



A Snapshot of National Policies for Internationalisation in Europe Today

Jody Hoekstra-Selten
EAIE | the Netherlands

Jenny Nygård
ACA | Belgium

Gerhard Volz
OeAD | Austria

Eero Loonurm
Harno | Estonia





Welcome & Introductions



Jody Hoekstra-Selten
(EAIE, the Netherlands)



Gerhard Volz
(OeAD, Austria)



Jenny Nygård
(ACA, Belgium)



Eero Loonurm (Harno, Estonia)



Session agenda



Overview

ACA-EAIE National Policies for Internationalisation Project (NAP)

Reflections

Internationalisation policies/approaches as seen from national expert perspectives – examples from Austria and Estonia

Conversation

Questions and commentary – please join in!

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Inspiration: 2023 conversations with national (funding) agencies

Aims:

- Provide an up-to-date overview of national-level internationalisation strategies/policies in HE
- Identify recurring priorities, gaps, and emerging practices across countries
- Support policymakers and stakeholders by presenting how strategic direction and support structures for internationalisation are framed at the national level

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Scope: European Higher Education Area (EHEA)

Methodology:

- desk research
- document analysis
- targeted country expert interviews and consultations

Oversight: Independent project (no external funding)

Duration: 2024–2025

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Overall:

- Challenging task!
- 14 countries with:
 - Stand-alone national strategies/policies
 - Explicitly focused on the internationalisation of higher education
 - Adopted and in force in 2025
- Notable variety in scope and focus, as well as geography
- Much activity also in countries without stand-alone internationalisation strategies/policies in HE

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Chapter 1: contextual framework and a retrospective on the emergence of strategies/policies within the EHEA and the evolution of policy dynamics.

- European frameworks and funding set shared goals and tools, but national policies mainly drive internationalisation creating both commonalities and diversity.
- Early documents (e.g., Sorbonne, Bologna Declaration) didn't call for national internationalisation strategies but created a supportive policy environment, alongside growing education cooperation in the EU.
- Key elements included, mobility, automatic recognition, increased access and participation in HE and mobility etc., many of which are now central to national strategies.
- First generation internationalisation strategies: Early 2000s to mid-2010s.

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Chapter 2: brief country-specific information of the EHEA countries

- Factsheets for 14 countries with dedicated strategies for internationalisation of HE
- Paragraphs for 34 countries pursuing other forms of national-level policy engagement
- Concise summaries of key documents and main characteristics, with links to full sources
- Diverse approaches across EHEA; *the existence of a formal national strategy does not automatically indicate a more advanced or effective approach to internationalisation.*

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Chapter 3: key trends and future implications

Global developments increasingly influence national strategies, bringing new challenges and opportunities, alongside national-level impact:

- **External factors:** geopolitical and health-related crisis, shifting political contexts (the US) and perceived security risks of cooperation (China). Positive impact of the EU policies and initiatives: e.g., Erasmus+ mobilities, the EUI and the European Degree.
- **Internal factors:** political shifts, budgetary constraints (impacting both national and institutional levels, including areas like development cooperation), alongside efforts with more positive impact, such as addressing skills gaps in some national contexts.

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Main takeaways:

- Current strategies often don't reflect current national debates or realities, given growing uncertainty and recent crises.
- Strategies are evolving from fixed policy documents to flexible living frameworks, subject to change and adaptation.
- Recent strategies (vs. 3-4 years ago) are more expansive, with broader vision, reaffirming core internationalisation values, emphasising flexibility, agility and crisis management, with less focus on detailed implementation (e.g., priority countries, resource allocation).
- Continued commitment to internationalisation, with greater caution and adaptability in today's context.

Countries at a glance



A view from Austria



A view from Austria



- **Austria's National Mobility and Internationalisation Strategy for Higher Education 2020–2030 ('HMIS 2030')**
- Emphasises 'internationalisation of the curriculum' as a core guiding principle
- Openness to diverse approaches in achieving the strategy's overarching goals
 - Subtitle: 'Many routes to internationalisation'
- 5 main goals, supported by 37 clear-cut objectives for implementation
 1. Promote an all-encompassing culture of internationalisation at higher education institutions.
 2. Promote mobility for all members of higher education institutions.
 3. Develop and implement innovative digital forms of mobility.
 4. Facilitate effective skills improvement and institutional learning.
 5. Strengthen the global mindset and international position of Austria's higher education institutions.



A view from Estonia



A view from Estonia



- No stand-alone national strategy exclusively focused on internationalisation in higher education.
- Overarching Education Strategy 2021–2035 includes:
 - I a sub-goal on "Promoting internationalisation and learning mobility" with a need to:
 - increase the mobility of teaching staff, particularly within the EU;
 - facilitate greater inclusion of international academic staff;
 - create opportunities for short-term mobility of Estonian students;
 - provide foreign language learning and education in foreign languages;
 - market Estonian education and its success story
 - II a sub-goal "Supporting the development of competences that create more added value" with a need to:
 - make Estonia an attractive environment for Estonians who have completed their education abroad and for foreign nationals who have completed their education in Estonia.
 - promote the inclusion of international school and university students in Estonian society as well as the transition of graduates to the labour market
 - increase openness to innovation and improve national and international cooperation between educational institutions and the labour market in relation to innovative development activities

Let's talk!



What's next?



Report to be published in week of **24 November 2025**

LinkedIn webinar scheduled to take place in December to share the main takeaways from the report.

ACA - Jenny Nygård (jenny.nygard@aca-secretariat.be)
EAIE - Jody Hoekstra-Selten (Hoekstra-Selten@eaie.org)