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## Researching the Europe of Knowledge: Insights for policymakers from the UACES CRN

**3-4 March 2016**  
 Directorate General Research & Innovation  
 European Commission  
 Square Frère Orban, 8  
 Brussels, Belgium

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### PRESENTATION ABSTRACTS

Day 1: 3 March 2016 (Venue: Square Frère-Orban 8, Room 04.149)

*Welcome* – **Dr Meng-Hsuan Chou**, NTU Singapore 16.00-16.15

<b>Actors and Institutions in the Europe of Knowledge</b>	16.15-17.00
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**Dr Mari Elken**, NIFU  
**Mr Jens Jungblut**, University of Oslo  
**Dr Martina Vukasovic**, Ghent University

The presentation draws on a set of projects that have examined the multi-level multi-actor dynamics of European knowledge policy-making. Employing multiple theoretical perspectives and focusing on different levels of analysis we highlight the interplay between institutions and actors focusing on the following topics:

The transformation of governance of the Bologna Process: The study has examined the evolving governance structure of the process and the emergence of a transnational dynamic related to stakeholder organizations, next to the intergovernmental and supranational ones. Furthermore, the study presents recent findings on the changes in the political saliency of the process, suggesting waning political interest of the participating countries.

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EU education policy beyond the subsidiarity principle: The study analyses policy innovation on the EU level, with a particular focus on instruments used and institutionalization of new policy arenas. The key finding is that while the subsidiarity principle has not been formally changed, stretching and reinterpretation of rules has in some cases taken place, leading to new modes of policy coordination. This is exemplified on the case of European Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning.

Role of stakeholder organizations: In relation to the aforementioned transnational dynamics of the Bologna Process, this study focuses on stakeholder organizations as interest groups, i.e. organizations explicitly mandated by their constituents to influence European level policy making. In light of the expectation that involvement of stakeholder organizations can increase the legitimacy of European policies, the study explores the extent and mechanisms of convergence of stakeholder organizations policy positions.

Conditions for Europeanization: The study analyses the process of institutionalization of European preferences on the national and organisational levels, with a particular focus on enable and constrain factors. The key findings highlight that Europeanization is conditioned by e.g. clarity of European demands, consequences of compliance, presence of epistemic communities, adaptation costs, density of veto players, prior internationalization of the policy domain, etc. The variance of these factors in specific national or organizational contexts accounts for differentiated Europeanization.

Politics of knowledge policy: The role of political parties in policy making processes has thus far been understudied. The study demonstrates their importance for European integration and Europeanization, given the role that national governments can play in filtering, channelling or buffering European ideas and processes. The key findings are that political parties have differing ideological preferences with regard to the re-distributive potential and governance of higher education, as well as that the national context and institutional structure constrain partisan actors in their preferences and thus affect the role national governments can play.

Lessons learned: While at first glance having different foci, the five studies show the multitude of actors that engage in the construction of Europe of Knowledge and reinforce the claim that processes of change rarely take place in a linear manner. Bringing together these multiple perspectives, this presentation provides a more comprehensive view on the Europe of Knowledge as a complex web of relationships, where the institutional rules for appropriate action are being negotiated and transformed by actors which themselves are enabled and constrained by the very same institutions.

Publications from these projects:

**Elken, M.** (2015). Developing policy instruments for education in the EU: the European Qualifications Framework for lifelong learning. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 1-17. doi: 10.1080/02601370.2015.1103795

**Elken, M., & Vukasovic, M.** (2014). Dynamics of voluntary policy coordination: the case of Bologna Process. In M.-H. Chou & Å. Gornitzka (Eds.), *The Europe of Knowledge: Comparing Dynamics of Integration in Higher Education and Research Policies* (pp. 131-159). Cheltenham: Edward Elgar.

**Jungblut, J.** (2015). Bringing political parties into the picture: a two-dimensional analytical framework for higher education policy. *Higher Education*, 69(5), 867-882. doi: 10.1007/s10734-014-9810-5

**Jungblut, J.** (2016). Re-distribution and public governance – the politics of higher education in Western Europe. *European Politics and Society*, 1-22. doi: 10.1080/23745118.2016.1140395

**Vukasovic, M.** (2013). Change of higher education in response to European pressures: conceptualization and operationalization of Europeanization of higher education. *Higher Education*, 66(3), 311-324. doi: 10.1007/s10734-012-9606-4

**Vukasovic, M.** (2014). When and how does Europe matter? Higher education policy change in Croatia, Serbia and Slovenia. *Higher Education Policy*, 27(3), 403-423. doi: 10.1057/hep.2013.36

**Vukasovic, M., Jungblut, J., & Elken, M.** (2015). Still the main show in town? Assessing political saliency of the Bologna Process across time and space. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-16. doi: 10.1080/03075079.2015.1101755

**When are universities bound by EU public procurement rules as buyers and providers? – English universities as a case study**

17.00-17.45

**Dr Andrea Gideon**, National University of Singapore  
**Dr Albert Sanchez-Graells**, University of Bristol Law School

In this study we assess the situations in which universities are currently bound by public procurement rules, as well as the combined changes that market-based university financing mechanisms can bring about in relation to the regulation of university procurement and to the treatment of the financial support they receive under the EU State aid rules.

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The first part focuses on the role of universities as buyers. The traditional position has been to consider universities bound by EU public procurement rules either because they are state authorities, or because they receive more than 50% of their funding from the State. In the latter case, changes in the funding structure can create opportunities for universities to free themselves from compliance with EU public procurement rules. National differences in funding schemes are likely to trigger different answers in different EU jurisdictions. This study uses the situation of English universities as a case study. In doing so it aims to assess whether, as has been suggested by the UK Department of Business, Innovation and Skills, changes in funding for English universities can allow them to stop being bound by EU public procurement rules particularly due to the increasing importance of tuition fees, the lift in student number controls and the pressure for universities to raise other sorts of commercial revenue. This issue is open to discussion because the latest analysis of the universities condition of contracting authorities by the Court in University of Cambridge did not take into account any of these recent trends.

In the second part, we assess the position of universities as providers. Here the traditional position has been that the State can directly mandate universities to conduct teaching and research activities. However, new EU legislation contains specific provisions about how and when teaching and research need to be procured if they are of an economic nature. Thus, accepting the exclusion of university services from procurement requirements as a rule of thumb is increasingly open to legal challenge. This part therefore assesses to what extent the commissioning of education and research services to universities needs to be subjected to procurement requirements. It also looks at the application of State aid rules to the commissioning of these services when procurement is not required.

Finally, the study stresses how even in those cases where, generally, public procurement would need to take place and bind the university as either a buyer or a seller, there are still exemptions for public-public cooperation or in-house arrangements that universities may try to benefit from. For these exceptions to apply, there needs to be an element of control of the providing entity by the contracting authority. Thus, certain organisational decisions could provide a secondary opportunity for universities to avoid compliance with EU public procurement rules as buyers. As providers and in view of their inherent autonomy, the case *Datenlotsen* case might give the impression that control cannot be present in the university-state relationship, which would bar the use of in-house or public-public exemptions when universities act as providers.

Publication from this project:

**Gideon, A. K. & A. Sanchez-Graells** (2015). When are Universities Bound by EU Public Procurement Rules as Buyers and Providers? – English Universities as a case study, see: <http://ssrn.com/abstract=2692966>

**The Rise of Higher Education Regionalism**

10.00-10.45

**Dr Meng-Hsuan Chou**, NTU Singapore  
**Dr Pauline Ravinet**, University of Lille 2

There is a rise and deepening of regional policy cooperation in the higher education sector all around the world. The Bologna Process has of course attracted much attention. But this is not the only regional initiative in the higher education sector. There have also been consistent efforts in building ‘common areas’ in Africa, Latin America and Asia.

Explaining this phenomenon which we label ‘higher education regionalism’ is crucial for two different strands of research. First, this appears as a very timely case to develop the comparative regionalism agenda. From the ‘New regionalism’ tenants in International Relations, as well as from some scholars in EU studies, there actually has been a strong call to compare occurrences of regionalism worldwide. Yet this has hardly led to substantial empirical work. With our analysis of ‘Higher education regionalism’, we therefore develop one of the first empirical studies in the field. Second, explaining this phenomenon is important for research on higher education policies. Regionalism is related, if not central, to many higher education reforms. For instance, we cannot extract regionalism from a series of controversial debates (such as: international student flows, degree recognition and quality assurance; global competition and rankings; the mushrooming of branch campuses; the rise of MOOCs). There are some emerging studies on higher education regional cooperation in this field, but they do not yet engage with broader debates on regionalism.

Relying upon these two fields of literature (comparative regionalism and higher education research), our first contribution is the development of an original comparative research framework. We compare higher education regionalisms along three different dimensions (1) *constellations of actors* (the individual and collective actors involved and characterising their patterns of interaction); (2) *institutional arrangements and policy instruments* (the institutional form and rules, and the instruments adopted for regional higher education initiatives); (3) *ideas and principles* (paradigms, policy ideas and programmatic ideas guiding ‘higher education regionalisms’).

Publications from this project:

**Chou, M.-H. & P. Ravinet** (2016). The emergent terrains of ‘higher education regionalism’: How and why higher education is an interesting case for comparative regionalism. *European Journal of Higher Education* 6(3).

**Chou, M.-H. & P. Ravinet** (2015). The Rise of ‘Higher Education Regionalism’: An Agenda for Higher Education Research. In J. Huisman, H. de Boer, D. Dill and M. Souto-Otero (Eds.), *Handbook of Higher Education Policy and Governance* (pp. 361-378). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

**Knowledge Brokerage and FP participation: a geographical perspective**

10.45-11.30

**Dr Nicola Francesco Dotti**, Vrije Universiteit Brussel

R&D activities are known for being unevenly distributed across space, yet how this geography evolves is less explored. Based on the recognition that R&D activities are one of the main drivers for economic competitiveness, our research analyses the regional distribution of Framework Programmes (FP-Cooperation) and spatial dimensions of knowledge brokerage.

While the FP-Cooperation is based on scientific excellence regardless their location, the capacity to carry out excellent R&D activities through the FP is not common to all European regions. Since Kaldor and Myrdal, this uneven geography is explained by the cumulative nature of knowledge determining self-reinforcing mechanism and cumulative dynamics: advanced regions are more likely to participate in FP projects further reinforcing their leadership, despite the open and highly competitive rationale of FP calls. In this context, regional strategies can pursue specialisation or diversification to enhance their FP participation. With the increasing importance of the FP, knowledge brokers have emerged implicitly shaping this spatial distribution.

In our first study, regional drivers of spatial distribution are analysed using an econometric model for NUTS3 regions from 1999 to 2010 across six FP themes. Since preliminary analysis, a core-periphery geography is found in line with the large scientific literature using social network analysis. However, a strong dynamism is observed in-between: the competitive rationale of FP calls and the European enlargement during the 2000s have contributed to significantly change this geography. Our research shows that economic development is a precondition shaping spatial distribution of FP participation: more advanced regions have higher rate of FP participation, while growing regions are likely to increase their participation as well and, vice versa, declining regions reduce their participation. Neither specialisation nor diversification performs better.

Based on these findings, we can derive that the FP is a policy mainly for advanced and growing region and not for regional convergence, for which the Cohesion Policy is already in place. Nevertheless, the CP can promote regional development creating preconditions to join FP networks that have showed of being open to newcomers. In regions benefiting from the CP, (smart) specialisation in FP themes does not always seem beneficial, whereas diversification is often a better strategy.

In our second analysis, the focus is on emerging role played by knowledge brokers introducing a spatial perspective. For this purpose, Brussels is a special case because the presence of the EU Commission creates a special environment where strategic and implicit information can be easily accessed (the so-called eurobuzz). This local buzz attracts knowledge brokers and is beneficial also for local actors, despite the strong institutional fragmentation of the Brussels metropolitan area. Mapping FP participants in top-performing regions, Brussels is the only location for knowledge brokers and the only one with increasing rate of FP participation by local actors.

Publication from this project:

**Dotti, N.F. Van Heur, B. & A. Spithoven** (2014). The Dynamism of the European Research Geography. *Europe of Knowledge blog*, 4 April 2014. Available here: <http://era.ideasoneuropa.eu/2014/04/04/the-dynamism-of-the-european-research-geography/>

### **Differentiated Integration and the Bologna Process**

11.30-12.15

**Dr Amélia Veiga**, Centre for Research on Higher Education Policies

The research we have been developing focuses on the challenges involved with putting EU policy into practice, particularly on the discretionary aspects of transposition and implementation associated with the Bologna process and the creation of the European Higher Education Area. The research question aimed to know what is the contribution of the theory of differentiated integration to understanding Bologna and the establishment of the EHEA and, in answering to it, we intended to contribute to the enrichment of that very theory.

In developing this research we expanded our knowledge with regard to the concept of policy implementation. The relationship between the Bologna process and the EHEA has been enlightened by the interpretations of actors in realizing policy in and through practice and bringing to the fore policy enactment. In other words, the involvement of multiple reference points located at different levels and beyond the European Union, emphasizing national and institutional discretionary decision-making and practices, relies on the role attributed to factors actively involved in differentiated integration. In bringing to the fore which factors explain implementation processes this research contributes to EU policy implementation as a process of policy enactment. This concept explains how policy gets done on the basis of strategic (non)responses and (non-)changes by national and institutional appropriation of EU policies. The argument is that policy enactment at the national and institutional levels impinges on the political achievements of the EHEA.

Future directions of researching knowledge policy would gain from a flexible and idiosyncratic approach to policy convergence. The tensions between dimensions of differentiated integration (e.g. 1. temporary versus permanent; 2. territorial versus functional; 3. differentiation at the national-level versus multi-level differentiation; and 5. EU decision-making versus club decision-making) should be further explored to underline why and how they induce decisions and practices.

Publication from this project:

**Veiga, A., Magalhães, A. & A. Amaral** (2015). Differentiated Integration and the Bologna Process. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 84-102.

### **Scientific Diaspora: Roles and Options for Knowledge Policies**

13.30-14.15

**Dr Inga Ulnicane**, University of Vienna  
**Dr Anete Vitola**, University of Latvia  
**Dr Julia Melkers**, Georgia Tech

As global research collaboration and talent mobility is intensifying, the topic of scientific diaspora receives an increasing academic and policy attention. In particular, countries experiencing brain drain can use of academic and social capital of its scientific diaspora as one of opportunities to benefit from global flows of researchers and knowledge. Moreover, today opportunities for interaction between home country and expatriate scientists are increasing due to advancement of information and communication technologies. This paper aims to explore the roles played by scientific diaspora as well as public policies aiming to engage diaspora researchers for the benefit of their countries of origin. It undertakes an extensive literature review of existing studies on scientific diaspora and analyzes its role in a small catching-up European country - Latvia. This paper builds on our earlier research that analyzed international scientific collaboration (Melkers & Kiopa, 2010; Ulnicane, 2015) and knowledge policies in Europe (Ulnicane, 2016) and Latvia (Adamson-Fiskovica, Kristapsons, Tjunina, & Ulnicane-Ozolina, 2009, 2011; Vītola, 2015).

Scientific diaspora is a complex concept. Gaillard et al (2015: 276) points out that this concept is based on an 'internal contradiction: the universality of science versus the expatriate scientists feeling of allegiance. Studies show that the more "scientific" researchers feel, the more they tend to prefer contacts with professional peers, rather than with colleagues who are fellow citizens'. Jöns et al (2015) emphasize pivotal role that choice plays in one's decision to participate in the creation of diasporic linkages; they suggest a concept of 'elective diaspora' defining it as 'the elective diaspora of knowledge workers as a practice based, flexible association of highly

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diverse professionals and other talent who might not be in contact with each other, but who have formed emotional ties with a particular place or culture and chosen to participate in the construction of diasporic knowledge networks’.

Existing studies have demonstrated that diaspora can play diverse roles including being knowledge brokers of collaborative networks between their ‘home’ and ‘host’ countries and institutions (Jöns et al 2015; Lerner 2015), supporting reforms and capacity building in their countries of origin (Leung 2015; Tejada et al 2013), and organizing knowledge diaspora networks (Saxenian 2006; Tejada 2012). Several countries (e.g., Colombia, South Africa, China, New Zealand) have launched specific policies for scientific diaspora focusing on building scientific diaspora networks (Davenport 2004; Gaillard et al 2015), facilitating short term research visits of expatriate scientists to their home countries as well as providing incentives to consider return option (Leung 2015).

Studies of scientific diaspora so far have mostly focused on countries of South America, Africa and Asia Pacific. Despite increasing concerns about unidirectional flow of scientific talent from South/East to North/West of Europe (European Science Foundation 2015), less is known about scientific diaspora in Europe. This paper focuses on Latvia which during the last hundred years has experienced two main waves of emigration: one after the occupation of Latvia by the Soviet Union in 1940 and the second after opening up of borders in 2004 when Latvia joined the European Union. The paper analyses documents on diaspora policies, science policies and strategies of the main universities to establish if and how scientific diaspora is seen as a resource for developing scientific capacities in Latvia.

Publications informing this project:

**Adamsone-Fiskovica, A., Kristapsons, J., Tjunina, E., and I. Ulnicane-Ozolina** (2009). Moving beyond teaching and research: economic and social tasks of universities in Latvia. *Science and Public Policy*, 36(2), 133-137. doi: 10.3152/030234209x406836

**Adamsone-Fiskovica, A., Kristapsons, J., Tjunina, E., & I. Ulnicane-Ozolina** (2011). Latvia: Repositioning of Academic Institutions in a Catching-Up Country. In B. Göransson & C. Brundenius (Eds.), *Universities in Transition: The Changing Role and Challenges for Academic Institutions* (pp. 219-245). New York, NY: Springer New York.

**Melkers, J., & A. Kiopa** (2010). The Social Capital of Global Ties in Science: The Added Value of International Collaboration. *Review of Policy Research*, 27(4), 389-414. doi: 10.1111/j.1541-1338.2010.00448.x

**Ulnicane, I.** (2015). Why do international research collaborations last? Virtuous circle of feedback loops, continuity and renewal. *Science and Public Policy*, 42(4), 433-447. doi: 10.1093/scipol/scu060

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**Ulnicane, I.** (2016). Research and Innovation as Sources of Renewed Growth? EU Policy Responses to the Crisis. *Journal of European Integration*, 38(03), 327-341. doi: 10.1080/07036337.2016.1140155

**Vitola, A.** (2015). Innovation policy mix in a multi-level context: The case of the Baltic Sea Region countries. *Science and Public Policy*, 42(3), 401-414. doi: 10.1093/scipol/scu059

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**Knowledge policies for whom?**

14.15-15.00

**Dr Charikleia Tzanakou**, University of Warwick

Higher education and research have come to the forefront of international debate about economic growth highlighting the significance of doctoral education for fostering innovation and international competitiveness. PhD graduates are key actors in knowledge policies being simultaneously the users, the outputs, the beneficiaries or even the victims of such policies.

Based on a mixed methods approach blending quantitative and qualitative data on career trajectories of Greek PhD graduates from national sciences and engineering, this study will show how careers of Greek PhD graduates have been influenced by limited coordination not only between European and national knowledge policies but also within national policies. It will also demonstrate how institutional factors such as European funding affect the Greek doctoral labour market.

Study implications will be discussed in relation to knowledge policies while concerns about brain drain and under-utilisation of highly qualified individuals will be raised.

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Workshop organiser:

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