INSTITUTIONAL INNOVATION AND EUROPEANISATION OF RESEARCH

These days, the institutions for the governance of research seem to be changing continuously. Governments come with evaluation and priority setting processes. Research councils develop new funding mechanisms for coping with society's priorities, user needs and new scientific developments. Universities try to develop explicit missions in order to raise their profile and improve the universities position on new funding markets. At the European level the European Commission has developed a specific practice ‘the Framework Programme’ that embodies several of these changes, and has been innovative in its focus on strategic research, its processes of agenda building including politicians, policy makers and experts, its evaluation of proposals and its organisation of research in international, collaborative projects. (Gibbons, Limoges et al. 1994; Etzokowitz and Leydesdorff 2000)

This journal issue analyses the institutional innovations within the main organisations of national research systems, i.e. state organisations (including research councils), research organisations and universities, and how these innovations facilitate national research systems and research organisations to cope with the pressures and opportunities from the European level. One can also reformulate this into a comparative question. Some countries and some organisations are more involved in the European FP than others. Can we explain the difference from the institutional innovations at the level of national research system and those within research policy organisations (including research councils), research institutes and universities? The contributions to this journal come from the INNOCULT project, funded under the Commission's FP5 Targeted Socio-Economic Research program – which explored this question -, and from a session at the 4S/EASST conference in Vienna 2000, were intermediate results of the INNOCULT project were compared and contrasted with results of other projects on Europeanisation of research.

The comparative questions only make sense if we do understand the processes by which organisations innovate, become European, remain stagnant and how institutional innovation and Europeanisation relate to each other. For quite a long time the idea of

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2 See for project description: http://www.iccr-international.org/innocult.
Europeanisation was - and in public media and some areas of policy studies still is - that Europe is just a new government level, overarching the national governments of the different member states. From that perspective the process of Europeanisation implies a strengthening of the discretionary power of this new governmental level and adjustments of national regulations to European ones. But such a perspective is too limited. Processes of Europeanisation are much more complex and include also interactions with regional and local governments, interests groups and other actors. (Knill and Lehmkuhl 1999; Conzelman 1998)

The collection of studies in this journal take up the challenge of this complexity and analyse the dynamic relationships between “Europe”, “national research systems” and “research organisations” (universities and non-universities) as the interaction space in which pressures and opportunities for institutional innovation emerge and in which Europeanisation is getting form. The interactions and institutional innovations are analysed in terms of modes of governance and in terms of culture (organisational culture and governance culture). The governance oriented papers concentrate on the development of new modes of governance (interactive, democratic, new managerialism) and how these new modes are embedded within or linked to EU’s research policy. At the cultural level papers look at perspectives of science and research policy within different countries and the EU, and also at the perception of Europe and FP5 within research systems and research organisations.

Dienel, Hammerlund and Peterson trace historical roots of internationalisation at the cross points of scientific developments and national policies, of which the longue durée's run parallel from the early 17th Century. From the 19th Century onwards, they distinguish two different developments: one in for what Dienel et al. call longue durée disciplines like geology, meteorology and botany were internationalisation is a prerequisite for good science, and politically unproblematic or even facilitated through national policies. This development continues today in for instance the programs initiated by the ICSU. The other development originates from the transformation of the industrial and technological base, which made science already at that time a competitive factor and, increasingly, part of both national development and international politics. The result is, as examples from the sciences the CERN, EMBL and from technological projects such as the EFA show, a continuous struggle between forces of internationalisation and de-nationalisation. As within national policies and at the European level the two discourses of national science performances and competitive positions and international collaboration and European competitiveness are both alive and kicking, the historical review of Dienel et al. makes one wonder about the stability and continuity of the European RTD policy.

Féron and Crowley put the issue of internationalisation as a policy object into a wider analysis of a possible change towards a governance style of research policy. Their article reports main findings of a part of the INNOCULT project, which looks at changes in research policies in the direction of New Public Management in eight European countries. Although they observe such a shift, at the same time the findings reveal considerable differences between the countries, and moreover, with respect to
internationalisation, indicate that national policies are not very effective. While internationalisation is a prominent policy objective in many of the countries, the main motivations for internationalisation are to be found at the level of the research institutions, research groups, and maybe even of individual researchers. At policy level, the issue merely is seen as an object for lip service, an indicator of the strength of the national innovation system, and only because of infrastructural costs for certain disciplines seen as inevitable.

Roth and Küppers present a systematic analysis of the Framework Programme as a new research policy practice, focussing on its democratic legitimation – an issue even more pressing in the light of Crowley’s findings which suggest a disconnection between national democratic policies and internationalisation. There certainly are tendencies of democratisation in Framework Programme 5, but, at the same time, the procedures tend to reproduce existing patterns of influence and power. Democratisation is most visible in FP5’s orientation to societal problems, its strive toward transparent procedures and the broad consultation in the formulation of the program. Counter tendencies come from the aim of efficiency, as well as in the well known phenomenon that the already visible and strong actors from state, industry and science have easier access to the consultation rooms then others. Like the analysis of the role of national policies in the first two chapters, this analysis also indicate that direct relation between Europe and the research level is important in the Europeanisation of research.

The next two contributions analyse dynamics of Europeanisation at the research level. Pohoryles characterizes the networks that were funded within four of the thematic programmes in the fourth Framework Programme. Compared to traditional forms of organising scientific research within universities and research organisations as national systems of research have do, the fundamental role of the research networks at European level implies an institutional innovation as such. Most of these networks developed from existing contacts and collaborations, and almost all wanted to continue the collaboration. Apparently, through the Framework Programmes the European Commission has already created the bedrock for a European Research Area. Institutionally, this bedrock is quite distinct from the national research systems, although individual researchers may act in both systems.

The contribution of Van der Meulen analyses the intersection between national research systems and the European research field at the research performance level. The paper researches the hypothesis that researchers within entrepreneurial universities are more European than those within traditional universities. The institutional innovations at entrepreneurial universities in terms of funding base, boundary spanning, and spaces for entrepreneurial activities would provide the right organization-cultural context to acquire funding at European level and form the necessary transnational and transorganisational networks. Despite the plausibility of the hypothesis, also in light of the discussions about new modes of research with appropriate new institutional arrangements, researchers in an entrepreneurial context are not more European than researchers from traditional scientific contexts.
Hakala, Niskanen and Kaukonen asked Finnish researchers at universities about their perceptions of European research. Europeanisation has been a top priority in Finland's science and technology policy since the mid-1980's. The country study links again the policy and research forces towards Europeanisation within national research systems. In accordance to findings in the other contributions they are able to distinguish different ways in which “Europe” has becomes part of the culture of the Finnish university research system. They find considerable differences between the perception of the research elite (EU as second rate research and too applied) and the researchers (opportunistic reasons to participate) on the one hand and heads of units who valued European research in terms of ‘reputation for the institute’ and ‘access to new knowledge’. They also observe, like Pohoryles, that the dynamics of Europeanisation have moved into a phase were European cooperation is not just an opportunistic choice of researchers, but part of their overall strategy.

At least three overall observations/conclusions emerge from the collection of papers. First of all, that Europeanisation of research develops from complex interactions between heterogeneous actors. Different patterns and practices have emerged from these interactions, including new forms of research policy at the European level, new notions of quality and internationalisation at the level of research systems and new perceptions of Europe within institutions. It should be added that the presentations concentrated on interactions between research organisations and governments. Other important actors such as users and disciplinary bodies have been neglected, but surely have to be addressed in the future.

Second, the complexity of ‘Europe’ is also reflected in the different way actors and researchers about it and interchangeable talked about the EU, Europe, the Commission, European research policy etc. Analysing the Europeanisation of research one cannot but encounter the different concepts the actors themselves use and the diverse linkages there are between the research practices and Europe. Not the least because, what for some actors seems to be just a new opportunity for research funding, is for other actors directly connected to wider economic, social and political ideal of Europeanisation. Framework Programmes, and probably this is true for the ERA as well, is not just a new funding resource, but a pars pro toto of this larger idea of ‘Europe’ and an indication of an European identity.

The third conclusion is of a more general kind and refers to the ambition of the INNOCULT project to research the institutional innovation and Europeanisation from a cultural perspective. Science policy studies often neglect these cultural dimensions and tend to focus on the economic, organisational and management aspects of research policy. The papers develop a cultural approach to a different extent. Together they show that sensitivity to the cultural dimensions results in a deeper understanding of research policy practices, and enriches usual analyses of how these practices functions and what they are, with analyses of how actors perceive these practices and how they come part of the wider view of actors on developing research systems.
References