

June 2017

## Who governs the internationalization of higher education? A comparative analysis of macro-regional policies in Canada and the European Union

Merli Tamtik

University of Manitoba, merli.tamtik@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cie-eci>

---

### Recommended Citation

Tamtik, Merli (2017) "Who governs the internationalization of higher education? A comparative analysis of macro-regional policies in Canada and the European Union," *Comparative and International Education / Éducation Comparée et Internationale*: Vol. 46 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.

Available at: <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/cie-eci/vol46/iss1/2>

This Research paper/Rapport de recherche is brought to you for free and open access by Scholarship@Western. It has been accepted for inclusion in Comparative and International Education / Éducation Comparée et Internationale by an authorized administrator of Scholarship@Western. For more information, please contact [tadam@uwo.ca](mailto:tadam@uwo.ca).

# **Who Governs the Internationalization of Higher Education? A Comparative Analysis of Macro-Regional Policies in Canada and the European Union**

## **Qui dirige l'internationalisation de l'enseignement supérieur ? Une analyse comparative des politiques macro-régionales au Canada et dans l'Union Européenne**

Merli Tamtik, University of Manitoba

### **Abstract**

The internationalization of higher education has become a politically strategic and economically promising policy area. As a result, the traditional authority and governance boundaries related to internationalization are becoming fluid. This paper focuses on the macro-regional internationalization strategies in Canada and the European Union (EU) in order to understand the changing dynamics of internationalization governance. By applying multi-level governance theory (MLG), the paper analyzes and compares how internationalization is understood at the macro-regional level, revealing fundamental differences in the normative values. The findings indicate that while Canada is formulating an aggressive-marketization approach to benefit from the intensified global competition, the EU is endorsing a more comprehensive student-centered approach focusing on quality and balanced partnerships. The discussion section elaborates on the strengths and weaknesses of the use of multi-level governance theory.

### **Résumé**

L'internationalisation de l'enseignement supérieur est devenue un domaine de politiques politiquement stratégique et économiquement prometteur. En conséquence, les autorités traditionnelles et les frontières de la gouvernance en ce qui concerne l'internationalisation deviennent fluides. Cet article se concentre sur les stratégies d'internationalisation macro-régionales au Canada et dans l'Union Européenne (UE) afin de comprendre l'évolution de la dynamique de la gouvernance de l'internationalisation. En appliquant la théorie de la gouvernance à plusieurs niveaux (GPN), ce document analyse et compare la manière dont l'internationalisation est comprise au niveau macro-régional, révélant ainsi des différences fondamentales dans les valeurs normatives. Les résultats indiquent que, pendant que le Canada formule une approche de marché agressive afin de bénéficier de l'intense compétition mondiale, l'Union Européenne adopte une approche plus compréhensive/globale axée sur l'étudiant et se concentrant sur la qualité et sur des partenariats équilibrés. Les forces et les faiblesses de l'utilisation de la théorie de gouvernance à plusieurs niveaux sont expliquées et approfondies dans la partie consacrée à la discussion.

**Keywords:** internationalization of higher education; EU; Canada; internationalization strategies, governance

**Mots-clés:** internationalisation de l'enseignement supérieur ; Union Européenne (UE) ; Canada ; stratégies d'internationalisation ; gouvernance

### **Introduction**

The internationalization of higher education has become a politically strategic and economically promising policy area. Increasing global competition for resources and highly skilled talent has been a trigger for macro-regional stakeholders to coordinate internationalization initiatives in higher education (Kehm, 2011; Primeri & Reale, 2012). This trend is evident through the emergence of new strategies and policy documents from actors such as the European Commission or the Canadian federal government, stakeholders that do not have traditionally the highest legislative authority over higher education. While most European member states are following institutional

and/or national approaches to internationalization (e.g., Källemark & Van der Wende, 1997; Knight, 2004; Becker & Kolster, 2013), the European Commission recently released its own strategic document entitled “European higher education in the world” (2013). The aim is to articulate a regional vision for internationalization. A year earlier, the Commission adopted a communication on international cooperation in research and innovation (European Commission, 2012). Similarly most Canadian universities have incorporated internationalization in their institutional policies, followed by provincial policy documents. However, in 2014 the Canadian federal government designed its own approach for internationalization, introducing the policy framework “Canada’s International Education Strategy” (Government of Canada, 2014). These processes in jurisdictions external to the stakeholders’ direct power-influence indicate a potential shift in the governance of internationalization. Is internationalization of higher education becoming a battlefield of political powers among different levels of government? Or are we witnessing an increasing collaboration and alignment among the various institutions and levels of government? How are these macro-level developments potentially influencing the administration and management of higher education institutions?

The purpose of this paper is to understand and compare macro-regional internationalization strategies in the European Union (EU) and Canada. The aim is to analyze how internationalization is viewed at the macro-regional level; which values are endorsed and which instruments are used for strategy implementation. The paper utilizes multi-level governance theory (MLG) as a unique approach in education research to understand the complexity in dynamics among stakeholders operating at different levels of authority. The background section explains the main similarities and differences in the governance process in Canada and the European Union as it relates to internationalization. In order to analyze the content of the policy documents, an analytical framework by Gornitzka (1999) is applied. The paper ends with discussion of the findings through the lens of multi-level governance theory, emphasizing the strengths and weaknesses of this theory.

### **Conceptual Framework**

In order to examine the shifting authority of internationalization, a multi-level governance theory is useful. This theory is derived from European studies literature in an attempt to describe complex political networks involving multiple stakeholders and competing interests. Marks (1993, p. 392) defines multi-level governance as “a system of continuous negotiation among nested governments at several territorial tiers,” emphasizing complexity among stakeholders and ongoing dialogue in the process. According to this theory, governance processes are seen as negotiated relationships where traditional decision-making competencies are contested and shared among participants. Hooghe & Marks (2001) argue that such collective decision-making leads to loss of control for an individual stakeholder. As a result, central governments or higher education institutions no longer have full authority over their policies. Supranational bodies, connected through networks, have a significant influence on these processes (Bache, 1998; Hooghe & Marks, 2001). Hooghe & Marks (2001) argue that two different types of multi-level governance models have emerged. Type 1 illustrates federal systems where authority is dispersed to a limited number of non-overlapping jurisdictions. It focuses on the changing *tiers* of authority (distribution of supranational and subnational levels). Type 2 is applicable when the *spheres* of authority are contested, resulting from interactions between the state and non-state actors. Spheres might not be defined in a neat hierarchy of scales where the place of the nation-state is clearly identified but rather in terms of territoriality of different forms of political authority.

Applying a multi-level governance framework to internationalization is useful for two main reasons. First, it allows a comparison of the different spheres of authority in Canada and the EU,

which do not necessarily match the highest tiers of authority. For example, in Canada the highest tier of authority over education lies constitutionally with the provincial governments, yet the highest sphere and influence is in the hands of the federal government. This is especially evident in research policy through funding for researchers and research schemes (Jones & Oleksiyenko, 2011). In the EU, the central tier of authority and the decision-making power for education resides within the national governments. Nevertheless, there is an emerging sphere of authority at the supranational EU level that governs the developments in higher education (Primeri & Reale, 2012). As those highest spheres of authority have the power to shape policies directly through funding or indirectly through peer-review and mutual learning practices, they can have a significant influence on how internationalization policies get implemented. Second, the multi-level governance framework highlights the complexity of the state and the reduced ability of traditional stakeholders to control policymaking. As a result, national or central governments do not have the sole authority to direct and shape policies. The framework helps to explain the changing political opportunity of actors located at different territorial levels to influence social change. Sikkink (2005) argues that this “multi-level” interaction among groups provides opportunities for local actors (e.g., universities) to seek out allies beyond the central authority to pursue their interests. Such coalitions are useful in order to carry out domestic agendas for political change.

While multi-level governance theory takes an instrumental approach focusing on institutional hierarchies, it does not look at the interests or values that are accompanying policy processes. Yet scholars agree that internationalization is considered a highly normative process with an unspoken rivalry of values (Kehm, 2011). For example, some argue that internationalization is associated with peace, cultural dialogue and mutual understanding (Hayhoe & Liu, 2011; Altbach & de Wit, 2015). Others point to the potential of internationalization to increase the quality and relevance of higher education programs (Knight, 2009; DeWit, 2011). For many, internationalization is associated with reinforcement and reproduction of inequalities in the global political economy (Stromquist, 2007; Slaughter & Cantwell, 2012). It has generated pressures on higher education institutions to compete (Enders, 2004; Powell & Solga, 2008), and is often linked to “brain drain” and “brain train” (Knight, 2012). Various internationalization initiatives raise questions about quality control, quality assurance mechanisms, transferability and recognition of credits (Altbach & Knight, 2007). As internationalization does not carry unified purpose, the type of values and norms that get promoted are determined by the dynamics of complex networks and changing spheres of authority among stakeholders.

Governmental policy documents serve as a powerful tool to influence behaviours and internalize norms into society (Rizvi & Lingard, 2010). Several authors argue that depending on the power-relations among stakeholders, there is a considerable variety in the way policies get implemented (Gornitzka 1999, Capano 2015). Oliver (1991) proposes several institutional responses that organizations (e.g., universities) might proclaim against governmental pressures. Strategies such as *acquiescence* (obeying, mimicking rules and norms), *compromise* (negotiating and balancing the expectations), *avoid* (disguising different interests, loosening attachments), *defy* (contesting rules and norm) and *manipulate* (shaping values, controlling outcomes) could be applied. Each strategy depends on complex factors such as the economic alignment of goals between stakeholders; the consistency with organizational norms and values; the degree of constraints imposed on the organization and/or environmental uncertainty and interconnectedness (Oliver, 1991). Gornitzka (1999) emphasizes that the scope and the room for manoeuvre is also determined by an overall governance system and day-to-day relationships between government and higher education institutions.

Multi-level governance theory emphasizes the challenging spheres of stakeholder authority, giving power to networks and local actors. Insights from this theory help to understand potential

influence of diverse stakeholder groups on the outcomes of macro-regional internationalization strategies. It also helps to explain the emerging role and interest of macro-regional governments that do not have direct authority over educational sector in shaping the processes of internationalization.

### **Canada and EU—Different Paths to Internationalization**

Canada and the European Union are fundamentally different political systems. Canada is a constitutionally bound federal state with 10 self-governing provinces and three autonomous territories. The European Union is a treaty-based union composed of 28 independent member states. Despite these profound differences, there are several similarities, particularly in the sphere of postsecondary education that the EU and Canada share. First, both engage in multi-level governance practices with powers divided between the levels of government (Laforest, 2013). In Canada the constitution assigns exclusive power to regulate, coordinate and implement higher education policies to provincial governments. Although the federal government is responsible for the overall economic development of the country, there is no federal office or department of education that oversees a national approach to postsecondary education (Jones, 2009). The federal international education strategy was developed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada. In the EU, national governments are responsible for their education and training systems. The European Commission's Directorate General for Education and Culture is the core administrative body working closely with national policymakers to support the development of higher education policies across the EU. However, the European Commission has a weak legal basis to implement initiatives directly to shape the higher education systems in the member states (Gornitzka & Maassen, 2007; Maassen & Musselin, 2009).

Second, in both jurisdictions macro-regional governments have become increasingly interested in establishing legitimacy over higher education. In Canada this interest takes a more instrumental form whereby the government has utilized considerable financial mechanisms to shape the priorities and directions of postsecondary institutions (Kirby, 2007; Axelrod, Desai-Trilokekar, Shanahan, & Wellen, 2011). The EU has been primarily relying on "soft" governance methods to achieve policy coherence across member states. With a focus on mutual learning, professional networks, intermediary bodies (e.g., quality assessment agencies) and expert groups that connect supranational governance to other levels are used (Gornitzka, 2009). The EU has been shaping policies by implementing voluntary lesson drawing, peer review or "naming and shaming" practices (Cabus & De Witte, 2013). Similar to Canada, the EU can use its considerable financial leverage to shape higher education policies by making universities dependent on their EU-funded grants (Batory & Lindstrom, 2011). As a result, the European Commission has become increasingly influential in higher education (Beerkens & Vossensteyn, 2011; Tamtik & Sá, 2014). Such mechanisms increasingly blur the spheres of authority among government stakeholders in both contexts.

Third, there is evidence of a rise in nongovernmental networks in both settings. These have the potential to challenge central authority, institutional autonomy and shape internationalization norms and values (Viccko, 2013; Vukasovic & Stensaker, 2015; Wedlin & Hedmo, 2015). For example, in Canada, several professional organizations have published analytical reports, strategies and policy briefs on Canada's potential for international education (CBIE, 2015; Universities Canada, 2015). Universities Canada (formerly known as AUCC) provides forums for strategic planning, sharing of ideas and showcasing excellence in internationalization (see Viccko 2013 for detailed analysis). Ontario university administrators reported that they receive over 80% of their knowledge about internationalization from their professional networks (Williams, K., Williams, G., Arbuckle, Walton-Roberts, & Hennebry, 2015). In Europe, organizations such as the European Association of

International Education, the European University Association and the Coimbra Group have been actively contributing to the development of internationalization agendas at an institutional and policy level (EUA, 2013; EAIE, 2014). EU university administrators similarly reported the importance of developing networks and partnerships through EU tools (EUA, 2013).

While sharing several similarities regarding internationalization of higher education, Canada and the EU have developed different processes in other respects of internationalization. Canadian education abroad initiatives are grounded in the country's international development aid agenda of the 1960s (Trilokekar, 2010). Over the years, significant development assistance has been gradually replaced by Canadian security, diplomatic and commercial interests (Trilokekar, 2010). Currently, internationalization processes are tied together with international trade, forming a key component of the federal Global Market Action Plan (Government of Canada, 2013). Jones (2009) notes that the internationalization of higher education in Canada has experienced a lack of interest and limited coherency at a system level. The level of interest has changed since 2010, when provincial governments started to articulate their own visions for international education. Yet the question about the coherency in policy approaches remains. There is limited commitment to policy coordination and communication across federal departments and agencies as well as between the federal and provincial governments in relation to internationalization (Trilokekar & Jones, 2015).

In Europe internationalization has been a priority area since the 1990s. The process expanded as a result of the ERASMUS student mobility program linked to the Bologna process (Teichler, 2004). Beerkens & Vossensteyn (2011) note that the ERASMUS program has triggered European countries to revise their entire degree structure, to work towards a common qualifications framework, and to change the existing approaches to teaching and quality. It has been a bottom-up process driven by the interests of the member states, leading to coherence across the higher education systems.

Overall, the EU and Canada operate in similar decentralized governance systems where both jurisdictions are experiencing increasing complexity in policy processes with challenged central decision-making authority. The context demonstrates that the European Union and Canada have followed different paths in internationalization of higher education that can potentially impact the way internationalization is understood and pursued through the strategies.

### **Analytical and Methodological Framework**

The main goal of this study was to examine the macro-regional internationalization strategies developed by the federal government of Canada and the European Commission. As multi-level governance theory allows the analysis of broader dynamics among the stakeholder groups but does not provide a conceptual tool to examine the content of the policy documents, an analytical framework designed by Gornitzka (1999) was used. That framework was designed to investigate organizational changes in higher education affected by governmental policies and programs. This analytical tool is important as it traces norms and values, an aspect vague in the multi-level governance theory. Following the framework, four key themes were tracked: (1) the framing of the policy problem: how internationalization as a policy issue is presented; (2) the policy objectives employed to understand the anticipated goals internationalization is expected to achieve; (3) the normative basis, values and beliefs that characterize internationalization; and (4) the policy instruments as mechanisms designed to achieve these objectives.

Two documents were selected for the analysis—"Canada's International Education Strategy. Harnessing our knowledge advantage to drive innovation and prosperity" (Government of Canada, 2014) and "European higher education in the world. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social

Committee and the Committee of the Regions. COM (2013) 499 final” (European Commission, 2013). These documents were selected because they are the most recent macro-regional level strategic policy documents that address internationalization. For Canada, there is a further significance associated with this strategy. It is the first formal document from the federal government that articulates a national-level strategic vision for international education. It also comes with a clear financial commitment associated with internationalization initiatives. Similarly, the EU did not have an explicit macro-level policy for internationalization of higher education. This document is the first step in creating a coherency across the diverse approaches of internationalization among the EU member states and its universities.

A content analysis of the documents was carried out (Weber, 1996), followed by an analytic comparison assessing and identifying similarities and differences between the policy approaches of the EU and Canada. The findings were compared with the research findings of other scholars working in the area of internationalization in the EU and Canada.

## **Findings**

### ***Policy Problem and Approach***

The strategies demonstrate that in both contexts the macro-regional governments view internationalization as an increasingly important issue that needs to be addressed. Internationalization is framed as a core societal challenge linked to economic growth, the shortage of skilled workers and the aging demographics (See Table 1 below).

The definitions of international education reveal the governments’ approach to internationalization. For Canada, international education is primarily understood through the aspect of mobility:

International education includes foreign students studying in Canada for any length of time; Canadians studying outside of Canada; collaboration between educational and research institutes in Canada and abroad; and sharing of Canada’s education models with foreign countries and the online delivery of Canadian education around the world (p. 9).

Some scholars are cautious about thinking of mobility as an equivalent of internationalization. For example, De Wit (2011) notes that international mobility is only an instrument that leads to enhanced quality of education and not an end goal in itself. He notes that the European Commission has contributed to this limited understanding through its emphasis on mobility schemes such as ERASMUS. The EU’s internationalization strategy is a step towards a more comprehensive approach to the issue. The document emphasizes aspects such as curricula, innovative content delivery and policy coordination:

Effective strategies should also include the development of international curricula, strategic partnerships, finding new ways of delivering content, and ensuring complementarity with broader national policies for external cooperation, international development, migration, trade, employment, regional development, research and innovation (p. 3).

These definitions reveal the potential spectrum of initiatives included in policy implementation. For the Canadian government the objectives of internationalization could be achieved through supporting new mobility programs, while the EU is planning to apply a cross-sectoral collaborative approach to achieve its goals.

**Table 1. Analytic comparison of internationalization strategies**

	<b>Canada</b>	<b>EU</b>
<b>Policy problem</b>	global competition, shortage of skilled human capital, aging population, rising demand for higher education	global competition, need to become smart, sustainable and inclusive economy, shortage of skilled human capital, aging population, rising demand for higher education
<b>Approach</b>	market-centered, need to maximize economic opportunities for Canada	student-centered, need to prepare students by increasing their experience, knowledge to enhance their employability and productivity
<b>Policy objectives</b>	expanding student mobility programs, online and cross-border services, strengthening institutional collaborations, marketing	expanding student and staff mobility programs, internationalization at home, institutional cooperation and capacity building
<b>Normative basis (values and beliefs)</b>	economic advantage, market expansion, quantity of students, multiculturalism, input-based (counting invested dollars)	social responsiveness, balanced partnerships, quality of student experiences, multiculturalism, output-based (counting students)
<b>Policy instruments</b>	direct coordination efforts across government sectors and policy areas, involving educational organization	horizontal steering indirect coordination involving policy learning, soft diplomacy and European influence.

The language used in those documents frames the policy issue. The advisory panel of the Canadian strategy was mandated to find solutions to “maximize economic opportunities for Canada”, “strengthen our engagement with emerging and key markets,” “attract the best and the brightest students,” to develop “partnership between governments, the private sector, industry stakeholders and Canada’s trading partners” (Government of Canada, 2014). These statements indicate that internationalization is viewed as a market-driven process whereby global challenges are seen as opportunities to enhance a country’s economic competitiveness. The EU’s document focuses on the learners and their needs by stating the importance of “increasing the quality of the courses to attract and retain the very best students,” “preparing our learners to live in a global world,” and “increasing students’ experience and knowledge, employability, productivity and earning power” (European Commission, 2013). The presence of competitiveness and market pressures are a striking reality for both, but the framing is different—economic gains versus quality of education. Only by increasing the quality of educational experiences can the EU remain a top study destination for international students.

These different framings of a policy problem illustrate a policy dilemma that governments face where the increasingly global and interconnected world forces them to choose between competitive or collaborative strategies to mitigate environmental uncertainties. Canada’s current



scenario is focused on a competitive strategy through single-country benefit that might alleviate pressing problems for one country but might escalate global challenges. The EU's policy scenario is assuming a more collaborative approach that is likely to engage stakeholders for developing long-term policy solutions.

### **Policy Objectives**

Policy objectives illustrate the specific initiatives and functions that a strategy is aiming to achieve. For both policy documents the overall goal is not to alter policy behaviour but to adjust it by strengthening and concentrating on specific areas.

The key objectives listed in Canada's internationalization strategy include: (1) marketing activities; (2) expanding student mobility flows; (3) increasing online or cross-border services; and (4) strengthening institutional partnerships. While priority is given to building strategic partnerships between the governments and the private sector, industry and Canada's trading partners, the universities are not approached directly but through professional organizations. There seems to be an alignment between the objectives of the federal government and Canadian higher education institutions. According to a study conducted by Universities Canada (AUCC, 2014), the top institutional priorities for Canadian higher education institutions were international undergraduate recruitment (45%), strategic partnerships with overseas higher education institutions (19%) and international research collaborations (13%). These findings indicate little institutional resistance but rather acquiescence in implementing federal objectives.

The EU sees its internationalization activities expand in three core areas: (1) student and staff mobility; (2) internationalization at home and digital learning; and (3) strategic cooperation and capacity building. Similar to Canada, the EU's strategy is aiming for system level adaptation. The key partners are higher education institutions, the member states' governments, civil society groups (third sector) and the private sector. The European Commission sees its role as the supporter of a stronger policy focus in a region. The strategy recognizes that study abroad programs might not be accessible to every student, making it critical to incorporate a global dimension into the curriculum at home. To achieve a system level compatibility in recognizing foreign credits, an overall transparency and quality in the content of the curricula is also necessary. Not only is closer cooperation between North-South universities encouraged but support to develop South-South cooperation is aimed for. When looking at institutional priorities, differences emerge. European institutional priorities involve primarily mobility aspects such as attracting students from abroad (30%) as well as focusing on internationalization of teaching and learning (19%) (EUA, 2013). The goal of capacity building in the developing countries is absent. This lack in priority alignment is an alarming sign for policy implementation. Yet, having a nuanced macro-regional policy approach might increase broader awareness about the diverse aspects of internationalization.

### **Normative Basis**

Policy documents contain specific values and beliefs that are communicated to stakeholders. The key effort of the Canadian strategy is in market expansion. The internationalization strategy is aligned with the Government of Canada's Global Markets Action Plan (2013) as developed by the Department of Foreign Affairs, Trade and Development Canada. New strategic markets involve countries with relatively young demographics and inadequate educational capacities, such as former aid-receiving countries. This is a normative shift for Canada. Historically Canada's development agenda has emphasized concern over global inequalities and poverty reduction (Trilokekar, 2009; Grenier, 2013). With this new strategy, the key objective is to attract a skilled workforce to Canada. The EU's document highlights the importance of supporting and building capacity in other regions. South-South

partnerships through balanced educational programs are encouraged. This finding aligns with Carbone's (2013) argument of the EU increasingly becoming a coherent development actor following principles of democracy, equal cooperation and human rights.

Another value prominently featured in the EU's internationalization strategy is the quality of students' learning experiences. The normative belief that the relevance of curriculum helps to achieve a more sustainable economy has prompted European policymakers to find ways to develop new cutting-edge innovative curricula and to expand students' research opportunities with private sector and civil society groups. Emphasis has been placed on offering better support services for international students, including individual career counseling and language training. Efforts to improve recognition of foreign learning credentials and transparency in joint degree programs are also addressed. These are challenging areas for Canada as well, but those have not been addressed in the strategy.

The multicultural and multilingual environments of both the EU and Canada serve as an attractive asset for internationalization. While the EU's strategy states the need to offer language courses for incoming students, Canada's strategy assumes that incoming students already have the necessary language skills to access higher education. However, there are many unresolved issues related to culture and language in both realms. In Canada scholars have documented problems related to racism, religious diversity and declining employment prospects for new immigrants (Banting & Kymlicka, 2010; Cui & Kelly, 2013). Kiernan (2014) states that postsecondary programs in Canada do not seem to recognize the merits of developing a multilingual agenda within its curricula and feel no real pressure from the federal government to modify existing programs. For the EU countries, the increased pressure to teach in English is often perceived as a threat to national culture and identity (see Doiz, Lasagabaster, & Sierra, 2012). There needs to be a more balanced approach to address issues related to culture and language.

A significant value-based distinction has been made in terms of investing in student mobility. Canada has taken an input-based approach by listing the dollar amounts invested in scholarship programs. In contrast, the EU's strategy takes an output-based approach measuring the number of students reached. The Canadian strategy states that federal scholarships exceeded \$13 million during fiscal year of 2013–14. In contrast, the new Erasmus+ mobility program is intended to reach up to 135,000 learners and staff; and allow up to 15,000 non-EU researchers to start or pursue their careers in Europe (European Commission, 2013). This output-based approach builds on the social capital of the scholarship recipients, which might create long-term benefits compared to the input-based approach.

### **Policy Instruments**

Policy instruments refer to the means and mechanisms by which governments tends to pursue their policy objectives. According to Hood (1983) there are four broad categories of instruments for policy implementation: economic means, legal-regulative power, information distribution capacity (selecting the type of information which will inform decisions) and organizational capacity (standards and self-regulation). This analysis demonstrates the use of a blend of these instruments.

The most substantial tool used for both Canada and the EU is the financial resources allocated for internationalization programs. For example, the total value of international student scholarships from the Canadian federal government during fiscal year 2013–14 exceeded \$13 million (Government of Canada, 2014). More than \$10 million was allocated in 2012 for the most prestigious doctoral and postdoctoral scholarships (Vanier Canada Graduate Scholarships, Banting Postdoctoral Fellowships). The budget for Erasmus+ Program for 2014–2020 includes a budget over 16 billion euro (22.5 billion CAD) (European Commission, 2014). Horizon 2020, the EU's

research and innovation program includes research scholarships for over 6 million euro (8.4 million CAD) (European Commission, 2013). The exact comparison of funding is not possible as EU combines all the resources for a seven-year period, whereas Canada's resources are distributed across different sectors and departments and for different time periods. However, with these significant resource allocations, both governments demonstrate a strong commitment to internationalization.

Legal-regulative power is exercised in indirect ways. The Canadian federal government has taken steps to work across the other policy sectors to ease the immigration process for international students. The capacity of the Temporary Resident Visa program has been increased. A permanent residency program "Canadian Experience Class" has been implemented to help with the settlement of international students. Collaboration with the industry sector has culminated in offering industrial research internships (Government of Canada, 2015). The means to implement legal regulations for the European Commission is limited and includes mainly general guidelines for action. The Commission has recently issued a proposal that should make it easier and more attractive for non-EU national students and researchers to enter and stay in the EU for periods exceeding 90 days (European Commission, 2014).

The organizational capacity to expand stakeholder networks and build ownership of decisions is crucial. The EU is utilizing a horizontal steering mechanism to engage its key actors. Policy dialogue, involving diverse expert groups, remains a key mechanism for information exchange with the member states (Gornitzka & Sverdrup, 2015). The Canadian strategy takes a more straightforward approach. A National Education Marketing Roundtable has been created with over 60 stakeholders, including several university associations. The goal is to create an embedded Trade Commissioner position to oversee the process and work more closely with the provincial governments.

### **Discussion on Using Multi-Level Governance Theory**

Macro-regional internationalization strategies are important as they are designed at the highest sphere of political decision-making. They define governmental priority areas and often involve significant financial and cross-sectoral commitments allocated to the activities. These strategies have the potential for direct policy change, especially if alignment of goals between the stakeholders is achieved. In addition to the contextual analysis presented above, multi-level governance theory emphasizes additional aspects in macro-regional policymaking that can shape strategy implementation. The core aspects in multi-level governance theory are (1) collective decision-making; (2) interdependence among stakeholders; and (3) mutual learning (Hooghe & Marks, 2003; Börzel & Heard-Lauréote, 2009; Zito, 2015).

As a result of collective decision-making it is in the hands of local actors and nongovernmental networks to determine the final outcome of policy implementation. Universities and international education networks have considerable say in the way policies get implemented (Capano, 2015). For Canada the shifting authority of the government and complexity in stakeholder interests were less visible: acquiescence with obeying to government rules and norms (Oliver 1991) seemed to be the dominant stakeholder response. This finding aligns with Capano's (2015) argument noting that the position of federal government remains substantially unchallenged regarding higher education in Canada. From the beginning, the Canadian strategy carried a clear government mandate of developing a document that has a goal of maximizing economic opportunities for Canada (Government of Canada 2014, p. 5). The advisory panel consisted of six members, most of whom represented university administration. While the consultation process included a broader set of stakeholders (representatives of education associations and institutions and private sector

organization), the views on how to achieve the overall economic mandate were the focal point. Today, universities are increasingly challenged by the focus on marketization and competitive advantage, and engagement in intense economic competition is a reality for most institutions and their administrations (Gopal, 2014). This alignment of goals and policy objectives among Canadian stakeholder groups confirms the dominance of economic agenda related to internationalization.

In formulating the EU's policy, the European Commission did not have a specified supranational mandate for its internationalization agenda. It did consult informally with a broad range of stakeholders across the member states, including key organizations representing higher education institutions, employers, student and alumni networks, experts in the field, and representatives from EU and non-EU education ministries. The European Parliament and EU member states governments will be consulted as the internationalization process moves further. This broad range of stakeholders and flexibility in its outcome align with the multi-level governance theory whereby networks of multiple stakeholders have a considerable input on policy directions, allowing for more nuanced representation of internationalization as demonstrates the strategy. According to Oliver's (1991) classification, this approach aligns with compromise where stakeholder interests are negotiated leading to balanced expectations and broader agreement in results. At the same time, this allows for significant leeway in institutional responses to policy implementation.

MLG theory is a beneficial lens as it suggests interdependence and ongoing interactions between stakeholders—one cannot advance one's interests without the help and support from the others (Börzel & Heard-Lauréote, 2009). Even when one party can exercise its power through authority, it is still dependent on skills, contacts or information involving subordinate units (Zito, 2015). Zito (2015) suggests that specific coordination mechanisms and resources associated with it determine the outcome of MLG approach. Therefore, both vertical (across tiers of authority) and horizontal (across spheres of authority) cooperation and coordination among stakeholders are needed in order to advance internationalization agendas of macro-regional stakeholders in EU and Canada. In both cases the monetary resources associated with internationalization policy help to secure vertical coordination and alignment in implementation of policy objectives among multiple stakeholders. The Canadian strategy provides funding of \$5 million a year to support the objectives of the International Education Strategy (Government of Canada, 2014). The exact distribution of funding is not specified but compared to investments made through Erasmus+ program (16 billion euro for 7 years), those finances are not enough for universities to start following the strategic priorities. Universities are interested in benefiting from those funds and more likely to align their institutional strategies accordingly. In addition, permanent policy dialogue and clear mechanisms to exchange information are increasingly needed to secure continued knowledge exchange among actors. Horizontal collaboration across policy sectors is achieved by working with other policy sectors. For example, the Canadian government is already focusing on building coherence across immigration policy, fiscal policy and employment policy to advance its internationalization agenda (Government of Canada, 2015).

Finally, the multi-level governance framework is useful as it emphasizes knowledge and learning in policy processes by the participants, providing a mechanism for policy change. In the multi-level governance model, social learning happens when the state and other actors realize the need to include a wide array of policy actors in the process, recognizing that those actors have a valuable role to play in contributing resources, knowledge and ideas to the process (Zito, 2015). Stakeholders are seeking to expand resources, particularly knowledge to advance their policy agendas. As a result of those interactions, stakeholders expand their own worldviews and outlooks that might eventually lead to radical shifts in how policies get to be framed, programs developed and policies implemented (Bennett & Howlett, 1992). Stakeholder learning process is a core focus

articulated in the EU's international strategy. The European Commission is committed to promote and support peer learning and the exchange of good practices through continuous stakeholder dialogues with EU actors as well as non-EU actors. This emphasis on learning aligns well with arguments stated in MLG theory, whereby regular knowledge exchanges among partners lead to updating one's policy beliefs resulting eventually in more balanced views on policy outcomes.

Although the multi-level governance approach emphasizes important aspects in the governance process, there are also limitations on using this approach. The core weakness of the MLG approach is in its empirical vagueness. As MLG often involves informal coordination processes, the core challenge of this approach is the limited empirical data and absent visibility in decisions (Papadopolous, 2010). It is challenging to determine how decisions were reached, what was the specific mechanism and which stakeholder group had most influence. As a result there is often certain vagueness in responsibility for decisions and clear accountability mechanisms among stakeholders (Leask, 2013). More research is needed to clarify those aspects in the MLG theory.

## **Conclusion**

This analysis demonstrates that macro-regional governments are increasingly pursuing increased marketization and economic advantages through internationalization. While Canada and the EU are facing broadly similar societal challenges, the paths articulated in their internationalization strategies are quite different. Canada is taking an aggressive marketization approach following the clear mandate of the federal government while the EU is pursuing a more nuanced and open approach that focuses on learner-centered perspectives to internationalization.

The rationale for these fundamentally different approaches is related to their specific contexts. In Canada the process of internationalization of higher education has been historically linked to governmental development agendas that have drastically changed in the realm of economic competitiveness. For the EU the process of building a coherent approach to internationalization has been developing for decades as a bottom-up process, starting from the student mobility programs and gradually expanding its scope to a more comprehensive and detailed vision for internationalization. The role of governing mechanisms has a considerable influence on the process. In the case of Canada, the federal government has a constitutional responsibility for the well-being of the country, allowing for a more direct influence on the policy processes related to higher education. The European Union does not have similar powers and can only move forward with flexible, inclusive and learning-centered approaches. In both cases it is potentially the university sector that ultimately determines the outcome as they are seen as policy implementers.

The MLG theory was used to illustrate complexity in policy-making process at macro-regional level. Insights from MLG theory allow researchers to focus on several important aspects of policy-making: dynamics of collective decision-making, interdependence of stakeholders on monetary and non-monetary resources, policy coordination and learning aspects that allow to explain potential changes in policy decisions. According to MLG theory, there is a considerable leeway for universities to take leadership and engage in more balanced approaches to internationalization that serve both students and society.

## **References**

- Altbach, P. G., & de Wit, H. (2015). Internationalization and global tension lessons from history. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 19(1), 4–10.
- Altbach, P. G., & Knight, J. (2007). The internationalization of higher education: Motivations and realities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 11(3–4), 290–305.

- Association of Universities and Colleges in Canada (AUCC). (2014). *Canada's universities in the world. AUCC internationalization survey*. Retrieved from <http://www.univcan.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/internationalization-survey-2014.pdf>
- Axelrod, P., Desai-Trilokekar, R., Shanahan, T., & Wellen, R. (2011). People, processes, and policy-making in Canadian post-secondary education, 1990–2000. *Higher Education Policy*, 24(2), 143–166.
- Bache, I. (1998). *Politics of European Union regional policy: Multi-level governance or flexible gatekeeping?* Vol. 3. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press.
- Banting, K., & Kymlicka, W. (2010). Canadian multiculturalism: Global anxieties and local debates. *British Journal of Canadian Studies*, 23(1), 43–72.
- Batory, A., & Lindstrom, N. (2011). The power of the purse: Supranational entrepreneurship, financial incentives, and European higher education policy. *Governance*, 24(2), 311–329.
- Becker, R., & Kolster, R. (2013). *International student recruitment: policies and developments in selected countries*. Nuffic. Retrieved from <https://www.nuffic.nl/en/library/international-student-recruitment.pdf>
- Beerkens, M., & Vossensteyn, H. (2011). The effect of the Erasmus programme on European higher education. In J. Enders, H. F. de Boer, & D. F. Westerheijden (Eds.), *Reform of higher education in Europe* (pp. 45–62). The Netherlands: Sense Publishers.
- Bennett, C. J., & Howlett, M. (1992). The lessons of learning: Reconciling theories of policy learning and policy change. *Policy Sciences*, 25(3), 275–294.
- Börzel, T. A., & Heard-Lauréote, K. (2009). Networks in EU multi-level governance: concepts and contributions. *Journal of Public Policy*, 29(2), 135–151.
- Cabus, S. J., & De Witte, K. (2012). Naming and shaming in a “fair” way. On disentangling the influence of policy in observed outcomes. *Journal of Policy Modeling*, 34(5), 767–787.
- Canadian Bureau for International Education (CBIE). (2015). *A world of learning: Canada's performance and potential in international education 2015*. Retrieved from <http://cbie-bcei.ca/media-centre/publications/research-reports/>
- Capano, G. (2015). Federal strategies for changing the governance of higher education: Australia, Canada and Germany compared. In G. Capano, M. Howlett, & M. Ramesh (Eds.), *Varieties of governance. dynamics, strategies, capacities* (pp. 103–130). Palgrave: Macmillan.
- Carbone, M. (2013). Between EU actorness and aid effectiveness: the logics of EU aid to sub-Saharan Africa. *International Relations*, 27(3), 341–355.
- Cui, D., & Kelly, J. (2013). “Too Asian?” or the invisible citizen on the other side of the nation? *Journal of International Migration and Integration*, 14(1), 157–174.
- De Wit, H. (2011). *Internationalization of higher education: Nine misconceptions*. Retrieved from <https://htmlbprod.bc.edu>
- Doiz, A., Lasagabaster, D., & Sierra, J. M. (Eds.). (2012). *English-medium instruction at universities: Global challenges*. Bristol: Multilingual matters.
- Enders, J. (2004). Higher education, internationalisation, and the nation-state: Recent developments and challenges to governance theory. *Higher Education*, 47, 361–382.
- European Association for International Education (EAIE). (2014). Annual Report. Retrieved from <http://www.eaie.org/about-eaie/annual-report.html>
- European Commission. (2012). Enhancing and focusing EU international cooperation in research and innovation: a strategic approach (COM(2012)497). Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/pdf/policy/com\\_2012\\_497\\_communication\\_from\\_commission\\_to\\_inst\\_en.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none](http://ec.europa.eu/research/iscp/pdf/policy/com_2012_497_communication_from_commission_to_inst_en.pdf#view=fit&pagemode=none)
- European Commission. (2013). *European higher education in the world. Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (COM(2013)499)*. Retrieved from [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/international-cooperation/world-education\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policy/international-cooperation/world-education_en.htm)
- European Commission. (2014). *Directive 2014/66/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the conditions of entry and residence of third-country nationals in the framework of an intra-corporate transfer*. Retrieved from <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex:32014L0066>
- European University Association. (EUA). (2013). *Internationalisation in European higher education: European policies, institutional strategies and EUA support*. Retrieved from [http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications\\_homepage\\_list/EUA\\_International\\_Survey.sflb.ashx](http://www.eua.be/Libraries/Publications_homepage_list/EUA_International_Survey.sflb.ashx)
- Gopal, A. (2014). Canada's immigration policies to attract international students. *International Higher Education*, 24, 19–21.
- Gornitzka, Å. (1999). Governmental policies and organisational change in higher education. *Higher Education*, 38(1), 5–31.

- Gornitzka, Å. (2009). *Networking administration in areas of national sensitivity: the commission and European higher education*. Working paper. Retrieved from [https://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-publications/workingpapers/working-papers2007/wp07\\_02.pdf](https://www.sv.uio.no/arena/english/research/publications/arena-publications/workingpapers/working-papers2007/wp07_02.pdf)
- Gornitzka, Å., & Maassen, P. (2007). An instrument for national political agendas: the hierarchical vision. In P. Maassen, & P. Olsen (Eds.), *University dynamics and European integration* (pp. 81–98). Springer: Netherlands.
- Gornitzka, Å., & Sverdrup, U. (2015). Societal inclusion in expert venues: participation of interest groups and business in the European Commission expert groups. *Politics and Governance*, 3(1), 151–165.
- Government of Canada. (2013). *Global markets action plan. The blueprint for creating jobs and opportunities for Canadians through trade*. Retrieved from <http://international.gc.ca/global-markets-marches-mondiaux/assets/pdfs/plan-eng.pdf>
- Government of Canada. (2014). *Canada's International Education Strategy. Harnessing our knowledge advantage to drive innovation and prosperity*. Retrieved from <http://international.gc.ca/global-markets-marches-mondiaux/assets/pdfs/overview-apercu-eng.pdf>
- Government of Canada. (2015). *Canadian Experience Class*. Retrieved from <http://www.cic.gc.ca/english/immigrate/skilled/>
- Grenier, F. (2013). The global educational challenge: How Canada can contribute to global developmental solutions through innovation in higher education. *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal*, 19(3), 354–367.
- Hayhoe, R., & Liu, J. (2011). China's universities, cross-border education, and dialogue among civilizations. In D. W. Chapman, W. K. Cummings, & G. A. Postiglione (Eds.), *Crossing borders in east Asian higher education* (pp. 77–100). Springer: Netherlands.
- Hood, C. (1983). *The tools of government*. London: MacMillan
- Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2003). Unraveling the central state, But how? Types of multi-level governance. *American Political Science Review*, 97(2), 233–243.
- Hooghe, L., & Marks, G. (2001). Types of multi-level governance. *European Integration Online Papers (EIoP)*, 5(11).
- Jones, G. A. (2009). Internationalization and higher education policy in Canada: Three challenges. In R. D. Trilokekar, G. A. Jones, & A. Shubert (Eds.), *Canada's universities go global* (pp. 355–369). Toronto: James Lorimer and Company (CAUT Series).
- Jones, G. A., & Oleksiyenko, A. (2011). The internationalization of Canadian university research: A global higher education matrix analysis of multi-level governance. *Higher Education*, 61(1), 41–57.
- Kehm, B. (2011). *Research on internationalisation in higher education. International Higher Education Congress: New Trends and Issues*, 231–239. Retrieved from [http://www.uyk2011.org/kitap/pages/uyk2011\\_s\\_0231\\_0239.pdf](http://www.uyk2011.org/kitap/pages/uyk2011_s_0231_0239.pdf)
- Kiernan, J. E. (2014). An analysis of the Canadian mosaic: Language usage among immigrant post-secondary students. *World Journal of English Language*, 4(2), p. 21.
- Kirby, D. (2007). Reviewing Canadian post-secondary education: Post-secondary education policy in post-industrial Canada. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 65, 1–24.
- Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization remodeled: Definition, approaches, and rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 8(1), 5–31.
- Knight, J. (2009). Internationalization: unintended consequences. *International Higher Education*, 54, 8–10.
- Knight, J. (2012). Student mobility and internationalization: Trends and tribulations. *Research in Comparative and International Education*, 7(1), 20–33.
- Källemark, T., & Van der Wende, M. C. (1997). *National policies for internationalisation of higher education in Europe*. Stockholm, Sweden: National Agency for Higher Education.
- Laforest, R. (2013). Shifting scales of governance and civil society participation in Canada and the European Union. *Canadian Public Administration*, 56(2), 235–251.
- Leask, B. (2013). Internationalizing the curriculum in the disciplines—Imagining new possibilities. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, 17(2), 103–118.
- Maassen, P., & Musselin, C. (2009). European integration and the Europeanization of higher education. In A. Amaral, G. Neave, C. Musselin, & P. Maassen (Eds.), *European integration and the governance of higher education and research* (pp. 3–14). Springer: Netherlands.
- Marks, G. (1993). Structural policy and multilevel governance in the European Commission. *The state of the European Community*, 2, 391–410.
- Oliver, C. (1991). Strategic responses to institutional processes. *Academy of Management Review*, 16(1), 145–179.
- Papadopoulos, Y. (2010). Accountability and multi-level governance: more accountability, less democracy? *West European Politics*, 33(5), 1030–1049.

- Powell, J. J., & Solga, H. (2008). *Internationalization of vocational and higher education systems: A comparative-institutional approach* (No. SP I 2008–501). WZB Discussion Paper. Retrieved from <http://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/47650/1/585747911.pdf>
- Primeri, E., & Reale, E. (2012). How Europe shapes academic research: Insights from participation in European union framework programmes. *European Journal of Education, 47*(1), 104–121.
- Rizvi, F., & Lingard, B. (2010). *Globalizing education policy*. New York: Routledge.
- Sikkink, K. (2005). Patterns of dynamic multilevel governance and the insider-outsider coalition. In S. Tarrow, & D. Della Porta (Eds.), *Transnational protest and global activism* (pp. 151–173) Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.
- Slaughter, S., & Cantwell, B. (2012). Transatlantic moves to the market: The United States and the European Union. *Higher Education, 63*(5), 583–606.
- Stromquist, N. P. (2007). Internationalization as a response to globalization: Radical shifts in university environments. *Higher Education, 53*(1), 81–105.
- Tamtik, M., & Sá, C. M. (2014). Policy learning to internationalize European science: possibilities and limitations of open coordination. *Higher Education, 67*(3), 317–331.
- Teichler, U. (2004). The changing debate on internationalisation of higher education. *Higher education, 48*(1), 5–26.
- Trilokekar, R. (2009). The Department of Foreign Affairs and the International Trade (DFAIT), Canada: Providing leadership in the internationalization of Canadian higher education. In R. D. Trilokekar, G. A. Jones, & A. Shubert (Eds.), *Canada's universities go global* (pp. 98–118). Toronto: James Lorimer and Company (CAUT Series).
- Trilokekar, R. D. (2010). International education as soft power? The contributions and challenges of Canadian foreign policy to the internationalization of higher education. *Higher Education, 59*, 131–147.
- Trilokekar, R. D., & Jones, G. (2015). Internationalizing Canada's universities. *International Higher Education, 46*. Retrieved from <http://ejournals.bc.edu/ojs/index.php/ihe/article/view/7942>
- Universities Canada. (2015). *Crossing borders, opening minds*. Retrieved from <http://www.univcan.ca/media-room/publications/crossing-borders-opening-minds>
- Viczko, M. (2013). Internationalisation of Canadian higher education: Troubling the notion of autonomy through an examination of policy actors, knowledge and spaces. *Learning and Teaching, 6*(1), 26–46.
- Vukasovic, M., & Stensaker, B. (2015). University alliances in the Europe of knowledge: Positioning, practices and power. In *Consortium of Higher Education Research (CHER) annual conference*. Retrieved from at <https://ecpr.eu/Filestore/PaperProposal/ecdce34a-4070-4a97-a981-d601d307e0ac.pdf>
- Weber, R. (1996). *Basic content analysis* (6th ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Wedlin, L., & Hedmo, T. (2015). Transnational organisations defining quality and excellence. In L. Wedlin, & M. Nedeva (Eds.), *Towards European science: Dynamics and policy of an evolving European research space* (pp. 105–125). UK & US: Edward Elgan Publishing.
- Williams, K., Williams, G., Arbuckle, A., Walton-Roberts, M., & Hennebry, J. (2015). International students in Ontario's postsecondary education system, 2000–2012: An evaluation of changing policies, populations and labour market entry processes. Toronto: Higher Education Quality Council of Ontario. Retrieved from <http://www.heqco.ca/en-ca/Research/ResPub/Pages/International-Students-in-Ontario's-Postsecondary-Education-System-2000-2012.aspx>
- Zito, A. R. (2015). Multi-level governance, EU public policy and the evasive dependent variable. In E. Ongaro (Ed.), *Multi-level governance: The missing linkages (Critical Perspectives on International Public Sector Management, Vol. 4)* (pp. 15–39). UK: Emerald Group Publishing.

**Dr. Merli Tamtik** is an Assistant Professor (Educational Administration) in the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba. Her research interests are in multi-level governance systems, internationalization of (higher) education and education policy. She is a recipient of SSHRC two-year postdoctoral research grant for a project that examined policy coordination issues in Canadian innovation policy. Merli is serving as a board member of Canadian Society of Studies in Higher Education (CSSHE) and a track chair for internationalization of higher education, CSSHE.