Lessons for the Future of the Bologna Process and the Internationalization of Higher Education

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The progress of the case study countries, Portugal and Spain, toward change in higher education provide important lessons for policy reforms at the national level. Domestic political attributes that incentivize reforms are supportive leadership at national and institutional levels, dedicated funding, and government structure. The case study research identified that the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) for degree structure in the EHEA was established in 2007 in both Portugal and in Spain. The three explanatory variables -- economic pressures from globalization, domestic politics from intergovernmentalism, and ideational processes from the EU supranational governance through Europeanization – have promoted international policy coordination and institutional change in higher education in the region of Europe. The EHEA model has influenced other world regions to adopt similar policy reforms in higher education. The ties of Portugal and Spain with countries in Ibero-America come from shared cultural and historical experiences.

Keywords: Bologna Process, EHEA, European Union, Policy Reform, Portugal, Spain

INTRODUCTION

The Bologna Process, an unprecedented voluntary initiative that has garnered the participation of 48 countries, has resulted in institutional reform in the higher education space in Europe. This institutional reform on multiple levels of governance -- European, national, and university/institutional -- has taken place through soft law, which is not legally binding through treaties. It has created the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) for the recognition of higher education qualifications across these countries. As an initiative in regional integration, it builds upon the historical institutional structures of economic and political agreements in the years following World War II. Over time a greater number of national issues areas, such as education, have been confronted to gain the support and cooperation of these European countries, nearly 25 percent of the countries in the world (Pierson 2004; Dinan 2014; Wiener and Diez 2009).

The conclusions in this chapter address the implementation of the Bologna Process objectives at the national level, how this complements the Europe 2020 economic growth strategy, and how it may be a model for integration in higher education in other regions of the world. The research done to write this book has related the political economy context, as the independent variable, to the Bologna Process policy reform, as the dependent variable. The theoretical paradigms and policy processes of intergovernmentalism and Europeanization explain the reforms and progress on outcomes thus far.

This chapter presents the research findings, comparing the qualitative points of analysis in case studies on Portugal and Spain. Along with ongoing qualitative process tracing, it reviews the hypothesis

tested with quantitative analysis of the EU countries in Chapter 4. Assessing qualitative and quantitative aspects together, it considers the EHEA and the Europe 2020 economic growth strategy as guidelines for the regional investment in higher education. The example for regional integration in the Bologna Process is explained in relation to burgeoning regional integration schemes across world regions, with an emphasis on the Ibero-American region that has ties to the Iberian countries. Last, this chapter discusses the second decade of the Bologna Process and beyond. The book discusses three dynamics related to the political economy and policy process that influence the Bologna Process:

1. Competitive economic pressures: globalization
2. Domestic politics at the level of the state: intergovernmentalism
3. Leadership from the supranational European Union that socially engages stakeholders and constructs regional norms: Europeanization

Given the breadth and complexity of the Bologna Process, the main focus of this book is the degree structure and National Qualifications Frameworks (NQF) aspect for national level policy implementation in the case study countries Portugal and Spain. The quality assurance and international degree recognition aspects are still developing at varying rates across countries. The internationalization of higher education and the pursuit of competition in the region, guided by the European Commission's Europe 2020 economic growth strategy, are drivers for reform (Martens et al. 2014). The structure of government, the political leadership, and the funding available are variables that influence policy implementation. The cases of Portugal and Spain are the most similar for research design, and they have diverged on the dependent variable of pace of reforms toward higher education attainment. With the Bologna Process criteria and with the Europe 2020 target for higher education attainment, Portugal has proceeded at a faster pace than Spain (European Commission 2015b; Rauhvargers et al. 2009).

While Portugal and Spain are similar countries as members of the European Union (EU), they vary in government and higher education system structures, but the countries share a similar timeframe for the national legislation to legally establish the NQF in 2007. The drivers of this similar timeframe are the policy processes of intergovernmentalism and Europeanization.

RESEARCH FINDINGS IN QUALITATIVE CASE STUDIES

History matters because it determines the trajectory that institutions take (Pierson 1996, 2000, 2004). The temporal dimension provides the necessary context that is critical for evaluating politics in time: "Placing social analysis in time implies recognizing that any particular moment is situated in some sort of temporal context -- is part of an unfolding social process" (Pierson 2004:167). A parallel comparison of the two Iberian countries as they have implemented policy reforms in the Bologna Process at the national level examines the five areas of qualitative analysis: (1) national governance background, (2) policy economy context, (3) higher education governance, (4) policy implementation, and (5) modernization of higher education institutions.

National Governance Background

In the mid-20th century, generally there was more freedom for political expression and participation in higher education under authoritarian rule in Spain than in Portugal. In Spain, there were a limited number of universities and long distances to travel to attend, resulting in lower levels of higher education attainment when education was an elite system. Between the 1930s and the 1970s, the countries shared the notion of higher education as a privileged system to serve the elites, and the Catholic Church continued to run some private universities. In the 1978 Spanish Constitution, the quasi-federal system gave meaningful political power for governance to the 17 autonomous communities. Once granted, this autonomy became strongly embedded in the national culture; leadership in policy areas is shared between the autonomous communities and the national government in Madrid. Portugal's unitary structure, compared to Spain's quasi-federal governmental structure, provides for a process of policy reform that

may be more direct in design (Lijphart 1999). In practice, there have been institutional challenges and opportunities, and stakeholder coalitions act upon the policy process in both countries.

Political Economy Context

In the financial crises, Spain's crisis was initially a private sector debt crisis. Property and asset prices declined steadily from 2007, prior to the global financial crisis. Portugal, on the other hand, had a sovereign debt crisis caused by public sector indebtedness, which became unsustainable after the global financial crisis in 2008–2009. The opportunities for higher education reform -- attainment, innovation, and internationalization -- are shared. The challenges of limitations on funding affect each country differently. There have been austerity measures in both countries, causing a reduction in spending in Portuguese and Spanish education systems in 2013 (Spain Ministry of Education 2015:10; PORDATA 2016). The quasi-federal structure in Spain adds a layer of complexity for tax revenues taken from, and funds granted to, the autonomous communities. They have shared some limitations in funding private and public research initiatives, although a number of public research institutions remain supported by EU structural funds. Both countries suffered sovereign debt downgrades in 2011 that were followed by austerity reform packages negotiated with the troika (ECB, EU, and IMF) in 2011 in Portugal and in 2012 in Spain. Overall, education spending was not as significant an explanatory variable as GDP per capita in the statistical analysis in Chapter 4. The wealth of a country, measured by GDP per capita, has a significant relationship with higher education attainment.

Higher Education Governance

Both the governmental structure and the higher education system structure are different between Portugal and Spain, making these the diverging variables in the most similar cases for comparison in the research methodology. Portugal is unitary, or centralized, and Spain is quasi-federal, or decentralized, in governmental structure. Portugal has a binary higher education system, while Spain has a unified higher education system. Portugal's binary system of higher education includes university and polytechnical institutions. Spain's unified system of higher education includes all types of universities within a single higher education governance structure. The quasi-federal system is more complicated for university governance because of the authority granted by the 1978 Spanish Constitution to the regional governments of the 17 autonomous communities. In Spain, despite having a unified higher education system, there is a greater plurality of public sector stakeholders, making policy reform more contentious.

Consistency of leadership matters, which is evident in comparing Portugal and Spain. There has been more consistency in leadership in higher education administration in Portugal than in Spain, even though both countries changed governments in 2011. While in both countries the legal framework for the NQF was established with legislation in 2007, Spain took two years longer (2011) compared to Portugal (2009) to define the contents of the NQF. Nevertheless, the influences of the explanatory variables in the political economy, alongside the policy processes of intergovernmentalism and Europeanization, drove the similar outcome of the legal framework NQF initial legislation in 2007 in both countries.

The following are future issues that will remain important for Portugal: reform emphasis on teaching and learning, governance, and internationalization (Teixeira 2016). Particularly, in light of youth employment and underemployment, making teaching and learning more practical is a primary goal. The governance reform of higher education policy that began in 2007 continues to progress. Financial constraints stem from dependency on funding primarily from the public sector. Internationalization remains a priority, as higher education institutions continue develop an external orientation beyond the parameters of the country. This has roots in the Bologna Process launched in 1999, which recognizes the policy reform needed in the 21st century knowledge economy (European Commission 1997).

Spain has similar concerns that are manifest across the 17 autonomous communities with regional policies alongside national policies. The Bologna Process has supported the autonomy of the higher education institutions, which parallels the direction of higher education policy in Portugal and Spain in recent decades. While seemingly an incongruity, the state continues to have a central role in oversight (Neave 2012).

Policy Reform: Stakeholders

The public sector is the dominant coalition stakeholder in both Portugal and Spain. The governments, represented by the ministers of education at the EHEA ministerial conferences, have driven the reforms at the national level. By comparison, in some countries such as the United States, the academic sector may be more important in driving change in higher education because accreditation is granted by associations of peer universities. The accrediting quality assurance agencies in Europe are institutions that are created by national legislation, which are required to operate independent of the state and the higher education institutions. In the academic sector in Spain there is a greater number of faculty, students, and administrators who have diverse attitudes, positive and negative, toward the Bologna Process. In Portugal, there was general cohesion among the academic sector at universities to implement reforms on degree structure by the year 2008 (Correia 2012; Freire 2013).

Because of the differences in the size of their economies measured by GDP, there are more private sector businesses in Spain than in Portugal, resulting in more influence on higher education by private sector actors in Spain. The World Bank reports that in 2013 the GDP of Spain was $1.4 trillion and that of Portugal was $227 billion. The inclusion of a variety of stakeholders in higher education from across sectors has limitations. Namely the stakeholders beyond the traditional academic sector lack historical institutional knowledge. However, they bring value: from the private sector comes knowledge of market forces, and from the public sector comes a connection to the European level of governance. As higher education institutions grow in partnerships across sectors, an appropriate form of involvement may be found for stakeholders' involvement in governance leadership. Their involvement may be in distinct roles depending on the specific country, as influenced by its history and sociocultural values. As soft-law policies, the Bologna Process and the EHEA allow for variations in implementation, allowing countries to develop unique partnerships that are beneficial to attaining their objectives in higher education.

The Modernization of Higher Education Institutions

The higher education space of the EHEA overlaps with the research space of the European Research Area (ERA). The EHEA has the participation of the 48 country members in the Bologna Process. The ERA is designed by the European Commission to support the 28 EU Member States through programs such as Europe 2020 (since 2010) and Horizon 2020 (since 2014). To advance research, innovation, and the ERA, both Portugal and Spain's national research agencies benefit from EU structural funds. The primary agency in Portugal is the *Fundação para a Ciência e a Tecnologia* (FCT, Foundation for Science and Technology). The counterpart agency in Spain is the *Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas* (CSIC, Advisory Council of Scientific Research). In Portugal, the FCT is associated with the Ministry of Education and Science. In Spain, the CSIC is associated with the Ministry of Economy and Competition.

On the national level of governance, both countries have developed innovation strategies for the years 2013–2020 that are promoted by the ministries of economy. The national innovation strategies in Portugal and Spain align with the Europe 2020 objectives for increased employment and investment in research and development (R&D). There are domestic and international incentives for economic growth. On the European level of governance, there are the Horizon 2020 guidelines and research agendas for the innovation program sponsored by the European Commission to develop the ERA. This cross-over of policies and the co-constitutive relationship between the national and European levels of policymaking demonstrate intergovernmentalism and Europeanization in research and innovation policy.

POLICY REFORM OUTCOMES

In the policy reform of the Bologna Process, both Portugal and Spain have been policy *takers* (Molina 2012). The policy *makers* have been the four countries (France, Germany, Italy, and the United Kingdom) that signed the Sorbonne Declaration on May 25, 1998, which laid the foundation for the Bologna Process. The EU Member States have National Qualifications Frameworks (NQFs) and EHEA qualifications frameworks. The FHEQ-Portugal and the MECES in Spain are the NQFs. The FHEQ-EHEA in Portugal and the MECU in Spain are the EHEA qualifications frameworks. These countries

moved forward with their respective legislation to define the content and qualifications of academic degrees, after the overarching European framework for qualifications was adopted at the Bergen EHEA Ministerial Conference in May 2005. The NQF legal frameworks were established in similar timeframe, two years after the EHEA Bergen Ministerial Conference and soon after the London EHEA Ministerial Conference in May 2007. The initial national legislation legally establishing the NQF was adopted in Spain in July and in Portugal in December of 2007. This demonstrates the influences of intergovernmentalism and Europeanization as policy processes in establishing this central component of the EHEA within a similar annual timeframe in these two countries.

While liberal intergovernmentalism and Europeanization are distinct processes, they are not opposites; they may even be complementary (Schmidt 2009:211). Intergovernmentalism is framed by rational institutionalism; Europeanization is framed by sociological institutionalism; and each has explanatory power in higher education reform. In the case of Portugal, intergovernmentalism has been applied as an explanation of the policy process. Portugal's national interest has been to advance upon the EHEA reforms, since the country has been on a trajectory to widen educational access after the limited higher education attainment during the *Estado Novo*. The regional integration process of intergovernmentalism, where domestic interests are represented at the European level of cooperation, is useful to explain the willingness to participate in reform in Portugal once the 1986 Decree-Law for the Education System Act was amended in 2005. Portugal's national interest in reform is strategic instrumentalism to expand educational access coinciding with the Bologna Process initiative. Europeanization is also relevant to understand how European norms influenced Portugal to reform, and in this research it applies directly in the case of Spain.

Europeanization explains the policy process in Spain that built upon the national *Ley de Ordinación Universitaria* (LOU, Law of University Ordinance) reform of 2001. In 2000, a year after the Bologna Process launch, Spain had higher education attainment at 29 percent, compared to Portugal's 11 percent (Eurostat 2016).[1] In Spain, the national incentive to increase higher education attainment was less pressing than in Portugal. Since Spain's autonomous communities exercise the governance granted to them in the 1978 Constitution, the push for reform on a national level is resisted to a certain extent in order to protect regional autonomy. The *Ley de Reforma Universitaria* (LRU, Law of University Reform) in 1983 and the LOU reform that Spain experienced in the post-Franco years were intended to give the autonomous communities and university institutions more autonomy from the state in higher education governance. Since then, Bologna Process reforms have reclaimed some of that independence. When the national level of governance in Spain is influenced by the European level of governance, this Europeanization effect diffuses policy implementation to the regions and to their university institutions (Börzel 2000; Börzel and Risse 2012). It may be argued that, had it not been for the Bologna Process, Spain may not have undertaken these further reforms beyond the changes enacted with the LOU in 2001. The comparisons of qualitative case studies provide country cases that have explanatory value to relate to other national circumstances. Taken together, the qualitative and quantitative research methods reveal the political, economic, and social factors that influence policy reform at the national level.

TABLE 1
PORTUGAL AND SPAIN COMPARISONS

National Profile Variables:
Italicized: shared variable of interest that is similar temporally

	Portugal	Spain
Country Transition	*1970s to 1986 EU Accession*	*1970s to 1986 EU Accession*
Government structure	Unitary	Quasi-federal
Government style	Republic	Constitutional monarchy
University system	Binary	Unified
Population*	10.5 million	47.25 million
GDP*	$212 billion	$1.3 trillion
GDP per capita (2000–2014 average) *	$27,000	$33,000

*Source: World Bank. 2016.

Policy Outcome of Interest (Degree Structure Reform in Same Year 2007):
Bologna Process Policy Reform at the National Level
NQF (National Qualifications Framework) Legal Establishment of Academic Degrees

	Portugal	Spain
NQF legal framework	12/2007 Decree-Law 396/2007	7/2007 Royal Decree 900/2007

Additional Outcomes:
Bologna Process Policy Reforms at the National Level

	Portugal	Spain
ECTS	2/2005 Decree-Law 42/2005	9/2003 Royal Decree 1125/2003
NQF defined	7/2009 Ordinance 782/2009 2010 Report FHEQ-Portugal	7/2011 MECES Royal Decree 1027/2011
National accreditation agency established	11/2007 A3ES Decree-Law 369/2007	6/2001 ANECA Ley Orgánica 6/2001
Higher education attainment (30–34 year olds)	31.9% in 2015 (Eurostat)	40.9% in 2015 (Eurostat)

In recent decades, Portugal and Spain, have experienced important governance transitions from authoritarian rule, where education policies were planned by the state. In Portugal, with a unitary government and a population of approximately 10 million, the pace of higher education reforms has progressed steadily, resulting in its being an EHEA pathfinder country between 2012 and 2015. The Pathfinder countries have been committed to finding ways to implement the automatic recognition criteria

of the EHEA, and they have represented a variety of higher education systems. The idea and selection of Pathfinder countries was introduced at the 2012 EHEA Ministerial Conference in Bucharest. With the European Commission as the facilitator, they are Belgium (Flemish and French regions), Croatia, Denmark, Estonia, Germany, Luxembourg, The Netherlands, Portugal, and Slovenia. The Pathfinder countries started work soon after the Bucharest Ministerial and, in 2015, reported to the EHEA Yerevan Ministerial Conference with recommendations on automatic recognition (EHEA Pathfinder Group 2015). They made recommendations that are legislative and technical in nature, with the ultimate objective of increasing trust across institutions and across countries in the EHEA.

To advance the change in higher education attainment and related policy reforms, leadership was integral to the success of Portuguese higher education institutions. In response to the public sector as the leading stakeholder, the academic institutional governance experienced a collective undertaking of the new academic degree structure in the year 2008. With consistent leadership at the national level, resulting in less turnover of higher education leadership than in Spain, there was an opportunity to advance higher education policies. As policy takers in the Bologna Process, Portugal and Spain have changed their national systems of higher education to adapt to the European-level recommendations. This international cooperation in higher education complements efforts to strengthen the regional economy's common market, which is defined by the four freedoms of movement of goods, services, labor, and capital in the EU Single Market.

THE EHEA AND EUROPE 2020

The pressures of economic globalization act on countries oriented to compete in the global economy. Beneficial partnerships provide opportunities for shared learning and a strengthened position in the global market for knowledge and commerce. The research for this book has been framed by the new institutional theoretical frameworks that consider the organization of political life and its impact on the performance of systems in historical, rational, and sociological perspectives (Peters 2012). In the face of institutional change, education policies remain national competencies, as protected by the subsidiarity principle of the EU (Ritzen 2010:32). Although Europeanization has been in effect, it does not preclude education policy's continuing as a national competency. The policy processes of liberal intergovernmentalism and Europeanization are evident in each country to varying extents.

Giving an address at a U.S. university, former Italian Prime Minister Matteo Renzi acknowledged the important role that international education has played in Europe (Renzi 2016). Considering Europe's place in the world, Renzi emphasized the dynamism of the Erasmus international student exchange, which, since 1986, has grown to include countries beyond Europe through Erasmus+. The head of government from the country where Bologna is the oldest university city in Europe, dating from 1088, mentioned the achievements in education together with the current opportunity to pursue human travel to Mars.

The history and the opportunity of international cooperation in education make it an area full of possibilities at each level of governance. Universities and all types higher education institutions have experienced unprecedented institutional change in the knowledge society (Cantwell and Kauppinen 2014). Educational sociologists have concurred that the international harmonization of academic programs that comes from the Bologna Process is unprecedented (Frank and Meyer 2007:299). The Strategic Framework -- Education &Training 2020, provided by the European Commission, provides the rubric to pursue objectives and provide reporting in higher education. The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) among countries, discussed in Chapter 2, has provided a policy tool for countries to share best practices across the soft-law policy areas of education, employment, and environment.

Since the idea was presented with the Sorbonne Declaration, the Bologna Process has been used as a lever for domestic reforms in higher education (Neave 2009). While there remains cynicism about globalization efforts, the Bologna Process has been a relative success, given its continuity throughout and after the national and global financial crises.

The pedagogical paradigm shift to greater emphasis on teaching and learning, as part of a student-centered approach, has been initiated in the Iberian countries and across the EHEA (EU High Level Group 2013; Matilla 2013; Veiga and Amaral 2009b). This emphasis on teaching and student-centered learning is a central component of the report that recommends EU support to establish a European Academy for Teaching and Learning (EU High Level Group 2013:67). The former European Commissioner for Education, Culture, Multilingualism, Youth and Sport, Androulla Vassiliou, wrote in the Foreword of the *Report to the European Commission*, "In such a time of crisis, Europe needs to invest more in higher education, especially in the quality of teaching and learning. Every Member State needs to invest as much as it can afford and to maximise the return on every euro it spends" (European Union: High Level Group 2013:5). Seeing the regional economic challenges as an opportunity rather than an obstacle is further reason to strengthen investment in higher education. This was the same message that was put forward in the Communiqué and Statement on the Bologna Policy Forum at the previous year's EHEA Ministerial Conference in Bucharest. The European Commission Communication on "European higher education in the world" frames the EHEA in the context of the growing demand for higher education. It states that by the year 2030 the number of students worldwide will grow fourfold, from nearly 100 million at present to 414 million (European Commission 2013a:2). The report recognizes the intra-European integration through EHEA transparency tools such as the ECTS and the European Qualifications Framework. Simultaneously it recognizes the global dimension of educational integration. The EU, through the policy-making entity of the European Commission, which has been a partner alongside the participating countries, has influenced the EHEA countries in the process of policy reform. The influence has extended to other world regions as an example from which to simulate aspects and to take lessons learned.

GLOBAL TRENDS IN REGIONAL INTEGRATION OF HIGHER EDUCATION

The Bologna Process's policy reforms in Europe have been simulated by other regions of the world. Across regions, the degree of integration in higher education varies, from discursive originations as in Latin America to broader extents of cooperation as in Asia. As countries embrace democratic trends that provide opportunities for global citizenship, elites are challenged and there is greater pressure on educational institutions to serve the broader society (Ansell 2008; Kamens 2012:203). The following are some examples of how the international policy convergence, as undertaken by the EHEA, has been applied to other regional integration schemes.

The Bologna Process has provided a model for delivering and evaluating higher education for countries in the EHEA and beyond. In Africa, Asia, Latin America, and North America there are examples of international cooperation in higher education and research. An Italian diplomat, Consul General explained that EU Member States have been involved in bilateral international development initiatives in higher education, guided by the Bologna Process (Nava 2013). As former head of the Unit for Scholarships in the Directorate General for Development Aid at the Foreign Ministry of Italy in Rome, Fabrizio Nava worked with students from the Balkans and the Middle East beyond the EHEA. Among the initial Erasmus students who studied in Spain, Nava said, "The Bologna Process was and still is the only beacon that all these countries have to orientate the fundamental requirements for studying abroad." Countries and territories in the regional neighborhood, such as Egypt and Palestine, have evaluated curricula for studies abroad within the parameters of the degrees, credits, and quality assurance systems established by the Bologna Process. Nava attributes the end of the Cold War and the political transitions of countries as a central precursor to this initiative of internationalization in higher education. As an accelerator for globalization in the early 1990s, the political transformations across Central and Eastern Europe provided impetus for globalization of the economy and correspondingly higher education. Working toward academic recognition was among the objectives for bringing Central and Eastern European countries into EU accession (Nava 2013).

The European Commission's curriculum development initiative, Tuning, has a program for Africa called "Tuning Africa." The neighborhood policies of the EU extend into North Africa, which has been an

area of heightened interest politically since the Arab Spring in early 2011. Supported by the African Union, the African Higher Education Harmonization and Tuning Project (Tuning Africa), is part of the Africa-EU strategic partnership (Tuning Africa 2013). To implement the Plan of Action for the Second Decade of Education for Africa (2006–2015), the African Union Commission has established a framework for harmonization of Higher Education Programmes in Africa (Woldegiorgis 2013:20). The EU initiative Tuning is a template for regional integration in higher education. This policy diffusion has influenced the South African Development Community SADC and MercoSur across policy areas (Lenz 2012).

The Ibero-American countries, which have historic ties to Portugal and Spain, encompass most countries in Latin America. The political will to make regional higher education cooperation a policy priority is needed to elevate the issue and to develop more formal structures of cooperation (Llavori 2016). The Interuniversity Center for Development (*Centro Interuniversitario de Desarollo*), known as CINDA, based in Santiago, Chile is an association of Ibero-American member institutions that shares best practices. The guidance of the Spanish national quality assurance agency, *Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación* (ANECA), extends beyond Spain to support quality assurance and accreditation in higher education through involvement with the Ibero-American Network for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (RIACES) based in Asunción, Paraguay.

In South America, there have been efforts historically to cooperate in higher education with MercoSur-Educativo. Both MercoSur-Educativo and the Bologna Process higher education reforms are impacted by economic globalization (Vergera and Hermo 2010). Since its founding in 1991 by the Treaty of Asunción, MercoSur – the common market of the southern cone in South America -- has not experienced the deepening of economic integration on par with the EU. However, even prior to the launch of the Bologna Process in 1999, there were efforts in the 1990s to harmonize higher education systems with MercoSur-Educativo (Vergera and Hermo 2010:112). These preliminary efforts did not formally institutionalize higher education reforms as took place with the Bologna Process. The comparably moderate pace of integration in economics and higher education through MercoSur is even less for the regional trade area of the Andean Community that was established in 1969 with the Cartagena Agreement. Some countries – such as Brazil and Venezuela -- have vacillated in their alliances within regional groups in South America, and trade negotiations beyond the region have merited attention. New trends in regional integration in Latin America are emerging. The Community of Latin American and Caribbean States (CELAC) was formed in 2010, and it is the second largest group of countries in the region after the Organization of American States. The Union of South American Nations (UNASUR), formed in 2008 among 12 countries, has not taken up higher education cooperation as a policy priority. The primacy of state sovereignty, which may limit regional cooperation in political economy, is a trend observed in international politics to a greater extent in Latin America than in the EU (Malamud 2012).

Potential collaboration in higher education and research were agenda issues covered in the bilateral meeting of the presidents of Mexico and United States in May 2013 (U.S. Department of State 2013). Framed on the discursive level as an "emerging issue," there are opportunities for mobility of higher education, research, and workforce development between the countries (Vassar and Barrett 2014; Wood 2013). The rigidities facing mobility of human capital and labor in North America reflect a decades-long struggle for immigration reform. The regional economic relationship was formalized with the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in effect as of 1994, and the resulting economic cooperation has led to opportunities for developing human capital in North America. As is the case to elevate a policy priority across Ibero-American countries, strengthening domestic political will on both sides of this bilateral relationship is necessary to advance international mobility of human capital in higher education, research, and labor markets (Studer 2012a, 2012b).

The Pacific–coast Latin American countries -- Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Mexico, and Peru -- have a westward orientation, which is reflected in their 2011 Pacific Alliance partnership. The Pacific Alliance gives these countries a united position in negotiating trade with Asian countries. An early goal of the alliance has been to "create a joint university system where, much like in Europe, students will be able to get credits for their studies in any of the bloc's member countries" (Oppenheimer 2012). Representatives

from the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) were present as observers and participants in the Bologna Policy Forum at the EHEA Ministerial Conferences in Bucharest in 2012 and in Yerevan in 2015. In 2005, the ASEAN ministers of education embarked upon regional higher education collaboration with the decision to hold the ASEAN Education Ministers' Meetings (ASED). The Asia Pacific Quality Network (APQN), similar to the ENQA and EQAR for the EHEA, was established to support the national higher education quality assurance agencies.

The preceding are examples of efforts and ongoing considerations to harmonize higher education policy within regions worldwide. In keeping with the Bologna Process, "a distinguishing feature of harmonization is that the process is owned by nation-states, but the activities are facilitated by regional institutions," as harmonization assumes regional and national policy levels (Woldegiorgis 2013:21). The language of the Sorbonne Declaration emphasizes harmonization of policies. The Bologna Process emphasizes harmonization, to support the national prerogatives that maintain diversity, while coordinating with other countries on the criteria of the EHEA. Diversity is a key EHEA asset connected to countries' cultural, linguistic, and historical backgrounds, making the Bologna Process like a symphony. Though each country has its own instrument, they play together in harmony (Lagier 2013). The instruments for institutional change are the degree structure, quality assurance, and international academic recognition, toward which the participating countries have converged with higher education policy reform.

Worldwide, there are examples of regional integration through higher education that have some reference to the Bologna Process and the EHEA (Vögtle 2010). The United Nations Educational, Cultural, and Scientific Organization, a partner in the Bologna Process, will convene the Global Convention on the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications (UNESCO 2015). In 2018 the global convention and the 20th anniversary of the Sorbonne Declaration take place in Paris, France.

THE SECOND DECADE OF THE BOLOGNA PROCESS

The second decade of the Bologna Process, reflecting the institutions and ideas of a Europe of Knowledge, is one with greater emphasis on higher education in policy, economy, and society (Corbett 2005; Bourdan 2012). The number of countries, and the extent of their objectives in the regional integration of higher education, participating in the EHEA are unparalleled in other world regions. As the EHEA continues to be developed to achieve its commitments through the year 2020, the lessons from the Bologna Process are valuable (European Higher Education Area 2012). The European University Association's report *Trends 2010: A Decade of Change in European Higher Education* reviews the progress in the decade that preceded the establishment of the EHEA in 2010. By 2010, 95 percent of the higher education institutions had implemented the degree structure requirements. In comparison by 2003, 53 percent of the countries had implemented the degree structure requirements (Sursock and Smidt 2010:7). There has been continued emphasis on enhancing the quality of teaching and student-centered learning, which has been reaffirmed by the European Commission and the EHEA ministers of education. Concerns about the social dimension and employability are also at the forefront for graduates, and these relate to the dual purposes of education.

The dual purposes of education, for sociocultural development and economic development, are central to the values of stakeholders in the Bologna Process. These dual purposes are intertwined, and the institutional theories that are the basis for the Bologna Process frame each purpose accordingly: sociological institutional theories for sociocultural issues and rational institutional theories for economic development. There are dual roles of higher education institutions as recipients of policy change from the national and European levels, and as agents of policy change in the knowledge economy. The goal for broadened access to higher education attainment is in tandem with the incentives for innovation and internationalization as universities evolve over time (Mazza et al. 2008). There are a greater number of stakeholders in the higher education system today and in the European economic space (Rosamond 2002).

Since the granting of managerial autonomy from the state to European universities in the 1980s and 1990s, universities have become engaged with a third actor in the economic market (Regini 2011:4). With

the growth of globalization and the quest for research programs to support innovation, the private sector of the market has become increasingly attractive as an actor in higher education, gaining strength as globalization intensifies. Higher education institutions have responded with an interest in partnering with the private sector in research initiatives as part of internationalization. For market logic to become potentially relevant in a higher education system, universities must first acquire an identity and the ability to pursue their organizational interests autonomously (Regini 2011:5).

Institutional theories in political economy frame the research done for this book. A historical institutional perspective emphasizes the importance of space and time for understanding social change (Pierson 2004). It bridges the rational and sociological institutional perspectives that explain the motivations and the sociological embeddedness of institutional change (Hall and Taylor 1996). This book examines theories of rational institutionalism that relate to intergovernmentalism and those of sociological institutionalism that relate to Europeanization to explain the processes of international policy convergence in a historical institutional perspective. There is a rational logic of expected consequences and a sociological logic of appropriateness in implementing the Bologna Process. These logics are complementary and are beneficial when seen as a conversation rather than a debate (Fearon and Wendt 2002). A logic of expected consequences from rational theory and a logic of appropriateness from social constructivist and sociological theory, respectively, explain incentives to compete in the economy and to strengthen epistemic communities. A rational choice perspective is useful to explain why institutions continue to exist: "The persistence of institutions depends on the benefits it can deliver" (Hall and Taylor 1996:952). As long as the EHEA continues to deliver benefits to the participating members, such as trust building through quality assurance and facilitating mobility in higher education and employment, it will continue to exist. The European values and the objectives to achieve increased international mobility of students complements the social dimension of higher education. Rational institutionalism and the logic of expected consequences frame the motivations for participation in the EHEA. Sociological institutionalism identifies the co-constitution of agency, stakeholder agents, and structure in higher education reform. The former informs expectations in national and European outcomes, and the latter informs development of national and European identity. In the 1990s the emergent democracies of Central and Eastern European countries embraced the opportunity to associate with Europe, politically as well as educationally and culturally, part of which led to the Bologna Process. The cultural and sociological dimensions provide a normative influence that is transformative (Powell and DiMaggio 1991). Social learning takes place in European policy making (Radaelli 2008). In higher education, examples of normative influences have been the coordination of policies for quality assessment and the growth in the significance of international rankings (Regini 2011:210). The stakeholders in the academic, public, and private sectors experience change within the constraints of institutional structures.

As a result of decades of regional integration, understandings and commitments develop through the process of cooperation. These take place within a rationally motivated liberal intergovernmentalism and a sociologically diffused Europeanization that are redefined as intertwined:

> A strong liberal of constructivist analysis…would suggest that four decades of cooperation may have transformed a positive interdependence of outcomes into a collective "European identity" in terms of which states increasingly define their self-interests. Even if egoistic reasons were its starting point, the process of cooperating tends to redefine those reasons by reconstituting identities and interests in terms of new intersubjective understandings and commitments (Wendt 1992:417).

New intersubjective understandings and commitments evolved over the first decade of the Bologna Process. In its second decade, historical institutionalism remains relevant, providing the perspective to understand the institutionally embedded policy change over time (Pierson 2004). Since the post-World War II years, there have been ongoing developments in higher education policy in Europe (Corbett 2005). European politics together with domestic politics and international pressures have influenced each country on its own path-dependent trajectory. In 1968 students made their voices heard in social protests

across Europe. This brought the student stakeholders more visibly onto the stage of university governance. Since then, non-state stakeholders in higher education, as from the marketplace of the private sector, have become increasingly interested in educational outcomes for employability. They also have had an increasingly larger presence as potential partners in research and innovation. The countries used as case studies, Portugal and Spain, demonstrated that the public-sector advocacy coalition of stakeholders is the dominant stakeholder in the national contexts of policy implementation in the Iberian countries.

Since 1986, Erasmus, the European Commission-sponsored study abroad program, has been one of the most meaningful international initiatives of the EU. The flagship program, Erasmus, captured the spirit of the EU, reflecting its motto "unity in diversity." This inspired the Sorbonne Declaration in 1998 that led to the Bologna Process in 1999, and participating countries made commitments to create the EHEA by 2010. The Bologna Process has been more challenging because it has a greater number of elemental components than Erasmus, encompassing entire academic degree structures and quality assurance. Rather than a beginning, the Bologna Process is the end stage of a process -- reform of higher education governance and rules -- that has been taking place since the advancement of neoliberal principles in the last decades of the 20th century (Schmidt and Thatcher 2013). It is a progressive stage in neoliberal cooperation in higher education (Neave 2009). "The Bologna Process should be regarded as means to an end: its main goal is to provide the educational component necessary for the construction of a Europe of knowledge within a broad humanistic vision and in the context of massified higher education systems" (Sursock and Smidt 2010:9).

As a model for regional integration of higher education for other world regions, the Bologna Process and the corresponding Erasmus program continue to expand their reach. Amid contemporary economic and political struggles in the EU, Erasmus and the subsequent Bologna Process are the cultural and educational exchange mechanisms that may be the most positive aspect of the ever-closer union for the Member States and neighboring states in the region of Europe (Ellwood 2013). Higher education policy, like all policy, requires some economic and political negotiation (at multiple levels of governance in the EHEA), for its reforms to go into effect (Musselin 2008). Struggles among stakeholder groups in the Bologna Process take place as they compete for resources in the political economy.

When the EHEA education ministers meet in Paris in the spring of 2018, the meeting will mark 20 years since the Sorbonne Declaration signed by France, Germany, Italy, and the UK, which set the Bologna Process in motion. National cultures and historic traditions provide essential information for a complete understanding of policy reform in a qualitative sense – an understanding that is limited by analysis of quantitative factors alone. Qualitative analysis reveals the influences of history, culture, and tradition on legislative processes at the national levels. Taken together, the multi-method research approach provides a comprehensive analysis (Goertz and Mahoney 2012). Collaboration in higher education has been beneficial to harmonizing academic degrees and complementing the mobility of the four freedoms in the common market. It has not been without challenges and obstacles, including restrictions on funding available to students, professors, and institutions, as well as limited leadership and organizational capacity at various levels of governance. Future studies may assess how public and private universities compare in policy reform within countries and across the EHEA. Of particular relevance is future research on the role of higher education institutions in contributing to tangible socioeconomic outcomes in the knowledge economy and the knowledge society (Temple 2012). The Bologna Declaration of 1999 captured the essence of a "Europe of Knowledge" (European Commission 1997). This terminology, or linguistic discourse, is valuable in a social constructivist perspective that relies upon language shared inter-subjectively to create meaning:

> A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competencies to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space (Bologna Declaration 1999).

The broader context of the EHEA, for the 48 participating countries, and the Europe 2020 economic growth strategy, for the EU Member States, remains relevant to the second decade of the Bologna Process. Taking lessons from regional integration of higher education in Europe, initiatives have begun in other world regions to replicate aspects of the Bologna Process. These lessons are directly related to the political economy context that has influenced the policy reform and implementation at the national level.

The explanatory variables in politics, economics, and sociology have driven institutional change at the national level. Domestically, political and economic conditions influence decisions to serve the state's interests in a rationally motivated manner that leads to liberal intergovernmentalism. The countries participating in the Bologna Process have decided, with varying degrees of interest, to adopt the EHEA criteria by cooperating in intergovernmental efforts of policy coordination (Neave and Maassen 2007). Internationally, influences of Europeanization stemming from the European level of governance act upon national governments that make laws to adopt the EHEA criteria. Europeanization is a sociological institutional influence, given that the European and national level of policy interactions are co-constituted within the given constraints of social actors (Börzel and Risse 2012; Radaelli 2008). Pressures from domestic and international policy interests influence policy coordination and international relationship strategy (Keohane and Milner 1996; Milner 1997). Framing this analysis throughout decades since the start of the European project for regional integration after World War II, the historical institutional perspective connects rational and sociological institutional policy factors (Hall 2010; Hall and Taylor 1996).

To understand institutional change at a national level, both the higher education institutional system and the country's status in the knowledge economy must be considered. Despite success in higher education attainment, there remains a struggle for sufficient employment opportunities for graduates.[2] Pursuing entrepreneurial activities has been outside the historic cultural norm in Europe, and opportunities vary across countries given national regulations (World Bank 2013). The national and societal concerns about employment opportunities after graduation have become a broader regional concern, reflected in the inclusion of employment and higher education as core areas in the economic growth strategy Europe 2020. Assessing the challenges and opportunities in the employment dimension, following higher education, is a potential area for future research.

BEYOND THE SECOND DECADE

The policy outcomes for countries and the region will take years and generations to assess comprehensively. The interaction of the EHEA and the ERA over time will reveal the synergies between higher education and research. As internationalization gains strength in future years, the processes of globalization, intergovernmentalism, and Europeanization that have advanced the Bologna Process may continue to build momentum or may become undermined by national and global influences. It is a challenging time for opening international frontiers, considering the skepticism among some toward globalization and European integration. In the case of higher education, there has been a stronger force to promote spaces of confidence between institutions and between countries through quality assurance and academic recognition through the institutions of the Bologna Process (Llavori 2016).

The Bologna Process has implications for Europe and for other world regions that learn from its example of international cooperation and institutional change. The political economy and policy reform in the EHEA contribute to the evolving conceptions of a society and an economy in which the value placed on knowledge has become more central in Europe and in the world. The Bologna Process is unparalleled, in the number of participating countries and the scope of its policies, enhancing interest in ongoing engagement with it in the second decade of its inception and beyond. The ideas that gave rise to the Bologna Process in 1999 were prescient in discerning that knowledge is more important in the 21st century than ever. The institutions that brought to life this new paradigm for international relations in higher education have been constructed to endure for decades. In this century, which coincides with a new millennium, we continue to experience globalization as a compelling force.

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Please access the complete article at Palgrave Macmillan (Springer press) portal for the book Globalization and Change in Higher Education: The Political Economy of Policy Reform in Europe.

ENDNOTES

1. Eurostat. 2016. Tertiary educational attainment by sex, age group 30-34; Tertiary educational attainment – total. Available from: http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/tgm/table.do?tab=table&init=1&plugin=0&language=en&pcode=t2020_41
2. Private sector consulting firms such as McKinsey & Co. have addressed this challenge. Under the theme Tackling Youth Unemployment, they have identified the Education to Employment Challenge. Available from: http://mckinseyonsociety.com/education-to-employment/

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