

Work Package 3

URGE Bristol Workshop

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Aims

- To achieve enhanced theoretical understanding of the relationships between higher education policies and practices, European coordination and globalisation...
- By identifying and optimising synergies from commingling knowledge inputs from partner institutions
- To provide a basis for further work on the Bologna process and Universities academic and administrative policies and practices.

Objectives

- Based on the methodologies developed in WP2,...
- to share the separate expertises and knowledge generated through by the three partners
- This will entail critical collaborative combination of these knowledges, through developing a theoretical basis for increasing the synergies that URGE allows
- Develop broader and deeper accounts of the Bologna process, regionally and globally...
- One way that this might be done is by seeing the joint project as developing new modes of production, distribution and valorisation of knowledge through Universities

Preamble to Discussion

- (1) there is no suggestion that global, regional and national models of education have some kind of hierarchical relationship;
- (2) while it is important to examine closely their mutual relations, straightforward conceptions of the ‘diffusion’ of such models across scales should be resisted;
- (3) global models of education are not ‘scaled up’ versions of regional models of education, which are not ‘scaled up’ versions of national models; and
- (4) most importantly for the argument here, we should not take it for granted that the respective models of education have matching, or compatible, conceptions of what constitutes education and its objectives and purposes, or that these can easily be made commensurable

Basic differences between models

- Regional and global models differ from the (default) national model in terms of:
- their *orientation* (their stance towards the relationship between market, and morality),
- (especially) their *scope* (who/what is included within the model, and with respect to what range of activities),
- their *governance* (the means of coordination of education and other policies),
- and their *representation* (the nature of the relationship between producers and recipients of well being).

Regionalism: Europe as a model

- Regionalism has moved from being a defensive strategy to being a model to export across the world, based on the value of community and protection, e.g:
- claim to contingent territorial sovereignty (Elden, 2006) and state-hood;
- Europe's extension of its political project in relation to other geo-strategic claims;
- the attractiveness to domestic actors in neighbouring and more distant economies of the usefulness of Europe's higher education tools for brokering internal transformations;
- the desire of globally-oriented export and import higher education institutions and domestic economies beyond the borders of Europe to align their architecture and regulatory frameworks to maximise market position;
- and emergence of Europe's normative power on the global stage (Robertson, 2009: 1).

Key contexts of Discussion

- World economy increasingly multi-polar—e g G 20, BRICS
- Less of ‘emerging markets’ set against the metric of the West as the norm
- National education systems still the default assumption, but with decreasing validity
- Post EU regionalism increasing—see Jayasuriya, Mok, Robertson
- But the key axis remains relations between, and combinations and forms of capitalism and modernity, within the ‘shadowy zone where possession of money meets possession of political power’—the essence of the ‘morbid symptoms’ as one world dies and another struggles to be born

- ‘the warning signals are there. Increasing global competition and Europe’s demographic squeeze mean ‘business as usual’ is not an option. In the field of higher education, we can already see that universities in Europe attract fewer students and in particular fewer researchers from other countries than their US counterparts. ... to paraphrase a certain Danish university student made famous by Shakespeare: something is rotten in the state of Europe’s research and education (Barosso, 2005: 6-7).
- ‘The EHEA may end up challenging American dominance in international higher education, in much the same way that the European Union has become a counterweight in international trade vis-a-vis the U.S. and Japan’. ‘The Bologna Process : As seen from the outside’ WENR 2003

Bologna and Higher education in Lisbon (2)

- [...] the place of higher education in the overall Lisbon strategy goes far beyond ***the programme of structural reform*** initiated by the Bologna Declaration. The role of the universities covers areas as diverse and as vital as the training of teachers and that of future researchers; their mobility within the Union; the place of culture, science and European values in the world; an outward-looking approach to the business sector, the regions and society in general; the incorporation of the social and citizen-focused dimensions in courses. [Communication from the Commission ‘Education & Training 2010: the success of the Lisbon strategy hinges on urgent reforms’ ,

What might this mean more broadly?

- A technicisation/depoliticisation/supranationalisation of the goals, processes and outcomes of HE teaching; 'social needs' are inferred unproblematically from the 'needs' of the Global Knowledge Economy
- Compare here the success of the Bologna process in Europe, where it has been used to 'leapfrog' national opposition to change in the country and the sector itself
- A heterogenisation of the globally structured agenda for education, with competing (regional) claims to control the rules of the game
- A further dimension of Europe's global claims, and thickening of its capacities
- A reflection of a new division into spheres of influence (cf here, the wider EHEA, which can add little to European competitiveness, but may be a threat to Europe if it comes under a different QA regime)

Though we may be excused for thinking so, the Bologna process is neither...

- *Homogeneous*—for instance we can identify a 'social policy' Bologna and a 'research and innovation' Bologna;
- *Static*— it changes continually;
- The instrumentalisation of higher education *solely for reasons of competitiveness* (i.e., it is instrumentalised for other purposes, too)
- Or *(solely) national* in its effects, and its targets
- And these apply across all the areas of convergence we might distinguish—input, policy, process, output, etc, which can vary independently, and irrespective of sigma (mutual) or delta (target) convergence

Twelve meanings of Bologna

- A set of mechanisms to promote mobility and the attractiveness of European H E—driven by EUA, Bologna Follow Up Group (BFUG), national Ministers of Education
- A set of mechanisms intended to ‘modernise’ the European University (driven by Commission)
- Part of HE’s contribution to the Lisbon agenda (driven by Commission—3 papers in particular post 2005)
- Geopolitical expansion of influence of EHEA, eg, via QA processes, and especially Tuning (Latin America, Africa)
- Increasing Europe’s economic competitiveness through HE’s contribution to ‘the Europe of Knowledge

- Increasing Europe's economic competitiveness through 'brain gain'—Erasmus Mundus programmes
- 'Thickening' the idea of 'Europe'—a new sphere of 'European' activity
- Implementing the '5th freedom'—the free movement of knowledge, researchers, etc
- Mobility—an end in itself in the European Research Area
- A set of key indicators of HE across Europe
- A Brand
- A strategy for countries to transform higher education policy