Bologna Process:
A regionalism perspective

NEAR EU Kick-off meeting (Darmstadt, Germany)
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Regional cooperation

- **Africa**: Strategy of Harmonisation of HE progs. (launched within African Union's Arusha Convention framework, 2009)

- **Asia / Oceania**: SEAMEO RIHED (1993), AUN (1995), Brisbane Communiqué (2006)

- **Latin America**: Mercosur, Latin American and Caribbean Area for HE (ENLACES, 2008)

- Europe**:** Bologna Process (1999)

Regional cooperation

- **Different mechanisms** introduced

- But: all emphasise the importance of establishing intra-regional **academic mobility**, mutual **degree recognition**, and some form of **QA**

- Regional participants' **ambition to dominate the global higher education market** vis-à-vis other regions

Regional cooperation

- The **BP is one example** of regional HE cooperation

- Examine BP as **part of a worldwide phenomenon** of existing and renewed political interest in the HE policy sector (**knowledge 'turn'** in contemporary public policy → knowledge economy, society)

- **'Higher education regionalism'** (Chou and Ravinet 2015, 2016, and forthcoming)

Regional cooperation

- **'Higher education regionalism'** (Chou and Ravinet 2015, 2016, and forthcoming):

    - Refers to a **political project of region creation**
    - It **involves** at least some form of **state authority** (national, supranational, international…etc.)
    - Participating **state authorities decide** the **geographical region** in which their HE policy activities extend
    - **Varieties of HER** ('higher education *regionalisms*'): overlapping, competing…etc.

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Regionalism
(Forms)

- ## **Intra**-regionalism

  - Cooperation between entities *within* same geographical region
  - Examples: Europe's Bologna Process, initiatives from SEAMEO-RIHED and AUN

- ## **Inter**-regionalism

  - Cooperation between entities *across* 2+ geographical regions
  - Examples: European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN region (SHARE); EU cooperation with Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) countries, 'Towards the EU-LAC Knowledge Area'

How to study?

- A **heuristic framework** for **comparing** higher education regionalisms around the world. To **identify**:

  - **Actor constellations** (who?)
  - **Institutional set up** (how, what?)
  - **Ideas** and principles (why?)

A heuristic framework for 'doing' comparative regionalism

	Europe	
	Bologna Process	
Actor constellations (Who? Interaction patterns?)	Governments (initiators of the Bologna Process) European Commission (supporter; modernisation agenda) Council of Europe Stakeholder organisations	
Institutional arrangements (Form, rules, instruments?)	Common degree structure (Bologna Process) ECTS system (Bologna Process; EU) Qualification Framework (EU) Quality assurance (Bologna Process; EU) Funding schemes (EU) Mobility programmes (EU)	
Ideas and principles (Paradigm, policy ideas?)	'Europe of Knowledge' 'Competitiveness' 'Employability' 'Twenty-first century skills'	

← **Intra-regional dynamics** → (Overlap of regional initiatives? Competing, supporting, undermining?)

(Africa) ← **Inter-regional dynamics** → (Latin America)
(Circulation of regional models?
Competing, supporting, undermining?)

Intra-regionalism

*European **higher education** policy cooperation*
(BP and / in the **Europe of Knowledge**)

What is the EoK?

- In EU context, 'Europe of Knowledge' is a **political** term

- **Appeared in 1997**: EU Commission Communication on internal reforms to prepare for Eastern Enlargement

- Since then, various European policy actors have used the term to articulate their positions on:
  - The **university's role** in transition towards knowledge society and economy
  - The importance of knowledge in jumpstarting and sustaining **Europe's competitiveness**
  - The linkage between science and **'smart' policymaking**

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What is the EoK?

- EoK is best defined as encompassing all policy and coordination efforts to **establish the EHEA** and the **European Research Area (ERA)**

- Unlike EHEA, ERA is launched **within the EU framework**

- European research policy (and the ERA) has, for years, been **defined by the FPs** / H2020

- But the ERA is *not only* distributive, it also led to the adoption of other policies such as the **Scientific Visa**, and **European Charter for Researchers** and a Code of Conduct for the Recruitment of Researchers

'Lisbonisation'

- The rise of the EoK = **'Lisbonisation' of knowledge**

- Åse Gornitzka (2010: 540):

  'The Lisbon Strategy pushed knowledge policy areas, research and education to the centre of the EU agenda. But it did more than that: it opened these sectors to the influx of the premises and objectives of a wider audience. In short, it became a site for the horizontal dynamics of change in the governance of the Europe of Knowledge. **It showed how universities and their governance were linked to and influenced by developments in other policy areas'**.

What does it all mean?

- Studying BP through the intra-regional lens as part of the EoK development

- **Thee lessons** (Chou and Gornitzka 2014):
  - There are *multi-level* **tensions** (tensions between governance levels) and *inter-sectoral* **tensions** (tensions between policy sectors and institutions responsible for coordination);
  - *Sequential* **tensions**: tensions between past, present and future 'in which historical legacies and path dependence become enabling / hindering factors';
  - *Coherence* of the EoK: is it? Will it? → to be seen

Inter-regionalism

EU-ASEAN higher education policy cooperation
(EU SHARE)

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**Europe &
Southeast Asia**

Cooperation between Europe and Southeast Asia **began in the the 1970s** (2017 marks 4 decades)

Higher education has been **singled out** as an area for policy cooperation between the two regions

EU SHARE

- ## What is **EU SHARE**?
  - – 'European Union Support to Higher Education in the ASEAN Region' (EU SHARE → SHARE)
  - – An **EU grant funded project** (External Action Service)
  - – Overarching **objectives**
    - • **Strengthen** regional cooperation
    - • **Enhance** the quality, competitiveness and internationali-sation of ASEAN higher education institutions and students
    - • **Contribute** to an ASEAN Community beyond 2015
  - – Duration: **2015-2019**

EU SHARE
(Structure)

- Organised as **4 result areas**:
  - Result **1**: **Policy Dialogues**
  - Result **2a**: **Qualifications** Reference Frameworks
  - Result **2b**: ASEAN **Quality Assurance**
  - Result **3a**: Credit Transfer System (**ACTS**)
  - Result **3b**: **ASEAN-EU** Credit Transfer Systems (**AECTS**)
  - Result **4**: Student mobility with **scholarships**

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- SHARE **consortium**:
  - **British Council** (lead)
  - German Academic Exchange (**DAAD**)
  - European Association for Quality Assurance (**ENQA**)
  - European University Association (**EUA**)
  - **Campus France**
  - The organisation for internationalisation of higher education (**EP-NUFFIC**)

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EU SHARE
(Actors)

- Main stakeholders:
  - **EU** (European Commission in Jakarta)
  - **ASEAN Secretariat** (Education, Youth and Training Division – EYTD)

- Target groups:
  - **ASEAN agencies** involved in harmonisation of HE
    - ASEM, AUN, AQAFHE, AQAN, AQRF, SEAMEO RIHED
  - **National** level
    - Ministries (HE), University leaders association, higher education institutions interested in internationalisation

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- **Inter**-regionalism = **equal regions?**
  - SHARE: **S for 'support'** (of the EU to the ASEAN)
  - Are **EU actors** expecting to **learn** from it?
  - **Asymmetrical** knowledge

- Inter-regional policy developments:
  - Can we study them with our **classical analytical tools?**
  - For e.g.: what does **'effectiveness'** mean?

- Example: What is a **'policy dialogue'?**
  - **Who is involved?** To do what?
  - Is it more than **talk?** (Learning? Discursive exchanges?)

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- Too early to tell

- **Early contention**
  - European consortium (**where are the ASEAN partners?**)
  - Development framing (**where is Singapore?**)

- **Challenges** ahead
  - Competing models: ASEAN's *regatta* vs. Europe's Bologna *flagship*

Summary

- A regionalism perspective **reveals the value added** of studying BP as more than an isolated case of regional HE policy cooperation.

- An **intra-regionalism** perspective: **BP and the Europe of Knowledge project are intertwined**; it is important to examine the relationship between creating EHEA and ERA within the EOK.

- An **inter-regionalism** perspective: challenges the notion of BP as a model; **empirical fieldwork is essential** to examine how local actors interpret / reject the 'model' assumption. BP is important, but not in the usual way we assume.

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About

This Standing Group brings together scholars whose work relates to the deeply interconnected fields of higher education, research, and innovation to encourage debates and research on the politics and policies in these areas. Over the past decades, several developments have contributed to the growing political significance of higher education, research, and innovation in international, regional, and national arenas. First, the steady trend towards the massification of higher education throughout the world implies that more and more of the world's population is engaging in tertiary education. This has led to both increased public and private investments in the sector, as well as politically salient discussions concerning access and quality (excellence). Second, the turn towards 'knowledge' as providing policy solutions to grand societal challenges has placed higher education, research, and innovation at the centre stage of 'smart' multi-level policymaking. And third, the economies and societies of today are described as 'knowledge-based' that draw their competitive advantage from well-functioning knowledge sectors.

Thank you!

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