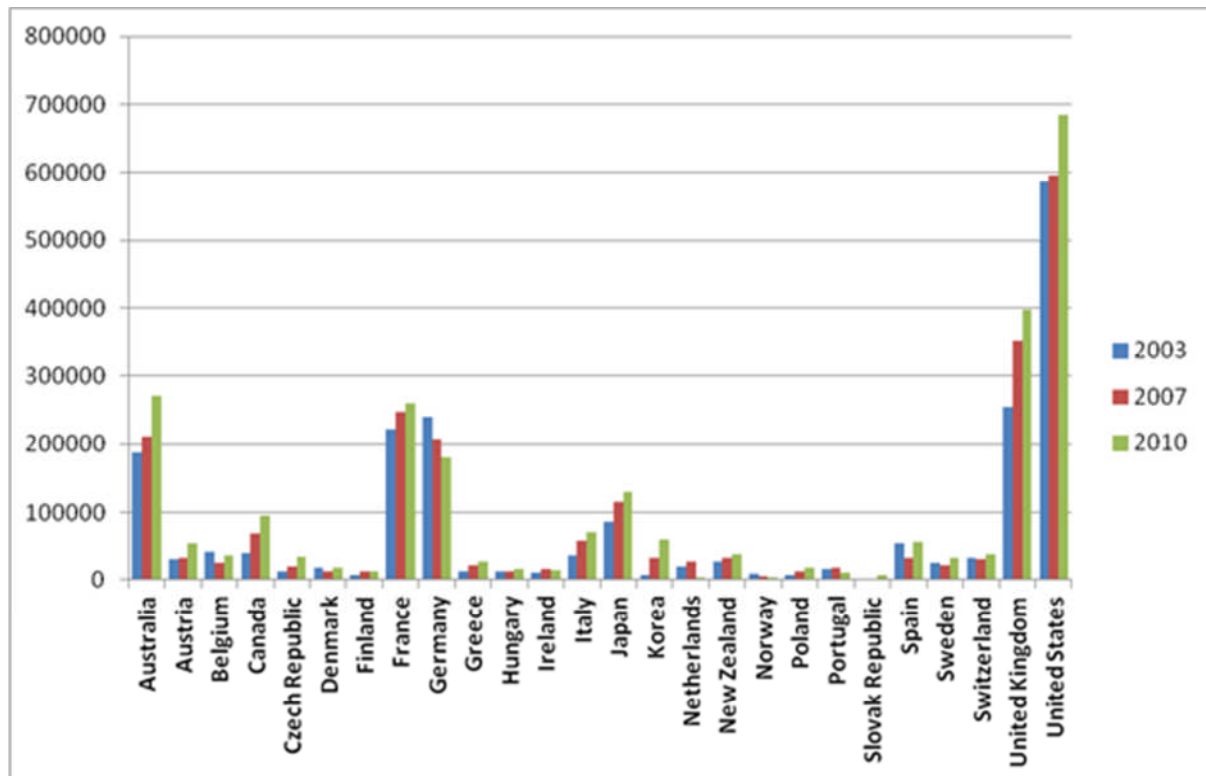
Source: OECD 2006; 2010; 2013.

Note: Data cover students in full-degree programmes, excludes short-term ones like Erasmus.

In absolute terms, the US attracted the largest number of students (about 684,800 in 2010), followed by the UK, Australia, France and Germany. Nevertheless, we should keep in mind that data for the Czech Republic, France, Greece, Italy, Korea and Poland refer to foreign students and thus might over-represent the number of international students. Many of the 26 countries under examination attracted fewer than 50,000 international students, with an average of 98,742 students for all countries (OECD 2013b:34).

While the US might have the largest absolute number of international students, the picture is different when we consider international students as percentage of tertiary enrolment. Figure 2 demonstrates that the US scores fairly low in this regard (3.4% of on-shore students). In 2010, Australia had about 21.2% international students as percentage of overall tertiary enrolment, followed by the UK (16.0%), Switzerland and Austria (both 15.4%) and New Zealand (14.2%). They have been successful in attracting international students in regard to the size of their tertiary population. The average number for the 21 countries was 7.0 percent (OECD 2013b).

Figure 2: International students as percentage of total tertiary enrolment (2010)
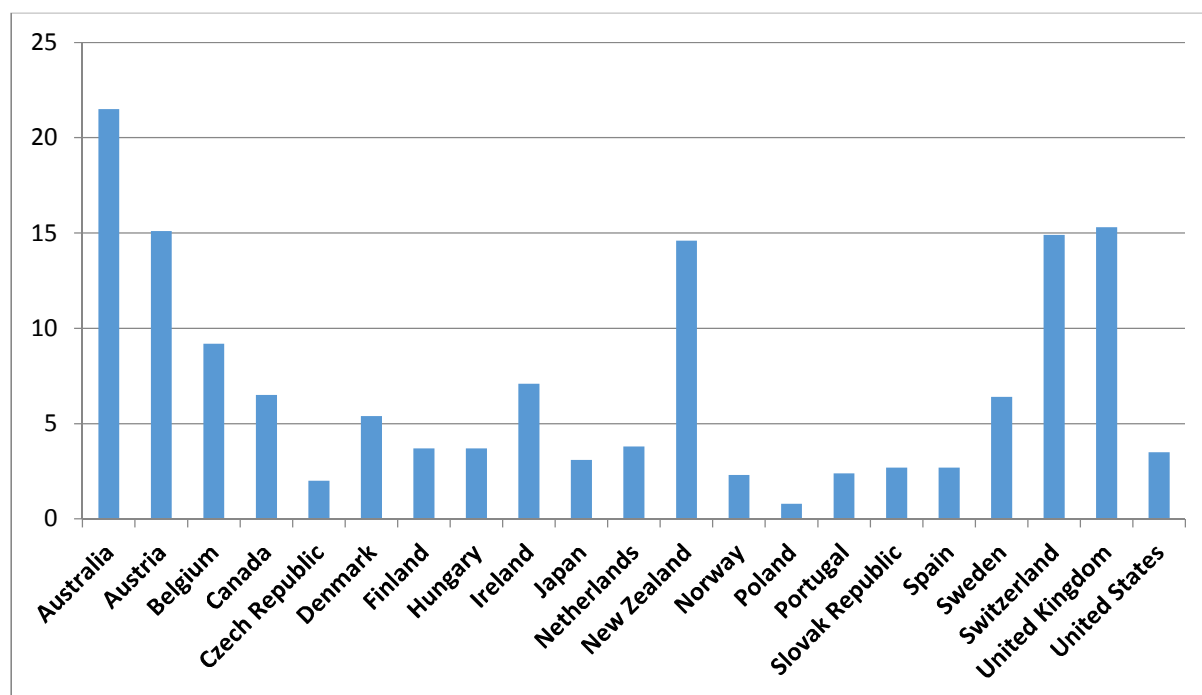
Source: OECD 2013b:34.

Considerable differences exist between the three countries in the level of internationalisation when migration outcomes are considered. This is visible in the (absolute) number of international students from 1998/1999 to 2009. Table 3 demonstrates that all three countries have experienced considerable increases over a ten-year period. In terms of international students as percentage of

tertiary enrolment, the UK ranked high with about 16 percent, while France had 11.6 percent and the Czech Republic 8 percent (OECD 2013b).

Table 3: International students in the Czech Republic, France and the UK

	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Czech Republic		4,583	5,468	7,750	9,753	10,338	14,923	18,522	21,395	24,483	27,907	30,624
France		130,952	137,085	147,402	165,437	221,567	237,587	236,518	247,510	246,612	243,436	249,143
UK	209,554	232,540	222,936	225,722	227,273	255,233	300,056	318,399	330,078	351,470	341,791	368,968

Source: UNESCO Statistics.
Note: Thanks to Chris Parsons for sharing this data.

Different national policies and university strategies for attracting international students are visible. The UK has been successful in targeting international students, but France and the Czech Republic have only gradually focused on seeing international students as important assets for the university sector and subsequent labour market. The three universities (Charles University, Sciences Po and University of Oxford) also demonstrate some differences, notably in the year of foundation, size, annual budget, international ranking, number and origin of international students as well as strategies employed. While they count among the top universities in the respective countries, their international rankings vary considerably as well as the success of their internationalisation strategies (Interview #5, Miklavič 2011, see Table 4 for a contextual overview). All three universities are trying to increase the number of international students, but they need to act under institutional and national limits (Interview #5). Even though the university is treated as one actor in this article, it is important to highlight that university strategies can be quite decentralised as individual faculties, departments, institutes or programmes within the same university can pursue varying approaches.

Table 4: Charles University, Sciences Po and University of Oxford – main facts (2012)

	Charles University	**Sciences Po**	**University of Oxford**
Founded	1348	1872	1096?
Student population	51,000	12,000	21,000
Annual budget	CZK 8 billion (£2.5 million)	€145 million (£116 million)	£919.6 million
International ranking	286	213	5
International students	13.7% (7,300 students)	46% (5,500 students)	Over 30% (8,100 students)
Main source countries	Slovakia, Moldova, Balkans, Romania, US, UK	US, Germany, UK, China	US, China, Germany, Canada, India

Sources: Charles University 2012, QS World Universities 2012, Sciences Po 2012, University of Oxford 2012a.

To examine the typology, the next sections probe the interactions between states and universities. More specifically, they systematically investigate policies on migration, international education and higher education (*national policies*), the more general pattern of the three universities' international activities and their overall institutional strategies (*university strategies*), and the detailed interaction between universities and states in the regulation of migration aspects of international students (*state-university interaction*).

Charles University, Czech Republic

The *national policy* on internationalisation of higher education has developed gradually. The Czech Republic has undergone profound changes in its higher education sector following the end of the communist regime in 1989. It has developed from a 'highly centralised and ideologically bound system' to a 'more diversified and decentralised system with full academic freedom and self-governing bodies, open to Europe and the world' through the 1990 (and reformed 1998) Higher Education Acts (MEYS 2006:87, see also Neave 2003).

Stronger market orientation and influence by the EU Bologna process have also impacted internationalisation - one of the four main drivers of change in higher education after the Velvet Revolution (MEYS 2009). As we will see, several policies have been implemented to attract high-skilled immigrants (such as the 2009 Green Card) as well as international students. From 2005 until 2010, foreign students graduating from Czech universities could participate in the Highly Skilled

Scheme which granted permanent residence after two and half years, if they had a prior job offer (Suter & Jandl 2008). The 2009 Green Card is meant for highly qualified workers though there is no explicit path for international graduates of Czech universities. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports (MEYS 2005) is committed to cooperative internationalisation of higher education, identified as one of the three main goals in its 2006-2010 Long-term Plan (2005).

The Czech Republic would likely count among income-generating strategy countries (Vincent-Lancrin 2008). The MEYS cited 'the need to attract highly talented students and the potential for revenue generation through international tuition fees' (The Observatory 2005). The same conditions prevail for Czech and international students in terms of tuition fees – education is free in public universities if Czech is the language of instruction. But for programmes in English language and in private universities, tuition fees need to be paid. A stronger market orientation is thus evident with regard to the diversification of funding through strategic investments and private contracts (Dobbins & Knill 2009).

The Ministry sought 'to double the country's foreign student population by 2010 (this meant 33,000 students or 10 percent of the student population), mainly through the support and funding of language programmes, the establishment of joint degrees and involvement in international education programmes. The proportion of degree programmes delivered in foreign languages was expected to increase in doctoral programmes from about 30 to 60 percent, and a half of Master's degree programmes were to be taught in foreign languages (MEYS 2005:7).

In particular, 'the interest on the part of foreign students and academic staff in Czech higher education is important in terms of openness of the entire Czech higher education system, its increased competitiveness and, as a result, better quality' (MEYS 2005:11). These internationalisation goals were reinforced in the follow-up Strategic Plan 2011-2015 (MEYS 2010), which included an increase in 'the number of foreign students at Czech higher education institutions by...enlarging the scope of study programmes delivered in foreign languages, ...developing HE [higher education] institutions' strategies of international cooperation and preparing conditions for the studies of foreign students' (Ibid 20).

However, as a latecomer to the internationalisation of higher education, the Czech Republic still has to establish 'its reputation as a distinctive and high quality study abroad destination' (The Observatory 2005). The 2011-2015 Strategic Plan makes greater provisions for promoting Czech higher education abroad (e.g. through web-based information and international affairs) (MEYS 2010:20). The policy change has had some results as the number of international students has risen from 4,583 in 1999 to 30,624 in 2009 (UNESCO Statistics, Table 3).

Moving from national policy to *university strategy,* Charles University, the oldest and best known university of the country (Stastna 2001), would likely fall under what Marginson (2006) terms 'exporting national research universities'. It is prestige-driven but runs foreign degrees as a profit-

making business. At Charles University, international students are considered to be a good source of money (they pay €3,000-3,500/semester, in contrast to almost no fees for Czech students) and thus there is self-interest to expand these English-speaking programmes (Interview #1). However, little advertising of programmes or the use of agencies abroad take place due to lack of resources.

The university attracts the highest number of international students in the country (almost 7,000), many of them doing degrees in medical or pharmaceutical sciences (Kabelova 2011). International student recruitment is a priority for the university; especially in its master's programmes (many of them are English-taught). However, each department has its own international office, and recruitment of international students is more or less decentralised. For instance, the medical faculty has received many Indian students due to long-established links (Interview #1). In addition, the university benefits from its location, as the city of Prague has been cited as a major draw for attracting students (Interview #1).

The development of internationalisation can be divided into two periods. In the first *quantitative* period (1989-2003), the number of bilateral agreements between the University and other universities in the world increased (Charles University 2013a). During the second *qualitative* period which started in 2004, the university has evaluated existing cooperation, discontinued some and started to select partner universities based on their international rankings (Charles University 2013a). Internationalisation is among the key points of the University's 2011-2015 strategy. For example, its international prestige will be used to further expand international exchanges with attractive partners, and student mobility of both domestic and international students will be supported further. In addition, Charles University aims to promote developing and disseminating high-quality teaching in a foreign language to international students through a higher number of active study programmes in a foreign language. A key strategic point has been to stimulate the recruitment of international students (including PhDs), in particular by reducing administrative barriers on the side of the state (Charles University 2013b).

How consistent are national policies and university strategies? It is clear that policies at the national level offer a framework of conditions for universities and an overall plan of internationalisation. The state, represented by the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport, has to conduct compulsory and exclusive consultation with two higher education bodies: the Czech Rectors Conference and the Council of Higher Education Institutions on proposals that would significantly impact higher education institutions (File et al. 2009:31). Rather than the work of ministries, it is mostly up to the activities of Czech universities to engage in the internationalisation of higher education (File et al. 2009:94); thus they have a certain level of autonomy. But most universities have neither developed a proactive policy for international marketing nor a clear strategy towards international cooperation, which is often due to the insufficient number of study

programmes accredited in foreign languages, in particular English (File et al. 2009:79;94). This has likely slowed down the internationalisation process.

Even when a clear university strategy is in place (e.g. Charles University), some university officials complain that national policies are rigid, inefficient and consider student migrants as a problem. Visa requirements can thus make the stay of international students more complicated than is necessary (Interview #1). The administrative barriers of the state are also visible in the previously mentioned strategy of Charles University (2013b). Thus the state at times hinders the internationalisation efforts of universities.

Sciences Po, France

In contrast to the Czech Republic, France employs a different *national policy* towards internationalisation of higher education. It counts among the 'skilled migration' category, which considers international students as future labour migrants (Vincent-Lancrin 2008). The financial incentives of internationalisation are hence not as evident as in the Czech example. In addition, the same tuition fees apply to national and international students in France, and thus international students are not necessarily seen as a source of income (OECD 2004).

Consistent with the 'skilled migration' policy, the French state simplified the visa procedure and permitted international students to take up part-time employment (Law of 11 May 1998 on the entry and stay of foreigners and of the right to asylum). Yet, expected flows did not arrive for reasons such as language. Several reports were published on how to improve the attractiveness of France. As a result, two 2002 circulars indicated that immigration officers should look favourably at the long-term residence permits requests made by previous international students (Tremblay 2005:214). Since 2003, new goals were pursued: first, to facilitate access to the master and doctoral level in certain studies and second, to diversify the geographical origin of students (Suter & Jandl 2006).

Following the example of other countries, the law of 24 July 2006 introduced a new six-month non-renewable residence permit to allow graduates at the master level and above to take up employment. The job had to be equivalent to the applicant's education and with a salary of at least 1.5 times SMIC (minimum salary). After the six-month period, the applicant, if s/he had a job offer or a job, could continue to stay in France for a professional activity (Immigration 2012). Overall, the number of international students increased from 130,952 in 1999 to 249,143 in 2009 (UNESCO Statistics, Table 3). However, a shift towards a restrictive policy took place with the 2011 *Circular Guéant*, which will be discussed later.

To take the example of Sciences Po, the university has had an international vocation since its foundation which has even further developed over the last twenty years through its *university strategy*

(Sciences Po 2013a). Greater orientation towards internationalisation started in 1996 with the support of the late Richard Descoings, then President of the university. The Vice President of Sciences Po in charge of international affairs, Francis Vérillaud, also encouraged the efforts of turning the French university into an international one. The central strategy included having three regional centres (later expanded to five). Each centre operates like a small embassy and has three missions: (a) to gain recognition for Sciences Po, (b) to organise student and researcher mobility, and (c) to offer programmes of excellence or dual degrees. These degrees aim in particular to improve the image of Sciences Po and thus make the university more interesting to students (Interview #3).

Sciences Po would fall under what Marginson (2006:21) terms 'exporting national research universities'. It is firmly rooted in international competition as around 42 percent of students are non-French and come from more than 130 countries (Sciences Po 2013b). The International Affairs and Exchange Division, created in 1996, is the main office for international policies, and has placed Sciences Po among the world class universities (Sciences Po 2013c). As the Director of the European Centre indicates, the university had about 38 percent of international students in 2010/2011 or 3,500 students in total (Interview #3). The majority came from the EU, followed by the US. The strategy was to keep around 40 percent of international students, but to receive more applications and select candidates based on high criteria, or in other words 'Get better qualified people and more of them' (Interview #3). The recent intake was mainly bachelor (about 50 percent) and master' students (about 43 percent international students) and there was a small number of international doctoral students.

Another example of internationalisation is the Paris School of International Affairs, launched in September 2010. French and EU students pay lower fees than third-country nationals. One third of students are former graduates of Sciences Po, but the aim is to decrease this number to one fourth. International students come from 62 countries (Interview #4). According to one interviewee, Sciences Po's international strategy is not about money, which is contrary to some universities in the UK and the US (Interview #3). This would go hand in hand with the overall French 'non-commercial policy, devoid of direct economic objectives' (Vinokur 20010208). Nonetheless, universities (including Sciences Po) depend more and more on private contributions (through fees and fundraising) since governmental grants have decreased in recent years. Therefore, some financial incentives to recruit international students may well exist.

The *state-university interaction* exemplifies several types over time. France wants to promote its higher education by attracting international students who 'can contribute to the dynamism of the French cultural, social, and economic model' (OECD 2004:113). The 2007 *Loi Pécresse*, meant to bring French universities to the 'level of excellence of major international competitors' (Powell et al. 2012:411), reformed the higher education sector by giving the nation's eighty-five universities greater autonomy, including control over their finances and more leeway in personnel decisions (Wildavsky

2010:91). As one immigration official put it, 'France wants international students in order to stay in the competition' (Interview #2). This would indicate a synergy between the national policy and university strategies. Nevertheless, the country still has a lot to change to become attractive to international students and offer a good quality of service (including acceptable housing). Allowing international students to work and then seek a job after graduation is a key strategy.

Nonetheless, universities and the state have clashed on exactly this issue. In May 2011, the former Sarkozy government implemented *Circular Guéant*, which made it difficult for international graduates to work in France. More specifically, it required prefectures to be stricter in assessing applications by non-EU nationals for post-study work permits. The main universities and grandes écoles (including Sciences Po), their confederations (such as Confédération des grandes écoles, Conférences des présidents d'université and des écoles d'ingénieurs) as well as a newly formed student association for this purpose (*Collectif 31 Mai*) mobilised against the highly controversial circular, together with employers (MEDEF) and immigrants' rights groups (RFI 2012). In a letter to former Interior Minister Claude Guéant, the then-Budget Minister Valérie Pécresse argued that the 'wave of refusals [of work permit applications] would not be without consequences for the attractiveness of our grandes écoles and our universities abroad' (AFP 2011). This circular was an example of a mismatch between national policy and university strategies towards internationalisation, and would have likely had an impact on student migration outcomes and acted as deterrent to potential international students.

Acting on an electoral promise, the controversial circular was finally repealed in May 2012 by the Hollande government (Le Monde 2012). A new text was added, specifying that relevant officials should not deport students whose temporary right to stay had run out and were urged to speed up the handling of requests for working papers (RFI 2012). This should have created again a synergy between the two levels, but in 2013, international students seeking work in France still encountered difficulties and delays, which has led university associations to push for a new law (Eychenne 2013). Thus this impact will likely appear in updated migration statistics. While the state has generally facilitated international student recruitment of universities leading to synergies, the two actors have clashed in more recent years due to inconsistencies between national policies and university strategies, hindering their internationalisation efforts.

University of Oxford, United Kingdom

The UK's policy towards internationalisation of higher education is differentiated between skilled migration (for EU students) and income generating (for non-EU students) approaches (Vincent-Lancrin 2008). It is evident that seeing international students as a source of revenue (especially for non-EU students) can be marked with the 1979 accession of the Thatcher government. Until then,

international students were considered cost to the system. The new Conservative government raised non-EU student fees (the first increase took place in 1966) and lifted the student quota imposed in 1977 in order to limit the cost on taxpayers (Bolsmann & Miller 2008). The Conservative government also ended subsidies to universities for international students in 1980. Part of a broader strategy, universities were considered as contributors to the national economy and expected to compete internationally for fee-paying students (Bolsmann & Miller 2008:76).

Students were among the first to be encouraged to come to the UK, a shift in policy that was mostly driven by economic needs. In June 1999, the Prime Minister initiated a three year strategy to attract more students to the UK and hence increase the UK's share of the higher education market from 17 to 25 per cent as well as double the number of new students. This measure was supposed to eventually boost the UK's export earnings by £700 million (Cerna & Wietholtz 2011). 'In addition to a £5 million marketing campaign, immigration rules were relaxed to give automatic permission for students to work part-time and to make it easier for would-be students to obtain a visa' (Spencer 2002:8). The second Prime Minister's Initiative for International Education (2006-2011) was a five-year strategy to strengthen international education.

According to the strategy, 'they [the students] are a factor in the economic sustainability of many of our educational institutions, and enable bright young people from abroad to develop lifelong ties with the UK which are of long-term benefit to the country' (Home Office 2005:15). Prior to that, the rules had already been relaxed in 2001 in order to allow post-graduate students to obtain a work permit after finishing their studies, hoping that this step would encourage students to keep ties with the UK and to contribute to the British economy (Cerna & Wietholtz 2011). The number of international students increased from 209,554 in 1998 to 368,968 in 2009 (UNESCO Statistics, Table 3). However, with the introduction of the 2008 points-based system, students (under Tier 4) are subject to tight approval processes and strict controls that have been installed to reduce abuse of the system. They have to be sponsored by a university and need to have sufficient funding for their studies.

In 2010, the UK government announced yet again tougher regulations on student visas to stop abuse of the system. Applicants needed to speak English to near-GCSE level and those on short courses were not able to bring dependants (BBC 2010). This change was a response to criticism of the government that it had allowed suspected terrorists and other would-be immigrants into the UK, who stayed on despite their temporary visas (BBC 2010). More restrictive policies came into place with more changes to Tier 4, which further hindered internationalisation efforts. Similar to employers in the case of work permits, universities needed to act as sponsors for student visas and thus control admission (i.e. migration control was outsourced to universities). The concern was that potential students would choose other countries with more favourable conditions (such as Australia or Canada) over the UK. The Tier 1 (post-study) route which allowed graduates of UK universities

to stay on for two years to find a job was closed in April 2012, but a route was retained into sponsored graduate employment through Tier 2 (UKBA 2012b). More specifically, graduates with an offer of 'a skilled job at a salary of at least £20,000 (or more in some cases) from a reputable employer accredited by the UK Border Agency, were able to continue living and working in the UK in order to benefit the British economy' (UKBA 2012a). Another policy change of April 2013 specified that international students completing a PhD in the UK were able to stay on for 12 months to find skilled employment or set up as an entrepreneur (UKBA 2013).

Compared to the other two universities in the article, the University of Oxford has had an international *university strategy* for a long time. It has been a clear front-runner in the internationalisation of higher education as it welcomed its first international student in 1190 (University of Oxford 2012b). Oxford falls under what Marginson (2006) terms 'world market of elite universities', which are prestige but not income driven. Therefore, in contrast to many other UK universities, the University of Oxford does not pursue students to add to the financial stability of the institution (Interview #6). A fraction of its funding comes from international fees (about 14 percent) - it relies more heavily on research funding and government grants. The equivalent is about 40 percent from fees at the London School of Economics (Interview #6). But with reduced university funding and the increase in student fees, financial incentives for international student recruitment may become more relevant.

Oxford already has a 'strong international profile' (32% of students are non-UK citizens), but due to intensifying global competition for the best students, it is important that it has a clear strategic response (University of Oxford 2008:7). The university seeks to 'attract students of the highest quality' and 'does not set a target for international student numbers' (University of Oxford 2008:22). An international recruitment and selection strategy for undergraduates and postgraduates was developed and implemented over the planning period (2008-2013) in order to attract 'the very best students' (University of Oxford 2008:21). In the follow-up strategic plan (2013-2018), the focus remains on refining approaches to the recruitment and support of undergraduate and postgraduate international students (University of Oxford 2013b:580). A review of undergraduate and graduate admissions processes is planned, which includes a 'policy on attracting and identifying the best home and international students' (University of Oxford 2013b:581). The university's strategy encompasses promoting deeper engagement with key countries/regions, international collaborations, international educational experiences for all students, integration of international academic staff and students and international student recruitment and funding (University of Oxford 2013a).

The fairly new International Strategy office is responsible for developing a coherent strategy to promote Oxford's international relations, global profile and international competitiveness (University of Oxford 2013a). The office works together with departments and colleges in Oxford due to the decentralised nature of the university. As a result, some departments and colleges pursue

international recruitment on their own since they have established links with particular countries, universities or schools over the years (Interview #6).

The *state and universities* have *interacted* in different ways. Changes in government policy regarding international students have had an important impact on international strategies in UK universities (Toyoshima 2007:276). As a result, Coate and Williams (2004:114) observe that 'internationalisation, globalisation, and even to a large extent Europeanisation are, in England, largely a matter for individual universities'. Thus universities are mainly responsible for the worldwide market for student fees and research (Luijten-Lub et al. 2005:238). This autonomy has likely facilitated the internationalisation of higher education - the state has provided an enabling framework and has allowed universities to devise their own internationalisation strategies (i.e. allowing for synergies to develop). This was also reflected in student migration statistics – flows have increased, though decreased after the introduction of the points based system. However, similarly to the French case, the state and universities have clashed on recent occasions – when national policies and university strategies were inconsistent. This happened more recently with the 2012 closure of the Tier 1 (post-study) route. Originally envisioned for 2011, this closure was postponed due to intense lobbying by universities who feared that they would lose potential students without this attractive opportunity (Workpermit 2011). International graduates could work in the UK, but they had to receive a work-sponsored employment Tier 2 permit. But more recently, it has outsourced migration control to universities who are acting as sponsors of students. Following the implementation of more restrictive national policies and the subsequent clashes with universities, student flows have fallen again. The negative signal may have encouraged potential international students to look for other study destinations.

4. Conclusions

The paper has analysed in what ways national policies and university strategies towards international students interact. While most of the literature has focused on national policies, other non-state actors such as universities have been largely neglected. States provide a broad national framework, but it is often up to universities to compete globally and attract international students.

The paper has argued that while universities can operate autonomously in a global setting, they are not inconsistent with state policies. Once this takes place, clashes with the state occur, which can hinder the internationalisation efforts of the country. By combining different approaches in the literature on education, comparative politics and migration studies, the article has offered a comparative analysis of the governance of international student migration. It has built upon Guiraudon and Lahav's (2000) framework on states' delegation of migration control to private

actors, and has examined interactions between national policies and university strategies through a developed typology on synergies and mismatches between national and university levels.

The three cases highlight considerable differences. The Czech Republic has been a latecomer to internationalisation, and has mostly offered financial and regulatory support for university efforts. Nonetheless, university strategies towards internationalisation are rather undeveloped, which is halting the process. In contrast, France's labour migration policy has largely enabled the internationalisation of higher education, and provided a supportive framework for French universities, such as Science's Po own internationalisation strategy. But a 2011 circular restricting the transition of graduates to the labour market led to clashes between the state and universities. Even though the circular was later repealed, the mismatch between national policy and university strategies has hindered internationalisation efforts.

The UK's policy has provided an enabling framework for internationalisation for many years, giving universities autonomy to pursue internationalisation of higher education. However, in more recent years, the state has outsourced migration control to universities. In addition, more restrictive national immigration policies have clashed with more permissive university strategies, which has hindered internationalisation efforts.

As the case studies demonstrate, national and university actors have interacted in different ways: both synergies and mismatches are visible. It is evident that if countries want to advance their internationalisation of higher education, they need to create (positive) synergies between national policies and university strategies (see Hénard, Diamond & Roseveare 2012 for policy recommendations). In case of a mismatch between the two levels, internationalisation efforts are hampered.

The conducted interviews have highlighted that the brand of university plays an increasing role in attracting international students (Interviews #1,3,6). For instance, while the University of Oxford seeks to preserve its brand, Sciences Po and Charles University aim for brand-building and brand-recognition. The brand image is important for public attitudes towards the institution. Therefore, further research should consider the role of branding of universities, building upon the literature in marketing and management (e.g. Hemsley-Brown & Goonawardana 2007, Mazzarol & Soutar 1999). Since this analysis has only focused on three cases, another research strand would be to examine other OECD and non-OECD countries as well as different universities around the world. The area of international student migration is expected to grow further in the next years; hence this article hopes to contribute to this fruitful discussion.

[1] International students have migrated for the purpose of taking up studies. Foreign students have either migrated with their parents before taking up their studies or in some cases have even been resident in the host country since birth (OECD 2010:42). International students refer here to non-national domiciled students - for example, they are both European Union and third-country nationals (Bolsmann & Miller 2008).

[2] This refers to 'institutional arrangements set up by governments, universities and education agents that involve the delivery of higher education services in two or more countries' (Kritz 2006:5). The term encompasses different forms, but is limited here to the recruitment of international students.

[3] In 2004, an estimated €23.5 billion was created including tuition fees, student travel and living costs in OECD countries (OECD 2004). However, the amount of fees varies across countries. In some (Finland and Norway), all students are offered free education. Others charge international students the same as national students (Czech Republic for some degrees, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Korea, Mexico, Spain and Switzerland for most universities), whereas international students pay much higher tuition fees in yet other countries (such as Austria, Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the UK and the US) (OECD 2013a).

[4] Cultural and security reasons also exist (Graf 2008, OECD 2004, Zha 2003).

[5] Some critics comment that international students can decrease wages and thus reduce incentives for natives to pursue studies. They might also take longer to graduate as they do not possess sufficient language skills. Considerable abuse may exist in full-fee charging countries (see Borjas 2002 in Suter & Jandl 2008).

[6] Policies towards international students are only one part of the equation, migrants choose the country of destination according to several factors, such as employment possibilities, recognition of skills and qualifications, the cost of studies abroad, reputation and quality of institution, existence of networks, language of destination country, perceived quality of life, geographical and cultural proximity (Vincent-Lancrin 2008).

[7] Governance refers to the broad approaches, ideologies and rationales used in systems of power (including government, civil society and private life) (Marginson et al. 2010:62).

[8] Thanks to Simon Marginson for summing up the argument so nicely.

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