

Universities from the Perspective of Internationalization

*Johan Hoornaert & André Oosterlinck**

1. Introduction

Essentially, universities are international. Universities are linked across all international borders through a common historical tradition and a knowledge network, communicating worldwide about research in journals, books, organizations, meetings and data files.

Politically and economically speaking, a growing number of initiatives are being taken to find the optimum solution for global problems in a world of increasing interdependence. International relations are crucial to improve the competitiveness of companies, science, technology and even more so for universities. Education and science are the levers of economic, social and cultural development. Our knowledge society enables us to integrate new discoveries and to apply them in various areas of human activities, ranging from health and environmental care to the production of goods and services, always respecting the ethical values of mankind.

We do hope that the economic motivation to educate highly skilled graduates will go together with keeping the focus on their value formation. That is why post-secondary education needs to train alumni who are important and responsible actors in order to guarantee an innovative but also humanely valuable and equitable society, also to the benefit of the developing countries.

Many institutions attempt to evaluate the quality and international profile of universities. One way to do this, is to measure the number of professors, honorary doctors, visiting scholars and students in foreign universities. Or the number of professors and assistants with post-graduate training in foreign universities, and the number of tangible collaboration initiatives and agreements with foreign universities, and the collaboration in establishing them. Furthermore, the internationalization of universities can be observed from the number of publications in internationally acknowledged journals and books, with or without the collaboration of foreign researchers, and the impact of these publications through quotations. Finally, the key positions of alumni abroad, the active participation of faculty in editorial boards of international journals and books, foreign academies, international conferences, European and world organizations for inter-university, economic, political, cultural, religious and inter-religious organizations, are important aspects of the internationalization of universities. In this article, however, we will not focus on any of these parameters.

2. International character of the medieval universities

The newly established medieval universities used Latin as the international language of culture, and they recruited professors and teachers from the four corners of the world. Many students visited many universities, and they belonged to the most mobile members of medieval society. In Medieval Latin, the word 'university' meant 'studium' as well as 'universitas'. The 'studium generale' was an institution of higher education. The 'universitas magistrorum et scholarium' was the corporative organization of professors and students which made the 'studium' work and which increased its autonomy. During the 13th century, many subdivisions came about, namely the faculties or 'facultates' and the nations or 'nationes'. There were five subdivisions in the 'studium', namely five faculties,

* Johan Hoornaert is Professor, Advisor for Educational Affairs, at the K.U. Leuven. André Oosterlinck is Professor and Rector at the K.U. Leuven.

four of them the higher ones (theology, canon law, civil law and medicine), and the preparatory faculty of free arts or 'artes liberales' (including philosophy and science). In practice, many universities only had two or three faculties. The nations were organizations of professors and students with the same country of origin, and they took care of the reception and accompaniment of their colleagues. The nations were not subdivided, at least not everywhere. The members of the various nations were the most prominent assistants, board members or 'procuratores' of the rector or sometimes of the deans of the faculties. The mandate of the rector, which was supervised by the university board, consisting of professors as well as students, had a limited duration: one month in Oxford, three months in Paris, and one year in Bologna (Verger, J., 1978, pp. 42-49).

In Bologna, the bishop's school of free arts and the abbey school of canon law were joined in 1088 by a town school of Roman law. The University of Bologna was recognized by Emperor Frederick Barbarossa in 1158, and in 1219 it obtained the foundation charter by Pope Honorius III. The professors were only allowed to teach in Bologna. Many foreign students joined together in order to defend their interests against the town, to obtain certain privileges. After various attempts these 'societates' or 'universitates' were limited to just two: the university of the Citramontans, grouping all Italian students from outside Bologna, and the university of Ultramontans, grouping all non-Italian students and subdivided in nations, of which the German was the most prominent. At the head of each of these two universities, a rector was elected from the end of the twelfth century. The professors were not included and mainly had to rely on the lectures' fee (collectae) they got from the students. Most of the students were over 20, and especially the German students originated from well-to-do and often noble families. They were, therefore, more mature and self-assured, and they consciously joined together to negotiate their privileges with the town. A couple of times, they didn't even hesitate to move elsewhere. The biggest exodus took place in 1222, which was the starting point of the University of Padua, because a number of professors had followed the students, despite the oath they had sworn not to teach elsewhere. In 1230, the town allowed them the same privileges as it had given to the citizens of Bologna (Verger, J., 1978, pp. 32-36).

Already during the tenth century, Paris had a number of renowned abbey schools for higher education. In the eleventh and twelfth century, teachers and students mainly from England, Scandinavia, Germany and Italy came to the bishop's schools on the 'Ile de la Cité' of the abbey of 'Notre-Dame', more specifically to the canon's houses, which had been erected around the cathedral. The University of Paris grew out of these chapter schools, obtained its statutes, and was eventually officially recognized in 1231. It was famous mainly because of its philosophical and theological faculties. In Paris, professors and students together constituted the university, although it was the first group which took every initiative. The Paris University comprised four loosely defined 'nations', viz. the French, including students from Italy and Spain, the Normandic, the Picardic and the English nation, which also included students from Central and Northern Europe (Verger, J., 1978, pp. 24-32, 43-44).

In Oxford schools which had started from 1187 onward had obtained the university identity by 1214. The chapter schools from Salamanca grew in 1218 into a university, which was recognized by the pope in 1243. Starting from the second half of the twelfth century, Montpellier had schools for arts, law and especially medicine, with a very international student population. The Medical University of Montpellier was founded in 1220 by a papal bull, with a chancellor elected among the professors. The Montpellier University was founded in 1289 (Verger, J., 1978, p. 58).

During the 13th century, the popes promoted the development of university corporations by fine-tuning the right to teach elsewhere ('ius ubique docendi'). Starting with Innocentius III, until Bonifacius VIII, practically all popes had studied in Paris or Bologna, and some, like Innocentius IV or John XXI, had even been professor there. By students' and professors' migration, many more universities were founded, such as Padua in 1222, Naples in 1224, Toulouse in 1229, Siena in 1240, and Rome in 1244. Similarly, secession from Oxford University in 1209 founded the University of Cambridge, which received its official recognition only in 1318. The Universities of Angers and Orléans grew out of the grand Paris secession of 1229-1231. Orléans was founded in 1235, and was recognized as a university in 1306, whereas Angers, which had already been founded in 1219 and became very popular with foreign students from 1230 onward, was officially recognized as university in 1337 (Verger, J., 1978, pp. 36-40).

Between 1300 and 1500, the number of universities increased from 15 to more than 70. Both in the 14th and in the 15th century no less than 23 founding bulls were given by the popes. Not only every sovereign, but also every local ruler or every important town authority wanted to have their own university. That is why the Leuven

University was founded in 1425, at the request of both Duke John IV of Brabant and the town magistrate and the St. Peter's Chapter of Leuven. By the end of the 15th century, every European country had at least one university, which is why the geographic origin of students became more regional, and sometimes even quite local. In some universities, colleges were founded for students from particular countries or areas (Verger, J., 1978, pp. 112-119).

The Leyden University, founded in 1575 and the oldest in the Northern Low Countries, had, during the first two centuries of its existence, as many foreign students (mainly from Germany) as native ones. The same was true for the professors. In the 17th and 18th century, the number of foreign professors varied between 30 and 40 or more percent. After 1750, this percentage started to decrease down to 25%. In most cases, the Dutch professors had received their education in two or three foreign universities (Leijnse, F., 2002, p. 1).

In the second half of the 18th century, the universities evolved into more nationally oriented training facilities, in order to provide the country with its direct personnel requirements. Starting in the 19th century, Latin was replaced as the university's lingua franca by the vernacular, which made universities less attractive for foreign students and professors. In the fifties of the 20th century, the national inclination, sometimes-even provincialism, reached its climax. From the sixties onward, together with the first hesitant steps toward European unification, the universities witnessed a gradual rebirth of their international orientation. The increasing internationalization of economy, society and governments encouraged them to restructure their programs from the perspective of this internationalization. The recent European integration of higher education follows this tendency (Leijnse, F., 2002, pp. 2-3, 11).

3. Foreign professors at the Leuven University through the ages

When the Leuven University was founded in 1425, twelve professors were recruited. Most of them had obtained their doctoral degree in Cologne, Paris, Bologna, Heidelberg, Padua, and Erfurt. They were supplemented with a few Augustinians, Dominicans and Carmelites, whose convents had been incorporated in the Leuven University in 1447. We would also like to point out that four former Lovanienses were elected as rector of the Paris University in the course of the 15th century.

Twenty years after its temporary closure, in 1817 a 'State University of Leuven' was founded, with many foreign professors: six from Germany, two from France, and one from the Netherlands.

When the Catholic University was re-instituted in 1834, French, Dutch and especially German professors were recruited. In the 19th century, some 10% of the Leuven professors came from abroad. There were good contacts with expressly Catholic universities. After the first few years, the majority of the new professors were selected from the university's own alumni, and during the final decades of the 19th century, alumni from Ghent, Liege or Brussels became more numerous. In many cases, especially in physics and medicine, the training was completed by a study visit to a foreign university, before 1914 mainly in Germany, afterwards in the United States. After 1918, the cultural agreements with various European countries and especially the Belgian American Educational Foundation, and the University Foundation, increased the number of students completing their studies abroad.

In the year 2001, K.U. Leuven's staff counted 13% with a foreign degree, plus 17% with a degree from other Belgian universities (Jaarverslag K.U. Leuven 2001, 2002, p. 101).

4. Foreign students at the Leuven University through the ages

During the first century of its existence, the Leuven University had some 6% of its students coming from abroad, mainly from France, Germany and Scotland, and to a lesser extent from Italy, Scandinavia, the Baltic States, Spain, Portugal, Switzerland and Ireland. Practically all European countries were present already before 1450. Between 1485 and 1527, some 25% of the students came from the northern half of the Low Countries, mainly from Holland (15%) and Zeeland (6%). Leuven alumni completed their legal or theological education in Orléans, Bologna, Cologne, Paris, Heidelberg, Erfurt and Krakow.

The golden era of the Leuven University, in the 16th century, was marked by a considerable increase of students coming from Germany, England and Italy, but also from Spain and Portugal, whereas the number of students from Scotland and Denmark decreased. For many centuries, the teaching language was Latin, and for more than 125 years, until the Douai University was founded in 1562, to be followed by the Leyden University in 1575, Leuven was the only university in the Low Countries.

The number of foreign students and of students from the Northern Low Countries decreased in the 17th and 18th century. The only relevant foreign groups during the 18th century were Catholic students from the Northern Low Countries, Ireland and England, coming to Leuven to study theology. The number of students from the Northern Low Countries and of other foreign students was lower than 5%.

After Belgian's independence, French became the vernacular of academic education in all Belgian universities. The foundation of the Catholic University in 1834 made the number of foreign students rise. They mainly came from neighboring countries, where most universities were predominantly protestant: The Netherlands, Germany and Great Britain. Especially the theology faculty became very international, which it has been ever since. The special schools for engineers in 1864 turned out to be a new center of foreign attraction. In 1867-68, 16% of the students came from abroad, mainly from The Netherlands, Ireland and Germany, but also from the United States and Brazil. After the economic crisis of 1877, the number of foreign students went down again.

In the beginning of the 20th century, the number of foreign students rose once again, from 9 up to 12% in 1913-14. They mainly came from Russia, North and South America, Egypt and some from Asia, probably with the help of Belgian missionaries. Some 85-95% of all foreign students came from Europe, but by 1913-14 this figure had come down to just 75%. After 1905, Dutch students in Leuven started their own and very vibrant student association, 'Hollandia Lovaniensis'.

After the First World War, the foreign students population increased from 3 up to 14% in 1929, thanks to students coming from Russia, North America and China. More and more students of the technical faculties came from developing countries. Students coming from countries with universities of their own were mainly attracted by the catholic character of the Leuven University. They mainly opted to study in the humanities faculties: theology, philosophy, political and social sciences, oriental studies and history. The economic crisis of the 1930s led to a decrease of foreign students to 7%.

After the Second World War, the full 'netherlandification' of the Leuven University was turned into reality. Between 1947 and 1952, Leuven once again counted 7% of students of foreign origin, coming from 58 countries, mainly from Poland, Ukraine, The Netherlands and Luxembourg. Only 2% of the foreign students registered in a Dutch program. In 1958, for the first time there were more than 1000 foreign students, 8% of the total number of students. They came from 55 different countries, mainly from the United States, The Netherlands, Hungary, Luxembourg, France and Italy, but also from Vietnam, Formosa, Lebanon and Congo. Only half of the foreign students originated from Europe.

From the beginning of the 1960s, the number of foreign students from developing countries grew, even though the Leuven University had taken the initiative to found Lovanium (near Kinshasa), its daughter university in Congo in 1954, and a Belgian colony at that time. After 1962, the Leuven University was completely split into a Dutch-speaking (K.U. Leuven) and a French-speaking (UCL) section. Most foreign students registered in the French section. In 1964-65 there were 1544 foreign students, coming from 80 countries. When the university was fully and formally split in 1968, there were 2232 foreign students, or 9% of the total number, especially coming from Latin-America, Zaire, Rwanda and Burundi. Only one third came from Europe.

Offering a number of English undergraduate programs and especially more English specialization programs during the recent decades has definitely had a positive influence on the further internationalization of K.U. Leuven. In 1996-97, 26% of foreign students had registered in post-graduate programs. In 2001-02 there were 2395 foreign students in Leuven, coming from 115 countries, which is still some 9% of the total student population. About one third of the foreigners comes from other EU states, especially The Netherlands, Italy, Germany and Greece. Furthermore, there are important groups coming from China, India, Vietnam, Indonesia, the United States, Nigeria, Bulgaria, Poland and Romania.

5. Foreign university students at the end of the 20th century

Foreign professors and students are the most visible aspects of the internationalization of universities. In 1995, there were more than 100.000 professors visiting foreign universities, and more than 1.6 million students went to a university belonging to one of the 50 most prominent host countries.

In 1995, the United States were the most important host country, with 453.787 foreign students coming in, 64% of them coming from Asia. It should be noted that about half of the students in the engineering and computing departments are foreigners. About half of all students studying abroad went to one of three host countries: the United States, the United Kingdom and Germany. More than three quarters of foreign students went to one of ten host countries, which, with the exception of France (with 52% coming from Africa), recruited the largest number of foreign students ever (see Table 1).

Table 1: Foreign students in the thirteen most important host countries: 1995 and 1998

Host Country	Foreign students	Percentage of total student population		Percentage of total number of foreign students *	
		1995	1998	1995	1998
United States	453787	3	3	28	32
United Kingdom	197188	10	11	12	16
Germany	159.894	8	8	10	13
France	130431	10	7	8	11
Russian Federation	67025	2	...	4	...
Japan	53847	1	1	3	3
Australia **	47834	10	11	2	8
Belgium	34966	10	10	2	2
Canada **	31435	2	4	2	2
Austria	28883	11	11	2	2
Switzerland	24093	16	16	2	2
Italy	22369	1	1	2	2
Spain	21403	1	2	2	2

Sources: Unesco, World Statistical Outlook on Higher Education: 1980-1995, 1998, p. 15 – Unesco, Statistical Yearbook, 1999 – OECD Education at a Glance, 2000, Tables C5.1-3 – Information for Belgium in 1998, see Table 2

* Percentage of foreign students in the 50 most prominent host countries - ** Only data for universities

Belgium occupies the eighth place, with 34.966 foreign students. They accounted for 10% of the total student population in Belgium, and mainly studied in the French speaking universities. In Table 1 we also provide the information relating to foreign students in 1998. The full data for Belgium could not be obtained from OESO, but were interpolated from other sources, leading to Table 2. In 1995, the three most important host countries attracted some 50% of all foreign students; by 1998, this had increased to 61%.

Table 2: Foreign students in Belgium: 1998

		Belgians	Foreigners	Total	% Foreigners
Flanders	Universities	62255	4849	67104	7,2%
	'Hogescholen'	95923	1857	97780	1,9%
	Total	158178	6706	164884	4,1%
French-speaking part of Belgium	Universities	48381	11931	60312	19,8%
	'Hogescholen'	63962	11759	75721	15,5%
	Total	112343	23690	136033	17,4%

Sources: Universitaire Stichting, Annual Report 1998 – Dienst Universitaire Statistiek, 1998, p. 37 – Ministerie van de Vlaamse Gemeenschap, Statistisch Jaarboek van het Vlaams Onderwijs, 1997-98, p. 205 – L'Enseignement en chiffres, 1997-98

In 1995, more than 900.000 students from developing countries came to the industrially advanced countries of the North, and more than 150.000 foreign students came from the newly industrialized countries. In 1995, some 540.000 students from the industrially advanced countries studied abroad, mainly in the same region.

In 1995, most foreign students, 115.871, came from China, followed by South Korea and Japan, with some 60.000 or 70.000 students, and Germany, Greece, Malaysia, India, Turkey, Italy and Hong-Kong, with 35.000 to 45.000 students (see Table 3).

Table 3: Foreign students from the ten most important countries of origin: 1995

<i>Country of origin</i>	<i>Number of students abroad</i>	<i>Percentage of total number of students in the country</i>	<i>Number of foreign students from elsewhere</i>
China	115871	2	22755
Republic Korea	69736	3	1983
Japan	62324	2	53847
Germany	45432	2	159894
Greece	43941	13	1513
Malaysia	41159	21	...
India	39626	1	...
Turkey	37629	3	14719
Italy	36515	2	22369
Hong Kong	35141	36	...

Source: Unesco, World Statistical Outlook on Higher Education: 1980-1995, 1998, Table C5 – Unesco, Statistical Yearbook, 1999

Research by the IDP Australia (see Table 4) in 1995 shows that most of the 1.4 million of foreign students come from Asia (45%) and Europe (31%), and that about half of the foreign students go to Europe (51%) and a little over one third to the United States (35%). It should be noted that almost one third of the foreign students comes from Europe (31%) and that the vast majority of those foreign students go to another foreign European university (88%), and therefore remain within the same continent (Wächter, B., 1999, p. 26).

Table 4: Students going abroad and coming from abroad, per continent: 1995

<i>Continent</i>	<i>Students going abroad</i>		<i>Students coming from abroad</i>	
Asia	606000	45%	110000	8%
Europe	422000	31%	692000	51%
Africa	182000	13%	31000	2%
America (North and South)	128000	9%	478000	35%
Oceania	17000	1%	44000	3%

Source: IDP Australia – Wächter, B. (Ed.), Internationalisation in Higher Education, 1999, p. 26

Because of the programs for international student mobility in North America, Asia and the European Union, the number of foreign students going for a shorter or longer span of time to universities of these country groups increased noticeably, for instance through Erasmus-Socrates, Tempus, Alfa, UMAP, Asia Link.

International student mobility is not only determined by geographical proximity, but also by a number of complex, often changing historic and cultural factors, which are hard to predict: the international teaching languages (mainly English, German and French) of the host universities, the educational and research resources already present in the host and the 'sending' countries, decisions of national authorities with regard to granting visas, cultural agreements for the financing of studying abroad, the registration fee, the cost of living at the host university, the financial possibilities of the families of foreign students, the relevance of certain specializations for the labor market, the economic or political migration and the asylum climate in the host country. We should also refer to the subsidy policy, the way governments finance foreign students, the cost-benefits analysis, the fiscal effects of students going abroad for themselves or their families, the possible return to their own countries, the existence or absence of a 'numerus clausus', and the already present but not fully used education capacity of the host

universities. Finally, the recruitment of foreign students is also influenced by the presence of alumni or citizens of the host country in a number of overseas countries, the European, international and inter-university facilities and agreements with regard to student mobility, the foundation of colleges for foreign students, and the general value orientation.

Many foreign and international organizations have their own policy, services and networks in order to support international student mobility: AIEA: Association of International Education Administrators, AID: U.S. Agency for International Development, CBIE: Canadian Bureau for International Education, CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchange, DAAD: Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst, EAIE: European Association for International Education, IDP: Education Australia, IEASA: International Education Association of South Africa, NAFSA: Association of International Educators, NUFFIC: Netherlands Organization for International Cooperation in Higher Education, UKCOSA: The Council for International Education (United Kingdom), WES: World Education Services.

Worldwide, more than 25.000 advisors are involved with international student mobility. Many of them join hands in order to facilitate sufficient exchange of information and training. International magazines deal with international university collaboration and exchange. Apart from this, in many countries in full expansion, and also in Asia, there are more and more university and private centers for English language tests and for improving aptitude in English as a second language.

6. Diversification of higher education and internationalization

In many countries there are, in addition to the universities, other institutions of higher education with professional programs of shorter duration. Some of these select only the best students, also recruiting foreign students, while others provide high-level specific programs primarily for their own students. This diversification is desirable because it responds to the society needs. Distinct program profiles are needed in tertiary education.

Programs in higher education provide a multiplicity of learning possibilities but also give rise to tensions. Cooperation rather than competition between the universities and *hogescholen* can produce benefits in many areas. Both the more theoretical and academic university programs and the more directly practical and vocational *hogeschool* programs have not only enormous social relevance but also attract a different type of student, with different ambitions and potential. They provide their student with different sets of scientific, practical and technical skills.

To different degrees, all forms of higher education contribute to knowledge acquisition, knowledge processing, general education and service to society at large. They all focus on the application of knowledge, independent thinking and the development of creativity and professional skills. In some countries, however, more and more universities want to develop in the direction of institutions only for teaching and knowledge transmission.

Nevertheless, university education presupposes theoretical and multidisciplinary education, the integration of research findings into teaching, critical and synthetic thinking, and especially professors who carry out internationally recognized research. Of course, under certain conditions universities and *hogescholen* can collaborate in carrying out research, since the boundary between fundamental and applied research is growing increasingly vague.

As far as the universities are concerned, one should refer to the 'Magna Charta' of Bologna which defines the university as a research institution whose mission statement gives a prominent place to fundamental research, and where the teaching is supported by the institution's own research. Research is becoming more and more detailed and complex, and researchers increasingly have to tackle extremely complicated problems. Both of these developments exhibit an increasing tendency to interdisciplinarity and internationalization. In Flanders and The Netherlands e.g., this concentration on fundamental research in most universities is essential since, contrary to what is the case in some other European countries (e.g., the Max Planck Institute in Germany and CNRS in France); there are practically no separate research institutes outside the universities.

In almost every country, in addition to the official universities and *hogescholen*, we are witnessing the rise of

private universities, universities with a foreign campus, and internal training programs organized by professional federations and private companies. And slowly but surely, the open and virtual universities are becoming part of the educational landscape. Compared with government-subsidized higher education, the transparency of these programs is frequently quite problematic for later employment both at home and abroad. The universities and the labor market reserve the right to evaluate and work together with these alternative programs. Accreditation will be a necessity in such cases.

7. Recent K.U. Leuven policy objectives regarding internationalization

The K.U. Leuven mission statement has this to say about internationalization: 'In a number of fields the university aspires to a place among the centers of excellence in Europe and in the world. As an internationally oriented university, the K.U. Leuven is heir to a centuries-old tradition of hospitality to foreigners. Thanks to intense inter-university collaboration and to the exchange of students and faculty members, its development and transfer of knowledge actively contribute to the enrichment of culture and science, in Europe and throughout the world'.

7.1 Internationalization of study programs

About 9% of K.U. Leuven's students have been foreigners since the university's rebirth in 1968. For its first-cycle and second-cycle programs, just over 4% of the students are foreigners. International student recruitment is very strong in the four English-language undergraduate programs: theology, philosophy, religious studies and canon law. Apart from these programs, foreign students are mainly attracted to the third-cycle programs and to the English-language advanced master's programs.

Almost one-third of K.U. Leuven's doctorates is awarded to foreign students. During the 2001-02 academic year, doctorates by foreign students were primarily in the following faculties: theology, engineering, sciences, philosophy, medicine, agriculture and applied biological sciences, economics and applied economics, arts, psychology and educational sciences. The foreign students registered in 2001-02 for advanced master's programs were mainly in European Studies, Industrial Management, Master of Laws, Architecture of Human Settlements, Educational Studies, International Business Economics, Financial Economics, Physiotherapy, Artificial Intelligence, Water Resources Engineering, Social Security, Economics, Public Administration, Cultures and Development, Family and Sexuality Studies, and Statistics.

At the beginning of 1999, K.U. Leuven's Academic Council approved the policy memo on international relations, in which a high priority is given to the development of advanced master's programs, particularly specialized programs in an international language (English) in order to strengthen international student recruiting. Funds were made available for an English-language website, for a brochure on International Study Programs and for the promotion of new international programs. For Dutch-language first-cycle programs, a number of cooperation agreements with the Netherlands were recommended, while the English-language first-cycle programs were left at the status quo.

In 1999, an internal evaluation committee for the advanced master's programs made concrete proposals for improving the offerings, taking account of the attractiveness and international profile of the program, its relation to research and the labor market, program content and the programs own evaluation data. Here also, K.U. Leuven clearly wanted to set the standard high and comply with the legally determined norm of 10 students on average per year. What's more, the possibility of continuing inter-university cooperation was critically investigated. Finally, the link between certain advanced master's programs and doctoral programs was strengthened, leading to a marked improvement or, in some cases, the cancellation of programs with an unfavorable evaluation.

The bachelor-master reforms have led to a more differentiated policy of internationalization. In principle, bachelor's programs are taught in Dutch. There will continue to be an emphasis on bilateral cooperation with universities in the Netherlands. There will also be modules provided in another international language, in order to promote student exchange programs, particularly in the third year of a bachelor's program. At the first master's level, Dutch-language programs will be provided in the first instance, but K.U. Leuven wants to remain open to international exchange and cooperation. To this end, the faculties will examine whether sufficient teaching capacity is present or could be created so that at least one program can be offered in an international language.

After the first master's level, in addition to Dutch-language programs, foreign-language programs or new multidisciplinary programs will be offered on the condition that at least half of the program is specific and that there is enough teaching capacity at faculty level. The advanced master programs in an international language have to be based on outstanding research by the staff and at least two thirds of those programs must be specific.

For both the post-initial master's programs and the doctoral programs, a dual diploma system (each university grants its own diploma) will be considered from a strategic viewpoint regarding international cooperation and positioning of the university. In order to strengthen teaching capacity, possible forms of cooperation with other foreign universities and with associated *hogescholen* will be explored by way of modularized programs, distance education and continuing education. In thirteen specialization programs, K.U. Leuven already works together with foreign universities: European Criminology, Social Security, European and International Taxation, Human Rights and Democratization, Mathematical Psychology, Public Administration, Social Policy Analysis, Adapted Physical Activity, Sport Management, Exercise and Sport Psychology, Materials Engineering, Earth Observation, Bio-Ethics.

In terms of content and funding, the program directors and the deans will examine the way in which each of the 100 postgraduate programs can best be organized in the framework of the bachelor-master structure. A steering committee will assess all faculty proposals.

From a purely financial point of view, increased tuition fees are legitimate for successful programs that recruit students internationally, insofar as they are self-supporting or profitable. Indeed, it is not very logical for the Flemish taxpayer to bear the costs of affluent foreign students who come to study in specialized programs. Moreover, it should be noted that the international prestige of inexpensive programs suffers in comparison with similar foreign programs that cost more. However, in order to make these programs accessible to Flemish students and students from developing countries reduced tuition fees are applied for social economic reasons.

In 1987, the European Commission launched the Erasmus program to promote inter-university teaching cooperation among the various member states. The Commission's goal was that at least five percent of students would spend a period of time at a foreign university. In 1995, the Erasmus program was integrated into the broader Socrates program with new cooperation agreements: what had been networks of disciplines became institutional contracts. A recent evaluation of the effects of the Socrates program confirms that K.U. Leuven continues to score well in terms of student mobility. In 1999-2000, 537 students or approximately 15% of the graduated students were sent from Leuven, primarily to France, the United Kingdom and Spain, while 473 students came to Leuven, primarily from Spain, Italy, Germany and France. The results of the efforts made in this area during the initial stages of the program are still clearly in evidence. There is, however, a glaring discrepancy between the number of social sciences and humanities students sent from K.U. Leuven on the one hand, and students from all other faculties, on the other hand. There is no doubt that the Socrates program creates unique opportunities for student mobility. In some cases, especially outside the humanities, students exhibit a preference for other mobility options, such as bilateral agreements, scientific funds, etc. (Van Grunderbeeck, F., 2001).

7.2 Internationalization of research

International cooperation is indispensable for high-level fundamental research. A recent study by the ministry of science policy has shown that almost 50% of the scholarly publications by K.U. Leuven faculty members are co-authored with foreign researchers.

Research is the pre-eminent domain for individual professors to seek contact with foreign colleagues whom they have met through the journal literature or at conferences. The aim is to assist one's own research progress by obtaining specific input from foreign colleagues. These international contacts often change rapidly however. Direction from the university authorities to cooperate with a specific university in research matters is usually not desirable: such a process is best regulated from below. At most, a bilateral agreement between two universities can be negotiated, if there already exist many individual cooperation agreements between them. This is one of the most important reasons for having a bilateral agreement between K.U. Leuven and the University of Nijmegen. In recent years, the university and the government have made funds available for increasing international contacts: research fellowships, travel grants, foreign post-doctoral fellowships, bilateral scientific agreements, etc. The Flemish Community contributed with funds to support international scholarly cooperation with geo-politically-important countries and for European projects.

Research spending based on funding from international organizations increased. More than 150 such EU projects are currently underway. Deserving special mention is the coordination of twelve training centers through the EU program: 'Improving Human Research Potential'.

The Research Council and the Council for Research Policy of K.U. Leuven, in consultation with the Office of Research Coordination, assist in preparing applications for inter-university and international research funds, meet at least once a year to discuss existing programs, and propose the needed adjustments. A database (IWETO) provides an overview of all current research contacts.

7.3 Bilateral cooperation with foreign universities and development organizations

K.U. Leuven's bilateral agreements were evaluated in 1998-99. Preferential partners can count on intensive contacts in the areas of research and teaching. This assumes there is reasonable familiarity with the foreign university, and a possibility of working as equal partners. There is a limited group of 24 universities and institutions with which privileged bilateral relations are maintained.

Bilateral agreements between K.U. Leuven and foreign universities and institutions

Katholieke Universiteit Nijmegen (The Netherlands)	University of Warsaw (Poland)
Universität zu Köln (Germany)	University of Pennsylvania (USA)
Westfälische Wilhelms-Universität Münster (Germany)	University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (USA)
Università di Urbino (Italy)	Kansai University Osaka (Japan)
Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore Milano (Italy)	National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan (Taiwan)
Università degli Studi di Bologna (Italy)	Commission of National Education, Beijing (China)
Ministry of External Affairs, Madrid (Spain)	Educational Department of Liaoning Province (China)
Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas Madrid (Spain)	University of Pretoria (South Africa)
Universidad de Salamanca (Spain)	University of Free State Bloemfontein (South Africa)
Catholic University of Lublin (Poland)	University of Stellenbosch (South Africa)
University of Wrocław (Poland)	University of Cape Town (South Africa)
	University of Western Cape (South Africa)

In addition, faculty-level cooperation agreements were signed with the following foreign universities, e.g.: Theologische Faculteiten Tilburg and Utrecht, Institut Catholique Paris (theology), Georgetown University, Boston College, Boston University, University College Dublin and National University of Ireland Maynooth (philosophy), Northwestern University School of Law, Chicago, University of Michigan Law School, NYU School of Law, University of Illinois, Duke University School of Law, Universiteit van Potschefstroom, University of Melbourne, University of Sydney, City University of Hong Kong (law), Rijksuniversiteit Groningen (commercial engineering), Landbouwniversiteit Wageningen (nutrition and health), Universiteit Twente (communication science), Technische Universiteit Eindhoven, Technische Universiteit Delft, RWTH Aachen and Imperial College (engineering).

In the framework of Institutional University Cooperation, K.U. Leuven coordinates development aid projects at three universities: Harare in Zimbabwe, Cochabamba in Bolivia and Baguio/Benget in the Philippines, and a network of Basic Science Education among South African universities. From 1999 on, some fifty scholarships are available for K.U. Leuven students to study in a developing country. In addition to active participation in joint projects of the Flemish Interuniversity Council, NGOs, the Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance and other development projects, K.U. Leuven also sets its own policy in the area of development cooperation.

Separate bilateral agreements permit a limited number of excellent students to prepare a doctorate at K.U. Leuven. The scholarships fund the entire period of four to a maximum of five years, on condition of a positive annual evaluation. Since 1999-2000 there are agreements with four Chinese universities. In 2001-02, the program was expanded with fifteen doctoral students from Latin America, and starting in 2002-03, there will be fifteen scholarships available for students from Central and Eastern Europe. K.U. Leuven also maintains a cooperation network with two Congolese universities: Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa and Université Catholique de Bukavu.

7.4 The organization of international relations within K.U. Leuven

In addition to the Office for International Students and Scholars and the International Relations Office, in charge of the practical follow-up of international cases at K.U. Leuven, there is also the International Relations Policy Committee and the Interfaculty Council for Development Cooperation. With a view to selecting candidates for K.U. Leuven scholarships in the framework of bilateral agreements and to provide advice on international relations with a specific region, there exist regional expert groups for Africa, America, Europe and Asia. In addition, an increasing number of faculty cells for international activities have been established. In 1999-2000, the Office for International Students and Scholars started the VESTA project – named after the Greek goddess of hospitality – to optimize the reception of foreign visitors.

At a central level, K.U. Leuven is a member of various organizations for inter-university cooperation: International Association of University Presidents (IAUP), European University Association (EUA), Working Group International

Management of Higher Education (IMHE-OESO), International Association of Universities (IAU), European Association of International Education (EAIE), Coimbra Group of the oldest university cities, Euregional Universities Network, Fédération Internationale des Universités Catholiques (FIUC), Fédération des Universités Catholiques Européennes (FUCE).

Twelve top European universities have joined together as the League of European Research Universities (LERU), in order to accentuate the importance of fundamental research: Cambridge, Edinburgh, Geneva, Heidelberg, Helsinki, Leyden, Leuven, Milan, München, Oxford, Stockholm and Strasbourg. In addition, K.U. Leuven, via the European University Network for Information Technology in Education (EUNITE), is a linchpin in the project of achieving the virtual European University. Finally, K.U. Leuven is a project leader in the dissemination of services for students with a handicap, through the European Agency for Development in Special Needs Education (EADSNE).

8. Conclusion

The great importance of knowledge in today's world means that universities, more than ever, find themselves in a competitive market. There is growing competition among universities as well as between universities and *hogescholen*. But private organizations are also active in the areas of teaching and research. The opportunities provided to the universities by the knowledge society are unmistakable, but at the same time there are more and more knowledge producers arising outside the university.

Competition exists not only within our own national borders, but is also situated at the European and world levels. Universities compare themselves with one another, attempt to attract the best professors and researchers, and compete for international research projects. Universities with more than local or regional ambitions will be need to belong to the best in Europe and the world in order to survive in the future.

Although competitiveness in the field of knowledge is a worldwide phenomenon, it is also present in the competitive struggle between regions. For this reason, the university has a mission to contribute to the welfare and development of its own region or country, in economic, cultural, social, medical, religious and ethical terms. In this way the university strengthens the position of its own country and region. Conversely, the university needs a prosperous region in order to grow and increase its international profile.

In order to occupy a strong position in this competitive environment, the university must make the necessary strategic choices. In so doing, its specific situation must be kept in mind: location, function and positioning within its own country or region, scale and reputation. Universities can, on the one hand, take up stronger regional positions by forging alliances with *hogescholen* from their own region and forming strong regional clusters for higher education. For some universities, the region will encompass the province or a part of it; for others, the region will be construed more broadly. On the other hand, sufficient financial resources and economies of scale are needed if one intends to occupy a stronger position internationally. This assumes that the university succeeds in attracting a sufficient number of students and in reinforcing the quality of its research and teaching. Attracting more international students is an important objective for an increasing number of universities. Attaining these strategic choices will give all students significant benefits for their future professional careers, which will ultimately result in a stronger position for their region within Europe and the world.

In an increasingly competitive environment, every university, in consultation with all stakeholders, must establish well-considered alliances with complementary educational institutions, not only in the same region, but also with renowned foreign universities and with universities in developing countries. Both in the case of *hogescholen* from our own region, and universities from abroad, intense structural cooperation will lead in the longer term to associations and even mergers. This does not preclude other forms of cooperation with businesses, professional groups and other functional networks, particularly at an international level.

Attaining and consolidating a university's international position through publications, conferences and student exchanges is, of course, not enough. Special efforts are needed to attract more foreign students, but also more foreign researchers, professors and even administrators. Via international agreements and effective associations with foreign universities, a university can also offer its own students more study and research opportunities abroad, thus creating added value.

All this presupposes that a university is capable of reacting rapidly to the changes taking place in the global knowledge society. It demands from the university a greater openness and orientation to what is happening in the rest of the world. It means that a university must adopt flexible structures and operations in order to respond in an adequate way to the new types of student, the new demands of a changing society, and the needs of life-long learning among professionals. Moreover, it requires an appropriate human resources policy capable of recognizing

the individual competencies of its personnel, and increasing job satisfaction for everyone. In any case, it presupposes that the university's basic funding approaches the Western-European average. Diverse members of the university community must work toward the concrete realization of these strategic options. We must decide what is essential for the university's positioning at a regional and an international level, and what accents and directions the individual faculties or departments can pursue.

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