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HIGHER EDUCATION AS COMMERCE:
CROSS BORDER EDUCATION AND THE
SERVICE DIRECTIVE

National Cases of Cross-border Education:
Austria

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Content

- **Political context and some characteristics of Austrian higher education**
- **Data on and developments in cross-border education**
- **Relevant policies and legislation**
- **Conclusions**

Political Context and HE in Austria

- Area 83 879 square kilometers, population of eight and a half millions.
- Per capita GNP of 36,930 EUR (2013).
- Member states of the European Union since 1995
- Public expenditure on HE: 1.5% of the GNP (average of EU27 1.4%; of OECD 1.6%).

HE in Austria

- HE is a responsibility of the federal government.
- Since 2013 economy/business and higher education merged into: Federal Ministry for Science, Research and the Economy.
- 45% of the relevant age cohort enter higher education (2012/13).

HE in Austria

- 22 Public universities (ISCED 5,6) with 298,100 students.
- 21 *Fachhochschulen* (universities of applied research (since 1994, ISCED 5A) with 43,600 students.
- 12 private universities (since 1999, ISCED 5,6) 8,100 students.
- 14 Institutions for the education of compulsory teachers (ISCED 5A) 15,000 students

Data on Cross-Border HE Students Mobility – Consumption abroad

- 14.7% International Students
2nd of EU (15), 5th of OECD (24) as receiving country.
- 5.3% Austrian tertiary students abroad
average of EU21 (3.6%), OECD (2.0%), 7th position as sending country.

Data on Cross-Border HE Mobility of Teachers –presence of natural persons to supply services

- 2013 approx. 40 - 50% of the new appointees to professorships were foreigners.
- 35% of professors foreigners in 2013 as compared to 16% in 2005; their number more than doubled.
Higher share of women among foreign as compared to Austrian professors (30% versus 18%).

Data on Cross-Border HE

Mobility of programmes and institutions- Commercial presence abroad

- 2001: Webster University accredited, 20 foreign institutions registered in Austria.
- Austrian public universities: joint study programmes, 2 private universities and one university for applied research with branches abroad

Relevant Policies and Legislations

Academic Mobility

- Traditionally measures for internationalisation to prevent „in-breeding“ and „becoming provincial“.
- New impetus: Erasmus, transformation in Central/Eastern Europe, discourse on „emerging markets“.

Relevant Policies and Legislations (commercial) Presence abroad

Exogenous and endogenous privatisation in HE

- Mid 1990s: Establishment of private HE Institutions
- 2002: „Outsourcing“ of public universities – separate legal entities entitled to form companies, foundations and association.
- 2011: Act on Quality Assurance in Higher Education and an Austrian Accreditation Agency confers the right for auditing and certification also to foreign recognized agencies

Conclusions

- As a small country Austria has been more outward oriented than bigger states.
- Big neighbouring country with the same language internationalization has meant predominantly academic mobility from and to Germany.
- The lack of data on cross-border activities in the neoliberal sense of trade in higher education reflects the decrease of governmental interest in HE.

- Austria is a late-comer in commercial cross-border education. But: When “receiving international students” has become “holding a market share” the days of an academic mobility policy not based predominantly on economic considerations seem counted.
- Impact of “Free movement of persons”, a pillar of the European Economic Area, and trade agreements on how Austria can govern and constitute her higher education. Eventually European and international measures will be incompatible with the country’s free access and tuition fee policy.

Thank you for your attention!