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COOPERATION OF THE EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY ASSOCIATION WITH EDUCATIONAL ORGANIZATION: EXTERNAL DIMENSION

The article highlights the peculiarities of cooperation of the European university association with educational organizations in the international dimension. The projects on cooperation between EAU and the Association of Arab Universities, the Association of African Universities, the Southern African Regional University Association, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, the American Council on Education, the Asia-European Foundation, the Arab-European Conference on Higher Education. The prospects of development of partnership relations between organizations in the field of quality assurance in higher education, research and innovations, implementation of doctoral studies programs, etc. are determined.

Key words: *European University Association, cooperation, international educational organizations, internationalization, partnership.*

Introduction. Integration of Ukraine into the European and world educational space envisages cooperation with international educational organizations and membership in the innovative educational networks, in particular, in the sphere of higher education. One of the leading organizations that promote cooperation both internationally and regionally is European University Association – EAU. The EAU is one of the largest organizations in Europe, active in all areas of higher education and research; in particular its mission is to disseminate its experience on other continents. Nowadays some Ukrainian universities are the members of the EUA, but their number is insufficient. In our opinion, it can be explained by the lack of information on the benefits of such membership. In this context the study of the main directions of cooperation of the European University Association with European and international educational organizations is relevant.

Analysis of relevant research. The issues of institutional cooperation and innovative networks have become the subject of scientific interest of a number of Ukrainian researchers: N. Avsheniuk, V. Bilokopytov, M. Boichenko, I. Chystiakova, A. Sbruieva, A. Ulanovska, O. Zabolotna and others. At the same time, the problem cooperation of the European university association with international educational organizations hasn't been studied enough.

The purpose of the article is to highlight the peculiarities of cooperation of the European university association with educational organizations in the international dimension.

Research methods. In order to achieve the aim of our research the following methods have been used – general research methods: analysis, synthesis, generalization, systematization, which made it possible to study the procedural aspects of international cooperation of EUA with partner-organizations all over the world.

Results. According to the logic of consideration of the issue of cooperation of EAU with international educational organizations, it is expedient to highlight the peculiarities of this interaction outside Europe, in particular at the international level. The structured analysis of international educational relations made it possible to present them in the form of the following scheme (Figure 1).

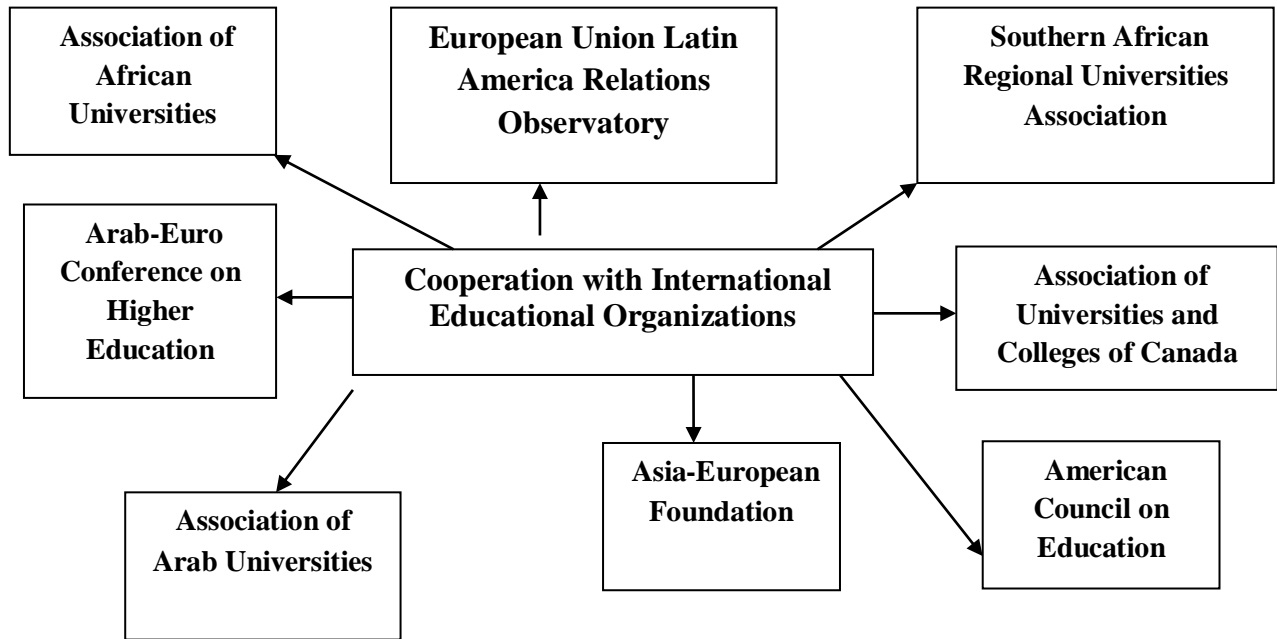


Figure 1. EUA cooperation with international organizations

It should be noted that European-American cooperation began actively since September 2001 with the publication of the Joint Declaration on the General Agreement on Trade in Educational Services between the EUA and the American Council on Education, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada and the Accreditation Council for Higher Education [14]. In January 2015, the EUA made a statement calling for the lifting of any restrictions in higher education in the course of ongoing negotiations [6].

In the same year, new bilateral and multilateral trade negotiations were started on the following issues:

- multilateral economic trade agreements on the provision of educational services between the EU and Canada;
- transatlantic trade and investment partnership in the field of education between the EU and the United States;
- an agreement on trade in educational services with more than 20 countries, including the EU and the United States.

We'd like to emphasize that EUA seeks international recognition of European higher education and the expansion of international scientific cooperation on the basis of a common interest that respects and promotes the development of academic values for the sake of mutual benefit.

Within this strategy, the EUA seeks to:

- create the opportunities for dialogue with international partners to increase the attractiveness of European education at the level of higher education institutions around the world;
- study the most important global problems of higher education together with international partners;
- promote the integration of European experience into higher education systems in other regions of the world;
- stimulate inter-university collaboration through the creation of a member forum to strengthen institutional alliances and partnerships, supporting universities in responding to global challenges and positioning themselves internationally;

- support the institutional development of the internationalization strategy [2].

In addition, the EUA not only carries out thorough monitoring of European and international political processes, but also seeks to share experiences with international partners in higher education and research. Thus, internationalization was optimized according to the main thematic areas of work of the EUA and formed the basis of the agenda of the EUA, the main goals of which were:

- to assist the awareness of the need for cooperation between the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) and the world as a whole, consisting of:
 - understanding of the point of intersection of different agenda (research perfection, “battle for brains”, etc.)
 - providing with the information on development trends in other regions;
 - understanding global imbalances;
- to respond to increased interest in convergence processes of regional higher education;
- to support the development of the internationalization strategy;
- to promote the mobility beyond Europe as well as the international cooperation on an equal platform.

It should be noted that development of European-African cooperation was a sign in expanding the circle of partners and consumers of European education. The starting point for this kind of partnership was the document *Access to Success: Fostering Trust and Exchange between Europe and Africa (2008–2010)* [2], which is aimed at implementing the following priorities of the mentioned cooperation:

- enhancing of the institutional cooperation and partnership between Europe and Africa;
- support of the universities development;
- assisting the dialogue between institutions, education policy specialists and donor organizations.

The “Access to Success” project (2008–2010) [2], funded by the European Union’s Erasmus Mundus program, is aimed at raising the awareness about the access and definition of the prospects for higher education in Africa and Europe, as well as to study how higher education institutions in the specified regions are able to cope with the changing requirements of specific socio-economic conditions. At the same time, the project is also intended to contribute to the advance of the educational European-African cooperation to a more qualitative level, in particular, in respect of the optimizing the student mobility schemes and teaching staff, building partnerships and government/donor support.

The key statements of the project were outlined in the White Paper “Africa-Europe higher education cooperation for development: meeting regional and global challenges” [3]. The document contains the recommendations from competent experts for the adoption of a forward-looking agenda in the field of higher education in Europe and Africa.

The project included parallel institutional research on access and identification of higher education perspectives, which was conducted in 2009 under the selection of 16 African countries and 19 European ones. The investigation was complemented by three student focus groups on access and mobility: one in Europe led by the European Students’ Union and two in Africa, led by the All-Africa Students Union and the Erasmus Mundus Students and Alumni Association.

The continuation of Europe-African cooperation was seminar “Towards a coordinated vision of Europe-Africa higher education partnerships: supporting Institutional Capacity Building in Africa”, held on 24–25 February 2010 in Oslo, Norway. As a result, programs for the development of institutional co-operation and capacity-building between Africa and Europe were considered, and efforts were being made to optimize donor activity coordination in research and capacity-building in higher education.

Another important document in the European-African partnership was the document “Europe-Africa Quality Connect: Building Institutional Capacity Through Partnership” (2010–2012). [7]. It highlights the peculiarities of the support of the EUA pilot project – the Institutional

Evaluation Program (introduced by five African universities in different regions of sub-Saharan Africa) by the Erasmus Mundus program. The project received positive feedback from all participants.

We'd like to emphasize that cooperation in doctoral education between the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe continued through the project (CODOC) (2010–2012), which was aimed at studying the trends of the doctoral education in different regions of the world and creating the network of stronger partnerships in the field of doctoral education between Europe, Asia, Africa and Latin America. The coordinator was Elizabeth Colucci. The project brought together various regional educational organizations, including the Southern African Regional Universities Association (SARUA). As a result, an agreement on cooperation in the field of doctoral education for 2010–2012 was signed, which included:

- tripartite comparative study of trends in doctoral education;
- a series of workshops that examine the role of partnership development in doctoral education.

In addition, the CODOC (2010-2012) project saw doctoral education in the light of a more balanced development of global knowledge and the role that Europe should play in this process. Prerequisites for such changes were the following factors:

- changes in the global interconnection of universities through internationalization;
- growing efforts worldwide for the development of knowledge societies based on highly skilled personnel;
- the growth of the role of information and communication technologies and their impact on competition and cooperation at the world market [5].

The project required the activation of doctoral school leaders, the intensification of doctoral education and dissemination of results for a wider range of higher education participants, including governments, academic councils and donors.

The results of the project were published in the report and presented during the week of doctoral studies held at the Caroline Institute in Stockholm in 2012.

It should be noted that during this two year project, the consortium was studying the trends in doctoral education in various developing countries and tried to deepen joint doctoral education between European universities and their partners in South Africa, Asia and Latin America.

The project also contributed to the strengthening of the international assessment of European doctoral education and the mutually beneficial cooperation in the field of doctoral education between European universities and these regions. Universities in the developing countries can make joint efforts to increase the access to knowledge, while the European universities benefit from partner universities in specific research projects, the fruitful exchange of students and teaching staff, the possibility to jointly develop curricula that have a greater international dimension topicality.

Latin American-European cooperation was not limited to the CODOC project only, but continued within the framework of the Leadership Conference in Europe and Latin America conducted by the EUA in 2012 in Sao Paulo, resulting in a new project. The ALISIOS Project – Academic Links and Strategies for Internationalization of the HE Sector [1] – was aimed at studying the strategies for better political dialogue and cooperation between European countries and their international partners. The project focused on Brazil, relied on the experience of the Science without Borders program (SWB), initiated by the Government of Brazil, and intended to send 110,000 students abroad by 2015. The overall objective of the project was to compare the experience of managing various cooperation programs in higher education (including large-scale grant programs), mutual learning in Europe and between Europe and Brazil, and to make concrete proposals as to the improving and coordinating European university cooperation with international partners.

An important role in the process of establishing Latin-American-European cooperation was played by the Observatory of the European Union – Latin America Relations OBREAL (El Observatorio de las Relaciones Unión Europea – América Latina). This is an organization consisting of 27 education institutions and research centers from both regions. Its main goal is to

become a channel that facilitates dialogue and interaction between the European, Latin American and European public, university and social sectors [10]. At its initiative in 2011, the ALFA PUENTES project was launched and supported by the European Commission. The main goal of the project was to create a platform for cooperation between the university associations in Latin America and Europe as important participants in the programs of internationalization and regional integration. It was led by the European University Association in close cooperation with its member associations, National Rectors Associations of France, Spain, Portugal and Poland, as well as 17 national and regional associations of universities in Latin America, the Observatory of the EU and Latin America and the Santander Group of Universities – AGS) [8].

The interregional poll “Transformation and Reform in Higher Education in Latin America” (September 2011 – September 2013) became the main activity of the Alfa PUENTES project which took place in Latin American region. It provided comparative data on how universities are currently undergoing teaching and learning processes, research, mobility development and the internationalization of higher education, quality assurance, and higher education management. It also showed a comparative view of the main trends in higher education and the forces that affect them. In addition, the project aims to gather the conclusions about the importance and progress in addressing the key issues of higher Latin American education over the last decade from the point of view of the universities, their teaching staff and students, and the assessment of the extent of the impact of these changes on higher education. The results included strengthening of institutions, promoting formation of the Latin American Higher Education Area and promoting cooperation in the fields of education, culture and science between Latin America and Europe [11].

The launch of the first Arab-European Conference on Higher Education on 11 July 2013 (AECHE, a joint initiative of the Association of Arab Universities (AARU) and the European university associations) became the starting point of establishing the cooperation in the Middle East. The main goal of the conference is to promote the dialogue, mutual understanding, knowledge sharing and intensification of cooperation between Arab and European universities. AECHE aims to encourage rectors, presidents and vice-rectors from both regions to rethink the role of the university in the current context of internationalization and explore the possibility of introducing new functions to address socio-economic problems in the Arab-European context of the European Union. The conference addressed a wide range of issues, including the framework for convergence of higher education systems, doctoral education and training of researchers, graduates’ employment and internationalization of higher education. This was the first in history conference between two associations (EUA and AARU), which gathered over 250 participants from 175 Arab and European universities, including more than 110 university leaders [12].

The next step in establishing Arab-European relations was the launch of the Second Arab-European Higher Education Conference on June 11, 2014 in Amman, Jordan, which was devoted to regional mobility. Taking into consideration the evident impact of the educational policy and academic mobility programs on the internationalization of universities, this event enabled both Arab and European university leaders to discuss this important topic with a range of stakeholders. In particular, the following issues were considered:

- internationalization of universities through regional mobility programs such as Erasmus+ in Europe;
- training foreign students and preparing of global workforce;
- mobility in the context of university-sectoral partnership;
- joint training programs;
- University Leadership and Management of Educational Policies and Mobility Strategies [4].

The third Arab-European conference “Opportunities and Challenges for Arab and European Universities fulfilling their societal mission” was held on May 25–27, 2016, at the University of Barcelona, Spain [13].

The report of the conference covered the key issues that arise during the discussions, in particular:

- understanding of the framework and instruments for the harmonization of educational systems developed in Europe, in particular in Bologna, and ratified by some Arab countries;
- dual mobility between regions, as well as within the Arab world, is decisive;
- the need to extend the practice of solving the problems of graduates' employment.

It should be noted that the report also identifies four main areas in which both associations will continue to cooperate in the future: joint academic degrees, graduate employment, education quality assurance and internationalization [13].

In the light of Arab-European cooperation, the project “Modernization of Institutional Management of Innovations and Research in Southern Neighboring Countries” (MIMIR), which was launched in October 15, 2015 and will last until October 14, 2018 is no less important. The MIMIR project is part of a process of cooperation between Arab and European universities, aimed at developing a strategic European-Mediterranean partnership and transforming of the Mediterranean region into a common area of peace, stability and prosperity. Research and innovation are one of the main priorities of this European-Mediterranean partnership.

By supporting research and innovation capacity-building activities, the MIMIR project aims at opening the European Research Area (ERA) to the research community in the southern Mediterranean countries and promotion of the integration of Moroccan and Jordanian partner institutions into the European Research Area. In order to achieve this goal, the project involves a series of steps.

At the first stage of the project, the European and Southern Mediterranean partners will conduct a modern analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of research and innovation practices at European, Moroccan and Jordanian universities.

At the second stage, the results of this analysis will be used to develop a roadmap containing all the necessary steps for building the institutional innovation and research model in partner organizations of Morocco and Jordan. Thus, the southern Mediterranean partner universities will be able to better coordinate their work with the European research space.

Finally, the new model was piloted at partner universities. Its mastering, early intervention and sustainability are monitored and evaluated by project partners.

At all these stages, Moroccan and Jordanian partner institutions participate in study visits to European partner institutions. They have participated in relevant case studies that help to improve their internal procedures and assess their administrative and legal framework. In addition, they have developed effective strategies for expanding the cooperation with local and regional industry and community.

The role of the EUA in the project is to identify possible managerial research models at European level and to gather information about implementation strategies and best practices from European partners. The Association also organizes study tours to be held in Europe and relevant thematic visits to Morocco and Jordan.

MIMIR is funded by the Erasmus+ Key Action 2 – Cooperation for innovation and the exchange of good practices – Capacity building in the field of Higher Education).

The MIMIR project is being implemented by a consortium of 17 partners, which includes 13 higher educational institutions from Belgium, Italy, France, Spain, Jordan and Morocco; Ministries for Higher Education and Research in Jordan and Morocco. EUA and AAU (Association of Arab Universities) also take part in the project. The MIMIR project is coordinated by the University of Barcelona [9].

Thus, the main directions of cooperation of EUA with partner organizations of different countries and continents, implemented in the number of projects, are systematized by the author and presented in the table 1.

Table 1

Areas of cooperation of the EUA with other educational organizations

Organization	Project	Areas of cooperation
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American Council on Education	Joint Declaration on the General Agreement on Trade in Educational Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increasing the attractiveness of European education at the level of higher education institutions around the world; - decision of global problems of higher education; - promoting the integration of European experience; - development of the internationalization strategy
Association of Universities and College of Canada		
Association of African Universities	Access to Success: Fostering Trust and Exchange between Europe and Africa	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - development of the internationalization strategy; - mobility development; - dissemination of best practices
	Africa-Europe higher education cooperation for development: meeting regional and global challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - research and capacity-building in higher education; - quality assurance
	Europe-Africa Quality Connect: Building Institutional Capacity Through Partnership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - quality assurance
Arab-Euro Conference on Higher Education	Opportunities and Challenges for Arab and European Universities fulfilling their societal mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - harmonization of educational systems; - dual mobility development; - graduates' employment
Association of Arab Universities	Modernization of Institutional Management of Innovations and Research in Southern Neighboring Countries (MIMIR)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - research and innovations; - dissemination of best practices
Asian-European Foundation	cooperation in doctoral education between the countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and Europe continued through the project (CODOC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - developnet of doctoral education; - -reseacr and innovations
Southern African Regional Universities Association		

Conclusions. So, concluding the consideration of the specifics of the cooperation of EUA with other educational organizations, we can state that EUA is a partner of many educational organizations both in the European region (in particular within the E4 group) and worldwide (American Council on Education, Association of Universities and College of Canada, Association of African Universities, Arab-Euro Conference on Higher Education, Association of Arab Universities, Asian-European Foundation, Southern African Regional Universities Association, etc.). The main areas of cooperation are higher education quality ensurance and creation of flexible and transparent procedures for its evaluation; development of doctoral education, research and innovation; development of mobility and the internationalization of higher education, etc.

On the basis of the study of the documental, organizational, and content constituents of EUA cooperation with partner organizations all over the world we consider it expedient to give a number of recommendations that could be implemented in the process of modernization of the higher education system in Ukraine, in particular: Ukrainian universities should join their efforts and unite into the Ukrainian university association that would present the interests of Ukrainian higher education institutions in global arena, because membership of separate native universities in the EUA doesn't produce the desired results; the next step will be establishing partnerships with other educational organizations.

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СПІВПРАЦЯ ЄВРОПЕЙСЬКОЇ АСОЦІАЦІЇ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ ІЗ ОСВІТНІМИ ОРГАНІЗАЦІЯМИ: ЗОВНІШНІЙ ВВИМІР

У статті висвітлено особливості співпраці Європейської асоціації університетів з освітніми організаціями в міжнародному вимірі. Схарактеризовано проекти щодо співпраці ЄАУ з Асоціацією арабських університетів, Асоціацією африканських університетів, Південно-Африканської регіональної асоціацією університетів, Асоціацією університетів і коледжів Канади, Американською радою з питань освіти, Азійсько-Європейською фундацією, Арабсько-європейською конференцією вищої освіти. З'ясовано перспективи розвитку партнерських взаємовідносин між організаціями у сфері забезпечення якості вищої освіти, досліджень та інновацій, запровадження програм докторської освіти тощо.

Ключові слова: *Європейська асоціація університетів, співпраця, міжнародні освітні організації, інтернаціоналізація, партнерство.*

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СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО ЕВРОПЕЙСКОЙ АССОЦИАЦИИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТОВ С ОБРАЗОВАТЕЛЬНЫМИ ОРГАНИЗАЦИЯМИ: ВНЕШНЕЕ ИЗМЕРЕНИЕ

В статье освещены особенности сотрудничества Европейской ассоциации университетов с образовательными организациями в международном измерении. Охарактеризованы проекты по сотрудничеству ЕАУ с Ассоциацией арабских университетов, Ассоциацией африканских университетов, Южно-Африканской региональной ассоциацией университетов, Ассоциацией университетов и колледжей Канады, Американским советом по вопросам образования, Азиатско-Европейским фондом, Арабо-европейской конференцией высшего образования. Выяснены перспективы развития партнерских взаимоотношений между организациями в сфере обеспечения качества высшего образования, исследований и инноваций, внедрения программ докторского образования и т.д.

Ключевые слова: *Европейская ассоциация университетов, сотрудничество, международные образовательные организации, интернационализация, партнерство.*

ABSTRACT

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Introduction. Integration of Ukraine into the European and world educational space envisages cooperation with international educational organizations and membership in the innovative educational networks, in particular, in the sphere of higher education. One of the leading organizations that promote cooperation both internationally and regionally is European University

Association – EAU. The EAU is one of the largest organizations in Europe, active in all areas of higher education and research; in particular its mission is to disseminate its experience on other continents. Nowadays some Ukrainian universities are the members of the EUA, but their number is insufficient. In our opinion, it can be explained by the lack of information on the benefits of such membership. In this context the study of the main directions of cooperation of the European University Association with European and international educational organizations is relevant.

Analysis of relevant research. The issues of institutional cooperation and innovative networks have become the subject of scientific interest of a number of Ukrainian researchers: N. Avsheniuk, V. Bilokopytov, M. Boichenko, I. Chystiakova, A. Sbruieva, A. Ulanovska, O. Zabolotna and others. At the same time, the problem cooperation of the European university association with international educational organizations hasn't been studied enough.

The purpose of the article is to highlight the peculiarities of cooperation of the European university association with educational organizations in the international dimension.

Research methods. In order to achieve the aim of our research the following methods have been used – general research methods: analysis, synthesis, generalization, systematization, which made it possible to study the procedural aspects of international cooperation of EUA with partner-organizations all over the world.

Results. The projects on cooperation between EAU and the Association of Arab Universities, the Association of African Universities, the Southern African Regional University Association, the Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada, the American Council on Education, the Asia-European Foundation, the Arab-European Conference on Higher Education. The prospects of development of partnership relations between organizations in the field of quality assurance in higher education, research and innovations, implementation of doctoral studies programs, etc. are determined.

Originality. The author has revealed the documental, organizational, content constituents of EUA cooperation with partner organizations all over the world. On the basis of conducted analysis of the mentioned constituents the recommendations for Ukraine in the process of modernization of the higher education system were given.

Conclusions. It is concluded that EUA is a partner of many educational organizations both in the European region (in particular within the E4 group) and worldwide (American Council on Education, Association of Universities and College of Canada, Association of African Universities, Arab-Euro Conference on Higher Education, Association of Arab Universities, Asian-European Foundation, Southern African Regional Universities Association, etc.). The main areas of cooperation are higher education quality ensurance and creation of flexible and transparent procedures for its evaluation; development of doctoral education, research and innovation; development of mobility and the internationalization of higher education, etc.