Campus Europae

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The European Higher Education Area

The Bologna Process

After predominantly US and Australian universities recognised and actively embraced globalisation more than a decade ago, the 1999 "Bologna Process" has now led most European universities and governments to actively promote the internationalisation of the university system. By doing so, they have recognised that a Europe of culture and education, which must develop alongside a Europe of trade, industry and currency – if the unification process is to succeed – can only be brought about if future graduates as the top performers of European societies, experience the European concept of "unity in diversity" as a significant component of their education, and thus develop to both sensibly and productively use this diversity as a unique resource. Great productivity potential lies in the exchange between European cultures, and appropriate structures and forms of co-operation are being developed within the framework of Campus Europae to exploit this potential in a university context.

Historical Roots

For more than 1,000 years, Europe has been viewed as having a common culture. Despite the differences in cultural experiences in each individual

country, all are linked by a common tradition and an awareness of their "unity in diversity".

With the start of the European university system in the 11th century, it was natural over a period of several hundred years for students and lecturers to move around freely. The "Barbarossa Privilege" afforded the special protection of the King to those migrant scholars who had become "homeless for the love of science (amore scientie facti exules)". Using Latin as the lingua franca, universities were international beyond the Age of Enlightenment, without having to emphasise this characteristic.

The era of nationalism over the past 300 years has not left the universities unaffected. At times, they almost became strongholds of chauvinistic thought. After the Second World War, however, this nationalist concentration has met with little response in European universities. With the end of the Cold War, the last wall, which blocked personal mobility and the free exchange of thought, has been removed. The path is once again clear for a fresh Europeanisation of the university system.

The Present Situation

Internationalisation and globalisation are the dominating phenomena in the current global debate. They will shape the foreseeable future of science and business, politics and culture, even when confronted with counter-movements seeking to impose regionalism and isolation. The Europeanisation of higher education is therefore not just a key idea in a historical sense. It is equally the necessary conclusion to be drawn from current endeavours to encourage Europe to grow together politically, culturally and

economically, resulting in a stronger Europe aware of its shared heritage: The foundations for the spiritual unity and strength of Europe lie in the respect of human rights, and in securing scientific universalism.

The restoration of the European dimension in the university system is a necessary pre-requisite in order to be able to survive in international competition with American, Asian and Australian universities.

Increased importance is placed upon the personal experiences acquired during a course of study. The systematic integration of inter-cultural activities is not in contrast to, but rather it complements the "virtual university" of the future and the Internet's ever increasing potential for long distance learning.

The Project Campus Europae

The idea of Campus Europae is to strengthen and accelerate the development of the European sphere of education initiated by the "Bologna Process" by establishing concrete co-operations:

Universities of different European countries intend to create a new dimension of collaboration, which will clearly exceed the current degree of international co-operation among universities, with respect to both intensity and quality.

At present, 12 universities from 11 European countries are taking part in the project Campus Europae - which is open to every university feeling committed to the project's objectives.

Cultural pluralism in Europe is not only valuable in itself when academically training the generation,

which will continue and intensify the European process of unification. With respect to the global competition for scientific locations, it is also strategically intelligent to use this cultural pluralism as a valuable resource.

Campus Europae and its contribution to the development of European universities

Campus Europae takes up the suggestions made in Bologna, Salamanca and Prague, and aims to quickly implement them within the "European Higher Education Area" by taking the experiences of previous exchange programmes into account and giving them new impulses:

1. The Campus Europae project adds a European dimension to higher education by providing students with an in-depth knowledge of at least three European regions.

2. The project will enable students to experience the "European Higher Education Area" already during BA-programmes – i.e. during the first study phase. This will ensure that also those students can acquire "European competence", who will enter professional life – temporarily or permanently – upon graduating with a BA degree.

3. The Campus Europae project demonstrates the European idea of "unity in diversity" by bringing students in contact with the so-called "minor" European countries and languages.

4. The Campus Europae study programme will enable students to communicate in at least four

European languages (three for English native speakers).

5. Using a new concept of academic exchange, Campus Europae encourages participating universities to improve the quality of their teaching and the transparency of their courses.

6. Campus Europae increases the international competitiveness of the participating universities.

7. The large number of foreign students will lead to internationalisation: changes in lifestyle and learning culture at the respective universities.

8. Campus Europae adds a European dimension to university degrees and improves employment prospects for graduates in Europe and worldwide.

Campus Europae accepts the legal structures presently existing. Therefore, participation is open to any university, and there are no barriers to entry. What is new is the co-operation in four aspects:

a. the emphasis on the European idea and the objective of promoting a European identity,

b. the promotion of an early period of study abroad,

c. the way it addresses linguistic issues,

d. the use of a standardised procedure for the accreditation of studies.

Particularly this new approach to linguistic issues will give smaller European countries the chance to attract students from other EU countries.

In its current stage, there are no evident reasons why the concept cannot be applied to other universities or university consortiums. All provisions serve to use Europe's cultural diversity as a competitive advantage and to prepare European students for a future in global markets and multicultural environments.

The project especially relates to the reform process of the higher education system in Europe, which was initiated in Bologna in 1999, continued in Salamanca in 2001 and in Prague in 2002. Without this reform, which has progressed significantly in recent years, the objective of which is the attainment of two degrees (BA and MA) in five years, the project would have been considerably impeded, if at all possible. Equally important to the success of the project is the gradually changing manner in which periods spent at European universities have been accredited since the introduction of ECTS (European Credit Transfer System).

However, in order to offer courses within the planned network of universities as quickly as possible, it is necessary to make changes in further areas:

Firstly, the acceptance and acquisition of several foreign languages must be promoted, in particular with regard to those European languages with relatively few native speakers. Only in this way can the integration of all European nations and regions be possible, irrespective of their size and current economic strength.

Secondly, the mutual accreditation of academic achievements must be standardised, in order to accommodate a larger numbers of students. This change is necessary so that courses and degree

qualifications can be co-ordinated to allow an exchange process between several universities, not only from a technical or organisational viewpoint, but also from a time perspective.

Thirdly, part of the project includes examining each university's legal, organisational and financial circumstances, which will govern the exchange programme to be undertaken by the estimated number of students.

English as Lingua Franca

Today, English is the lingua franca of the scientific community. Failure to recognise this will lead to isolation and is counter-productive. It is consequently necessary to have a good command of English – not just for studying abroad, but also for an individual's studies in general. It is appropriate here to draw a parallel with Latin, the old lingua franca of Europe, or German, which was occasionally used in the same way.

Due to the significance of the English language, the universities participating in Campus Europae have decided to use English as an "interim language". Unless "guest" students are already proficient in the host language, they can take their classes held in English for the first half of the academic year to enable them to achieve the required amount of ECTS credits. Classes in English should also form part of the regular curricula for the "home" students in order to facilitate their transition to study abroad. Furthermore, it is economically unfeasible – at least with certain forms of teaching such as lecturing – to offer parallel classes in both the native language and English. Yet, parallel classes in the local language as well as in English are

easy to implement with small-group-classes teaching the same topics: One or more of those classes can be offered in English.

Application of the ECTS System

The universities participating in the Campus Europae project aim to resolutely apply the ECTS regulatory matters – "one point is one point, be it in Trento or Aveiro". This presupposes basic trust amongst the universities involved. To create such trust and to mutually encourage each other to improve the quality of teaching is – in addition to research cooperation – the essential objective of the lecturer exchange program.

It is not our aim to achieve Europe-wide, joint "multilateral" or harmonised courses of study by agreeing on specific areas of content. Based on the experience of the demanding development of bilateral courses of study and final qualifications, as well as the earlier "equivalence commissions", such an aim is neither possible, nor is it desirable.

Within a system designed to promote mobility, the problem of accreditation can best be solved through a combination of stringent ECTS scoring regulations and accompanying "trust building measures".

In view of the diversity of subject-specific peculiarities, any attempt to find a solution at a professional level for the problem of accrediting work undertaken whilst studying abroad seems futile. Here, ECTS offers a suitable approach. The universities participating in the Campus Europae initiative have therefore agreed on the following procedure:

a. Students must be able to achieve 60 ECTS points in each of the academic years at the host universities. This is a prerequisite for being awarded the Campus Europae degree (120 ECTS points from foreign universities where different languages are spoken).

b. In each subject, such an offer should constitute 30 ECTS points (if possible with additional 15 ECTS points as electives) in English, and 30 ECTS points in the local language (again, plus 15 ECTS points as electives).

c. Classes taught in English as the interim language are limited and represent an additional drain on the universities' resources. Therefore, these courses should be chosen in such a way that they can be accredited by as many universities as possible.

d. Each subject area in the participating universities informs the counterpart in the other universities about which courses they wish to offer for this purpose, paying particular attention to select subjects with excellent academic profiles.

e. The subject areas at the other participating universities check which of the courses offered are compatible with the local study program, and which can therefore be easily accredited. Since these checks are only to be carried out (step by step) for courses of study in a subject area, the local effort is justifiable even if queries and amendments are necessary to achieve a 90 ECTS point offer (see b.).

f. At the end of this process, all of the participating universities can advise students at which university they can undertake which courses of study.

Increased Student Mobility: Two years abroad!

The universities participating in Campus Europae attach great importance to students being able to spend a year abroad, both as part of their Bachelors and Masters degrees. For three-year BA degrees, this year abroad would take place in the second (i.e. middle) year of study, and for two-year MA degrees, in the first year of study. These, however, are not strict rules. Depending on the degree discipline, it may be more appropriate to take the year abroad at another point in time during the degree. In all cases, it should be ensured that students are able to gain the experience of studying abroad, even during their first degree, upon completion of which they could enter employment.

The various common models of student organisation currently used in European countries enable these demands to be fulfilled, even if they are still not adapted to the "Bologna Model".

This however requires that the course of study be designed in such a way as to allow periods of study abroad, which do not require – for whatever reason – the student to be continuously present at the home university. One must keep in mind that the creation of a "European Higher Education Area" and the convergence of the organisation of study within Europe, which was agreed in Bologna, are *not* regulatory measures undertaken by the European

education ministers to *impede* but rather to *increase* mobility.

Increased Mobility for Lecturers

Campus Europae will allow the following targets to be achieved more easily:

- trouble-free mutual recognition of studies abroad

- learning from each other will lead to a qualitative improvement in teaching

- setting up joint teaching and research projects

- development of joint final examinations

These can only be achieved if teachers know both their colleagues and the teaching and research requirements at the other participating universities, and can become familiar with their learning and working cultures. This includes chairing seminars, advising students, involvement with examinations and contribution to the organisation of student projects. The length of stay should therefore be long enough to complete a constructive lecture period at the host university, i.e. half an academic year (semester), plus an examination period.

Specific efforts are required to motivate lecturers to spend longer periods of time at other universities. From a financial perspective, this can be best supported by the exchange of lecturers in the guise of "service at another location". This means that lecturers sent to other universities will teach there under the same obligations as at their home university and continue to be paid their home salary.

The European University Foundation (EUF)

The European University Foundation should provide the framework, forming the common body of the association. As the umbrella organisation, it will act as the co-ordinating authority for the association. At the same time, it is the institutionalised forum for participating universities, in which decisions regarding strategic affairs will be made. To ensure close and unhampered co-operation, the participating universities are drawing up a set of regulations, which will form the foundation for common conduct and direction. As the self-governing authority, the EUF has the task of ensuring that the participating universities observe the rules and standards, as well as evaluating the performance of the universities.

The universities working together in the EUF mutually support each other. Together they create the conditions for a high level of student and teacher mobility. They agree on a minimum of terms relating to the organisation of studies, whereby arrangements regarding the course structure and the mutual recognition of study undertaken abroad also aim to make the special features of the respective university accessible to students from other participating universities.

The History of Campus Europae

The project is based on the preparatory work of the "Initiative ESU/EUF – European Universities within a European University"– now known as the "Initiative Campus Europae (European University Foundation) e.V.". This initiative includes members

such as Dr. Konrad Schily and Prof. Dr. Meinolf Dierkes, former Senator Christa Thoben, the Managing Director of the Bucerius Law School Hamburg, Jürgen Büring, former State Secretary Dr. Christoph Ehmann, and the former director of Deutsche Bank Luxembourg, Dr. Ekkehard Stork. It was proposed by former Chancellor Helmut Kohl and supported by his successor, Gerhard Schröder shortly before Germany's term of presidency of the EU. Events in Kosovo during the first half of 1999 led to other political priorities being placed on the agenda within the European Union, with the result that in early 2000, the government of the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg was asked to assume patronage of the project.