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INTERNATIONALISATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: CHANGES IN
INSTITUTIONAL PRACTICES IN HUNGARIAN HIGHER EDUCATION IN
THE 2010S**

THESES OF THE DOCTORAL (PH.D.) DISSERTATION

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1. Introduction: research goals and questions

Internationalisation in higher education is not a new trend, but an essential characteristic of European universities. Even though it is an old phenomenon, in the past three decades, new internationalising activities, mechanisms, and new forms of international cooperation between universities have emerged. The research topic is the internationalisation of Hungarian higher education institutions in the 2010s. The main goal of the research is to characterise the internationalisation processes, analyse the main trends and identify the practices of Hungarian higher education institutions.

The doctoral dissertation seeks answers to four main questions. Some of the questions were posed at a more abstract level, while others examine the concrete institutional practices and mechanisms:

1. *What international and national environmental changes and tendencies determine and force the internationalisation processes of Hungarian higher education institutions?*

Concerning the question, I examine what international and national changes affecting the higher education system are considered important by the actors of higher education institutions, and what changes they “perceive” in their work. Based on the theoretical background, focusing on neo-institutional theory in organisational analysis (Powell & DiMaggio, 1991; Bányai & Légmán, 2011), I assume that the changes that took place in the organisational environment in the 2010s (e.g. inbound student mobility and higher education structural changes in the system) forced institutional isomorphism. Due to these changes, in the organisational environment and the uncertainties in the organisational environment, the coercive and mimetic institutional isomorphism were strengthened (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

2. *What organisational changes, isomorphic processes have resulted from the internationalisation of the last years?*

In the frame of the question, I examine what similarities and isomorphic processes can be explored at the institutional level relating to certain elements and pillars of internationalisation (Hudzik, 2011), such as organisational changes, internationalisation of curricula, and student mobility. Relating to this question, it is also necessary to examine what factors have been influenced the tendency that some higher education institutions are more “successful” in internationalisation than other institutions; for instance, they can

adapt more effectively to the organisational environment and are more effective in maintaining organisational stability (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991).

3. *What were the main impacts of the increasing inbound degree-seeking student mobility in Hungary in the 2010s?*

Related to the question, I examine how the increasing inbound degree-seeking mobility (Berács, 2018) – the constantly growing number of international students and the increasing heterogeneity of student body – and the related institutional strategic goals have influenced the higher education institutions, moreover which pillar(s) (e.g. internationalisation of the curriculum, organisational structure, institutional commitment), and what changes it has resulted in.

4. *Through what modes of institutional logic are the internationalising goals and activities implemented in higher education institutions?*

The last question examines the various forms of institutional logic behind practices, and activities. The institutional logic is one of the core concepts of institutionalist organisational theory; it means the symbolic and actual practices that shape the basic organising principles of an institution, based on available basic assumptions and beliefs known to organisations and individuals (Friedland & Alford, 1991).

In the doctoral dissertation, I attempt to describe the picture of the 2010s by answering the above questions. The research topic requires a complex, interdisciplinary approach, which determined not only the development of the theoretical background but also the research methodology. In my doctoral research, I employ the following main terms:

- Internationalisation of higher education;
- Higher education mobility (degree-seeking and credit mobility);
- Approaches in the analysis of internationalisation of higher education institutions;
- Neo-institutional organisational theory.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the first half of 2020 has been unprecedented, especially in the respect of internationalisation. The medium- and long-term consequences of the pandemic crisis on higher education are still questionable; the experts and researchers are continuously keeping track of the issue during the epidemic period (Altbach & De Wit, 2020).

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Neo-institutionalism in organisational analysis

Organisational theories are often employed in various areas of educational research (Davis & Powell, 1992). According to Scott (2003), organisations can be defined as the groups whose members coordinate their behaviour in order to achieve a common goal, and create a product or reach a target (Scott, 2003). Nowadays, organisations have become widespread, acting in an intermediary role in our society. Higher education institutions, as other organisations too, generally differ in their size, structure, and environment (Scott, 2003). The environment of higher education institutions is constantly changing; the relationship between the institutions and their environment has a considerable impact on the organisational management and the structure of universities and colleges.

The doctoral research – supplemented with other theories described in the next part – is mainly based on neo-institutionalism (new institutional or neo-institutional theory) organisational theory. The neo-institutional theory emerging from the late 1970s is a significant, middle-range theory used for the study of various social, economic, political, and educational phenomena (Bányai & Légmán, 2011).

Table 1: Concepts and theoretical definitions of the neo-institutional organisational theory (Source: Based on McFarland & Gomez, 2013, supplemented by the author)

	Neo-institutionalism
Unit of analysis	Organisational field(s)
Environment	Resources and cultural legitimisation
Changes	Greater homogeneity in the organisational field as rational myths have spread (these are so-called defensive strategies on the part of organisations)
Processes	Institutional isomorphism – through rational myths, under the influence of external pressures, in order to gain legitimacy (so-called bridge strategies)
Structures	Loose coupling, separation between formal structure and actual activities, de-coupling (so-called defensive strategies)
Necessity	Gaining legitimacy is necessary for survival, sustainability, and organisational stability
Main theorists, sources	DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Davis & Powell, 1992; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Powell & DiMaggio, 1991

The neo-institutional theory is not a closed, unified theory; it can be employed along with other concepts for analysing different research questions. The theory focuses on the organisational environment in which the various actors functionate (Bányai & Légmán, 2011). The theory is also relevant for grasping practical approaches, describing

interpersonal and intra-institutional relationships and mechanisms, and examining micro- and macro-phenomena (Bányai & Légmán, 2011; Davis & Powell, 1992). According to DiMaggio and Powell, organisational stability and change are central issues in theory — theorists focus on the relationship between the organisation and the environment, moreover the stability of the organisation. The theory argues that organisational change occurs when the environment forces it: the contradictions between an organisation's external and internal dynamics intensify, and the organisation is forced to change, thus ensuring its legitimacy for survival, and for organisational stability. When organisations change in line with institutionalised expectations, they do so in the context of unequivocal norms and beliefs. It is often ritualistic, ceremonial when organisations construct symbols of compliance with environmental change (DiMaggio és Powell 1983; Meyer és Rowan 1977).

The neo-institutional theory has been employed in higher education research since the 1990s and has become a frequently used theoretical framework in studying the various reforms, notably the Bologna Process and European higher education reforms (Szolár, 2009; Yuzhuo & Mehari, 2015; Diogo, Carvalho, & Amaral, 2015). In research on higher education in Hungary, this organisational theory approach has been mainly employed in the research projects of Tamás Kozma and his research group (Szolár, 2009; Kozma, 2004).

2.2. Approaches in the analysis of internationalisation of higher education institutions

Internationalisation is not a homogeneous concept; instead, many approaches and interpretations can be read in the large body of literature. It is important to emphasise that since the establishment of universities the international aspects of higher education institutions have always been decisive (Healey, 2008). In the late 1980s, we observed a new phase in the internationalisation of higher education: most recently, the changing political and social environment encouraged higher education institutions to achieve new types of international activities (Teichler, 2004).

In the body of literature in Hungary, the concept of internationalisation has been more prominent since the late 1990s, used primarily by researchers working on the analysis of student mobility. Derényi (2014) highlights the difficulties of defining the concept. From the beginning of the 2000s, an increasing number of research projects and analyses achieved that examined the internationalisation of higher education at the institutional

level. The literature suggests several institutional-level approaches (Knight & de Wit, 1995; Qiang, 2003; Knight, 2004; Hénard, Diamond, & Roseveare, 2012). An extensive body of the literature published in recent decades (Knight, 1994; Qiang, 2003), primarily Qiang (2003), which is based on a comprehensive literature review, provides four types of institutional-level approach that are well graspable categories whereas containing several overlapping organisational elements (Qiang, 2003):

- The activity-based approach, which has emerged since the 1980s, focuses on training, educational activities and collaborations, such as intercultural training, international teacher and student mobility exchanges, joint research and training (Knight, 1994; Qiang, 2003).
- The process-oriented approach is based on Knight's concept, and defines internationalisation as a process in which the international dimension is integrated into the educational, research, and service functions of the institution (Knight, 1994).
- The main characteristics of a cultural or ethical approach is that international or intercultural values are at the heart of the institutional development related to internationalisation.
- According to the competency-based approach, the primary goal of internationalisation is to develop international, intercultural competencies among actors in higher education institutions (students, higher education staff, especially teachers) (Qiang, 2003).

In his 1994 study, Knight examined the internationalisation processes of universities and colleges. The organisational approach emerging in Knight's study emphasised the importance of organisational factors. In the study – referring to other important sources – Knight distinguished the academic and organisational factors at the institutional level. Knight identified, for instance, the presence of international students, international exchange programmes, and research collaborations as academic factors, while managerial commitment, the management of international office, communication channels, and the involvement of institutional staff identified as organisational factors. Knight stressed the importance of organisational factors, arguing that these factors can support or hinder the implementation of internationalisation and its longer-term sustainability (Knight, 1994).

The concept of comprehensive internationalisation

Internationalisation has been a popular subject of a significant number of discussions in recent decades. Some of the critiques highlight the uncoordinated, fragmented institutional-level practices, and stress the importance of thoughtful, strategic, and comprehensive practices. According to Hudzik, comprehensive internationalisation is „a commitment, confirmed through action, to infuse international and comparative perspectives throughout the teaching, research, and service missions of higher education. It shapes institutional ethos and values and touches the entire higher education enterprise. It is essential that it be embraced by institutional leadership, governance, faculty, students, and all academic service and support units. It is an institutional imperative, not just a desirable possibility" (Hudzik, 2011, old.: 6.). At the institutional level, Hudzik provides the following main organisational and academic pillars:

- Articulated institutional, strategic level commitment, such as the integration of internationalisation goals into strategic planning, leadership-level commitment, the establishment of an international affairs committee, evaluation and feedback;
- Organisational structure, staff and administrative leadership. This pillar contains the elements; for instance, the organisational structure of the institutions, the commitment at managerial and staff level, the establishment of an international office in order to coordinate internationalisation activities at institutional, unit level;
- Curriculum, co-curriculum and learning outcomes. This pillar includes the following elements; for instance, the integration of the international dimension into general educational requirements, the existence of international courses in all disciplines, the emergence of international, intercultural competences in the definition of learning outcomes, and the development of the technology;
- Faculty policies, practices and programmes (faculties, departments, institutes, schools). This pillar includes the following elements: supporting the mobility of teachers and academics, focusing on the international experience in the selection of staff, and providing opportunities for professional development;
- Student mobility. This pillar highlights the importance of credit transfer, the financial support for outbound students, the orientation training of mobile students and the ongoing support for international students;
- Collaboration and partnership. This pillar includes the forms of co-operation of the staff with organisations, institutions, educational and research partnerships.

Internationalisation at Home

Over the past nearly two decades, Internationalisation at Home (IaH), following initial concerns and criticisms, has become an accepted concept in higher education. This concept was primarily employed in European countries where the mother tongue is not one of the world languages but one of the languages spoken by a smaller community. The emergence of IaH can be explained by the intensification of criticisms surrounding the issue of internationalisation in the late 1990s; IaH highlights the social utility and value-baseness in contrast to the market-oriented approach to internationalisation (Robson, 2017).

Since its inception, a number of reflections has accompanied the concept (Beelen, 2011). In fact, according to early concerns, IaH is not a well-grasped approach, rather a “movement” that was too instrumental to focus on activities. However, in the 2010s, IaH played an increasingly decisive role in the settings where internationalisation has traditionally focused on student mobility (Beelen, 2011). The definition of IaH has changed several times in the last decade, according to some authors we cannot even speak of a well-defined concept (Robson, 2017). According to the definition developed by Beelen and Jones in 2015, „Internationalisation at Home is the purposeful integration of international and intercultural dimensions into the formal and informal curriculum for all students within domestic learning environments.” (Beelen & Jones, 2015b, old.: 69.). This is currently the most widely used definition of Internationalisation at Home.

IaH is primarily student-centred, in which framework all students need to learn international perspective and experience. However, its implementation is considered important not only in the frame of optional and specialised study programmes and courses but also in the study programme as a whole (Jones & Reiffenrath, 2018). Through learning outcomes, in addition to informal curricula also play a key role in achieving the international perspective for all students. Internationalisation permeates all elements of educational practice (methodology, content) in an inclusive way, therefore, it creates an opportunity for students to meet and learn cultural diversity. Teaching in English does not necessarily have to be covered, but virtual mobility and the use of various tools for online collaboration are essential. Relating to Internationalisation at Home approach, collaborations with international students are strengthened by various forms of tools and activities (Jones & Reiffenrath, 2018).

3. Research methods

Here I simply listed the main research questions, hypotheses and related research methods; they will be examined in detail below:

Table 2: The main research questions, hypotheses and related research methods

Research questions	Hypotheses	Data collection tools	Data analysis
What international and national changes in the environment and tendencies in higher education determine the internationalisation processes of Hungarian higher education institutions?	H1: International (European integration, Bologna process) and national policy goals force internationalising activities of higher education institutions. H2: The main pillar of the internationalisation of higher education in Hungarian context is student mobility. H3: Changes in the organisational environment strengthen the institutional isomorphism.	Semi-structured interviews	Blended analysis: thematic and content analysis
What organisational changes, isomorphic processes have resulted from the internationalisation processes of the last years?	H4: There are similarities between higher education institutions in various pillars of internationalisation (student mobility, curricula, cooperation and partnership). H5: Some Hungarian higher education institutions are proactive in their internationalising activities, while others are less proactive, and less successful in maintaining organisational stability. H6: The internationalisation of higher education institutions is influenced by the size of the institution and the profile of study field(s).	Semi-structured interviews Online questionnaire	Blended analysis: thematic and content analysis Statistical analysis (descriptive analysis, crosstabs, principal component and regression analysis)

<p>What were the main impacts of the increasing inbound degree-seeking student mobility in Hungary in the 2010s?</p>	<p>H7: The increasing of higher education mobility, especially inbound degree-seeking mobility, has an impact on the strategic goals and internationalising activities of higher education institutions. H8: The strengthening of higher education mobility, especially inbound degree-seeking mobility, results in organisational changes in institutions. H9: Internationalisation has a comprehensive impact on the goals and activities of the higher education institution.</p>	<p>Semi-structured interviews Online questionnaire</p>	<p>Blended analysis: thematic and content analysis Statistical analysis (descriptive analysis, crosstabs, principal component and regression analysis)</p>
<p>Through what modes of institutional logic are the internationalising goals and activities implemented in higher education institutions?</p>	<p>H10: Higher education institutions approach internationalisation goals based on various institutional logics. H11: Some approaches, such as the concept of Internationalisation at Home, are less common and known, but some of its elements can be found among the goals and activities of higher education institutions.</p>	<p>Semi-structured interviews Online questionnaire</p>	<p>Blended analysis: thematic and content analysis Statistical analysis (descriptive analysis, crosstabs, principal component and regression analysis)</p>

Elaborating on the research questions thus required a complex, interdisciplinary approach. Among the research methodologies, I employed the mixed research methodology (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The literature provides several arguments to employ the methodology: triangulation, complementarity, elaboration, initiation, and expansion (Király, Dén-Nagy, Géring, & Nagy, 2014). Among the mixed methodological designs, I applied the convergent parallel design model. This means that the qualitative and quantitative data collection were conducted at about the same time, independently of each other, and the results based on the two methodological paradigms were combined and compared during the discussion and interpretation process.

3.1. Population, sampling

As regards the sample, I used non-random, purposive sampling (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). The research based on non-random sampling aims to gain a deeper understanding of a phenomenon, not to create a general picture of the given population.

Sampling in the quantitative research phase

During the quantitative data collection, the population was those international students who studied in Hungary within the framework of a Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship. In 2018, 7,440 Stipendium Hungaricum scholarship students studied in Hungary according to the Higher Education Information System database; they received the online questionnaire for submission. The quantitative research phase is based on the analysis of some sections of the online questionnaire survey of international students conducted by the Tempus Public Foundation, moreover the omnibus questions related to the doctoral research. Due to the high response rate of the survey conducted in June – July 2019 and the size of the sample, a total of 6,307 international students' responses were analysed in connection with the purpose of the research (students studying at private universities and medical and healthcare study programmes are excluded).

Sampling in the qualitative research phase

In the phase of qualitative research, it was purposeful to select the higher education institutions in which the number of international degree-seeking students increased mainly between 2015 and 2018, mainly in study programme whose language of the programme is English or other international languages. Besides, the other factor is that the rate of international students at the university included in the sample is significant, around 10 percent or higher.

3.2. Data collection tools

Quantitative research tools

As I mentioned above, the quantitative research phase is based on the analysis of some sections of the online questionnaire survey of international students conducted by the Tempus Public Foundation, moreover omnibus questions related to doctoral research. The Tempus Public Foundation regularly conducts a questionnaire survey for research purposes, and the data of surveys can be employed in compliance with the relevant data protection rules. Many of the thematic sections of the online questionnaire (e.g. questions on social and educational background, questions related to the motivation to continue studying) have been included in the survey in the same form in the last five consecutive years (Tempus Közalapítvány, 2019). Besides analysing some questions of the former online questionnaire (some of the questions developed by Malota, 2016), in connection with the doctoral research, I joined the online survey in the form of omnibus questions, with the section related to the topic of the doctoral research. After cleaning, coding, and completing the database for analysis, the dataset was analysed with SPSS statistical software. In addition to univariate analyses, I used cross-tabs analysis, principal component, and regression analysis to understand the deeper processes and correlation (Sajtos & Mitev, 2007).

Qualitative research tools

The qualitative data collection tool was semi-structured interviews. The aim of the data collection and analysis was a detailed, deeper understanding of the institutional processes, as well as a multi-aspect exploration and approach of the given phenomenon. In defining the main questions of the semi-structured interview protocol, I used the pillars of comprehensive internationalisation as defined by Hudzik (2011). The interviewees were the following actors: non-academic staff (dealing with international affairs, including managerial and non-managerial positions), academic staff (managerial and non-managerial positions), and students responsible for international affairs (e.g. mentors, member of Erasmus Student Network). The approximate length of the interviews was 40-90 minutes.

Table 3: Grouping semi-structured interviews by institutions and the positions or roles of interviewees

	Non-academic staff	Academic staff	Student	Total	In leading management position
University1	2	3	1	6	2
University2	3	2	0	5	3
University3	1	2	1	4	2
University4	0	1	0	1	1
University5	2	2	1	5	3
University6	1	2	1	4	3
University7	0	1	0	1	1
University8	1	2	1	4	1
University9	1	1	1	3	1
University10	2	2	1	5	1
Other interviews	0	8	0	8	0
Total	13	26	7	46	18

Semi-structured interviews were analysed by MAXQDA qualitative data analysis software, based on the method of content and thematic analysis (Neuendorf, 2019).

Secondary databases for analysis

The secondary databases of the doctoral research were the following statistical and administrative databases: the data of the higher education information system (hereinafter FIR), the higher education statistics available on the website of the Educational Authority from 2008 to 2017. The application of administrative data for research purposes is an increasingly used research tool, but their employability for research purposes is limited (Veroszta, 2015).

3.3. Research ethics

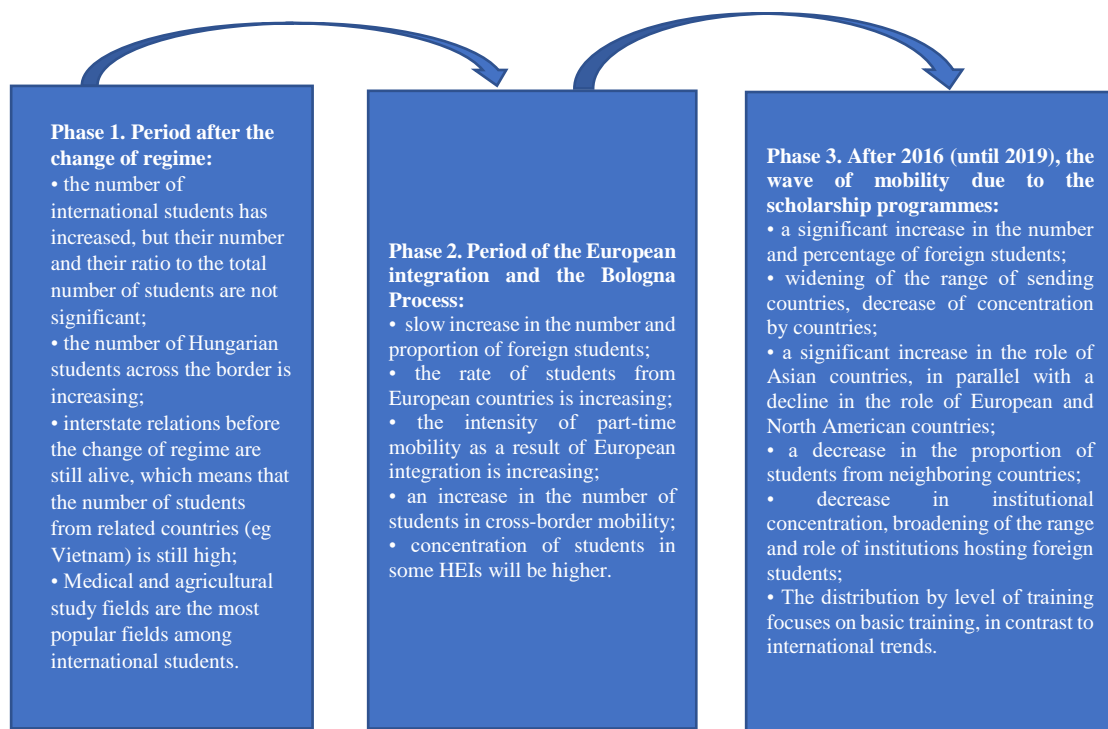
In connection with research ethics, there are the important questions: (1) the ethical questions during the research phase and (2) the question of the research impact (Johnson & Christensen, 2014). In the phases of data collection and data analysis, I followed the related research ethics guidelines of the university. The Research Ethics Committee of the Eötvös Loránd University approved the doctoral research (license number: 2019/207). Among the research ethics issues, I consider it important to discuss the research impact. I believe that the topic of doctoral research can be considered novel in this theoretical approach, and useful for further research in the field.

4. Research results

4.1. The new phase of international higher education mobility. Analysis of long-term tendencies of student mobility in Hungary

The following chapter analyses the long-term tendencies of student mobility in Hungary. In the last 20-25 years, the tendencies of international higher education mobility can be characterised by three phases: (I.) in the 1990s, after the change of regime, (II.) the second wave when the mobility was stimulated by the European integration and the Bologna process, and the third (III.) wave that began in 2016 after launching several scholarship programmes. The aim is to analyse the main features of third wave.

Figure 1: Three phases of international higher education mobility



The third phase of inbound student mobility

Examining the inbound student mobility, the main characteristics of the third wave can be identified based on the changes of the last nearly 3-4 years, between 2016 and 2019. A significant change has been the larger increase in the number of international students, which cannot be considered as an organic process. As Berács (2018) argued, the dramatic increase cannot be linked to the education and scientific quality of higher education in Hungary, but to scholarship programmes (Berács, 2018).

Table 4: Number and rate of international students, 2015–2019 (Oktatási Hivatal, 2019)

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Total number of students (capital)	295 316	287 018	283 350	281 934	285 110
Total number of international students (capital)	26 155	28 628	32 309	35 472	38 422
Total number of Stipendium Hungaricum students (capital)	1270	2942	5393	7440	9035
Rate of international students to total number of students (percent)	8,9%	9,97%	11,4%	12,6%	13,5%
Rate of SH students to total number of international students (percent)	4,9%	10,28%	16,7%	21%	23,5%

The last four years (between 2016 and 2019) show the following mobility tendencies and features:

- a significant increase in the number and proportion of international students;
- widening range of sending countries, decrease of concentration in the number of international students coming from the same country;
- a significant increase in the role of Asian countries, in parallel with a decrease in the number of international students coming from European and North American countries;
- a decrease in the proportion of students from neighbouring countries;
- decrease of institutional concentration, expansion of the range of institutions and faculties receiving international students;
- the peculiarity of the distribution of international students by study levels.

Through the marked changes in the number of international students of recent years, it is important to focus on the role of the scholarship programmes launched by the national government. The number of students studying in the frame of the Stipendium Hungaricum programme started in 2013 has been steadily increasing since 2013, and since 2016 by a higher rate. In line with the purpose of the scholarship programme, the sending countries are primarily Asian, African, and South American states. The majority of scholarship students attended undergraduate education: in 2018 and 2019, 40 percent of them attended undergraduate courses. Among the study fields, most students study in the scientific fields of informatics, engineering and economics.

4.2. Opinions of international students on Hungarian higher education and certain elements of internationalisation

Since the 2000s, a large number of studies has examined the situation of students, their opinions and satisfaction with higher education; student survey has become a significant tool in higher education research.

The study surveyed 6307 international, degree-seeking, scholarship students who were enrolled in 18 universities in Hungary during the 2018/2019 academic year: a decisive ratio (29 percent) of students came from the Western Asia region (e.g. Jordan, Azerbaijan and Turkey). Besides, many respondents came to Hungary to study from Eastern Asia (13.3 percent), Northern Africa (10.7 percent) and Southern Asia regions (10.3 percent). As regards the gender composition of the total sample, 58 percent of the international students were male and 42 percent were female. The majority of the respondents (41.5 percent) engaged in undergraduate training, and the rate of postgraduate students was 41.3 percent. 16.2 percent of students studied at the doctoral programme. The ratios by the study levels acceptably represent the population. With regard to fields of education, a large number of students included in the sample studied primarily in scientific fields of engineering (29 percent) and economics (18 percent).

The online questionnaire primarily seeks the answer to the question of what factors the satisfaction of international students with a higher education institution may depend on. The extent of satisfaction is shown by the question of how confident international students are in choosing the same higher education institution again if they apply for higher education. 34.3 percent of international students would not choose their institution again, 26.9 percent were uncertain (but rather “yes”), while 38.8 percent of students would definitely choose the institution at which they are currently studying again.

Student satisfaction with organisational and academic factors ranges widely; there are factors with which only 19 percent of international students were satisfied, but with some other factors, the survey reports that over 50 percent is satisfied. International students were the most satisfied with the following elements: the transport possibilities in the city where they studied, the contact with fellow international students, and the security of the campus. The mentor or buddy programmes, the helpfulness of the mentors, and the services of the international office mainly support the integration of international students into academic and university life: however, the students were moderately satisfied with

these factors. Among their negative experiences, they mentioned that the frequency and quality of contact with the institutional staff and the Hungarian students do not meet with their expectations. Furthermore, international students were less satisfied with the accommodation in the city, the helpfulness of Hungarian students, the organised intercultural programmes, and non-academic, leisure activities.

Taking into account the academic factors, the questions covered a number of topics ranging from the teaching methods of the lecturers, their explanations to the quality of the feedback and evaluation of the lecturers. In general, the results indicate that international students are satisfied with the various academic factors, but differences between study levels are demonstrated. It is a general finding that undergraduate and graduate respondents reported a lower extent of satisfaction with certain elements than doctoral students do. Consistently, the availability of specialised tools (e.g. lab), library services, and IT tools received a lower satisfaction level.

Table 5: Student satisfaction with some organisational and academic factors (five-point scale, 1: very dissatisfied, 5: very satisfied)

	Total (percentage)				
	1	2	3	4	5
transportation facilities (in the city where you study)	2,6	4,0	8,4	28,0	57
your relationship with your fellow international students	1,6	2,6	9,5	34,8	51,4
campus security	3,0	3,7	16,3	30,9	46,0
library facilities of your university/college	3,8	6,9	15,3	32,2	41,7
services of the International Office	3,3	5,9	15,0	35,2	40,6
support and advice you have received by your professors/lecturers/teachers	4,3	7,4	19,3	33,3	35,7
availability of professors/lecturers/teachers and keeping contact with students	3,9	7,8	17,9	35,2	35,2
scientific prestige of your university/college	3,6	7,5	21,8	36,0	31,1
quality of study programme at your university/college	4,5	11,4	15,9	38,2	30,1

According to the analysis, the general perception of the higher institution influences how satisfied international students are; but other factors (e.g. their sending countries, study levels, the general satisfaction with the country, and achievement of their career plans) may also play a role in whether the student would choose the higher education institution again. On the bases of the data, it can be identified that students studying at larger university with a wide range of study programmes, and university with special and focused range of study programmes would more likely to re-elect their institutions than students studying at medium-sized, labour market focused institutions based outside the

capital city. The general satisfaction with the institutions was mainly influenced by the academic factors. In the case of organisational factors, the contact, relationship with fellow international and Hungarian students (e.g. contact with international and Hungarian students, helpfulness of Hungarian students) and the support for student integration (e.g. mentoring, counselling services, services provided during initial administration) can explain the possibility of re-choose.

The conclusion is that satisfaction with higher education institutions is extremely important feedback because the students' decision-making of where they continue their studies, which higher education institutions they would apply for is greatly influenced by the opinions and satisfaction of friends and fellow students. The other significant trend is that the relationship between international and domestic students, their integration into the Hungarian academic and university life seems to be an important factor in forming their opinions on Hungarian higher education.

According to some studies, the development of intercultural competencies is a central element of the internationalisation of higher education. International students judged the development of social flexibility (60 percent), self-confidence (59.9 percent), self-regulation (56.6 percent), and self-knowledge (55.4 percent) important. 54 percent of students assessed that stress management, which is also a key element of self-management and self-regulation, is also an important area to improve. International students considered it important to develop the above attributes within the university context.

Table 6: Rate of respondents to the question of „How important is the development of the attributes listed above within the university context?“ (N=6024)

	Number of respondents	Percent
Very important	2375	39,4%
Fairly important	1775	29,5%
Important	1342	22,3%
Slightly important	466	7,7%
Not at all important	66	1,1%
Total	6024	100%

Clearly, in past years, intercultural training, in the setting of both extracurricular activities and classroom, has become an increasingly common tool to support the integration of international and domestic students. Therefore, further in-depth analysis is needed for a deeper understanding of intercultural competence.

4.3. Opinions of higher education staff (academics and non-academics) and students on internationalisation: analysis of semi-structured interviews

The qualitative research phase aimed to establish deeper understandings of internationalisation at both institutional and individual levels, to study the “local knowledge”, to follow the changes, and to explore the interpretation and practices of internationalisation.

An articulated strategic commitment

In the higher education institutions included in the sample, in the period between 2006 and 2010, the goals of internationalisation appeared in a more determined, significant way at the institutional level. None of the institutions included in the sample has an internationalisation strategy; the related goals can be generally found in the institutional development plan. The sub-strategy concerning certain areas of internationalisation was elaborated in one institution; in some institutions, the need for a future, designated internationalisation strategy was formulated. Strategic directions do not necessarily appear in a formalised way but are informally integrated into the practices of the institutions (“well-known rector’s secret”). The main characteristic of the institutions included in the sample is that they pursue a following strategy; the objectives of the sectoral and structural programmes determine their strategic directions. Besides, an adaptation process, such as the rethinking of processes within the organisation, seem to be present because of external coercive mechanisms.

Interviewees consider it important that both rector and chancellor level be committed to the internationalisation efforts. Managerial commitment can be indicated by the management level or operationalisation of internationalising activities; for instance, in some institutions, there is a designated vice-rector for international affairs or in conjunction with other fields (education, research-science). Concerning the proportion of the revenues from internationalisation activities and the process of the financing, the interviewees did not understand and know the various mechanisms, they could not answer the related questions.

The organisational structure: the role of the internationalising tasks within the organisation

Relating to the organisational structure, there are some important questions to analyse; for instance, which organisational units implement the internationalising activities, what

responsibilities and tasks these units have. In most of the higher education institutions included in the sample, the rector is primarily responsible for international education and training. Relating to the rectors' responsibilities, in most cases, the Vice-Rector for Education or the Vice-Rector for Scientific Affairs (also), and in the case of larger universities, the Vice-Rector for International Affairs is responsible for internationalising activities.

The primary task of the departments/units dealing with international "affairs" is to coordinate the various types of international education, training, and scientific tasks within the institution or faculty: for instance, coordinating and implementing scholarship programmes, partnership collaborations, and supporting international students in the integration into academic and university life. A designated "international office" was set up in many institutions included in the sample just a few years ago. According to the interviewees, international units/departments play a catalytic role in innovating the international affairs; the staff tries to advance internationalisation at the institutional level, and they support the incorporation of innovative practices and their institutional adaptation.

The interviewees also consider the role of bodies and committees at both institutional and faculty level in connection with the implementation of strategic and operational internationalising tasks important. The members of the committees and bodies have a variable composition; they are mostly defined by regulatory documents. Instances of such bodies are credit transfer committees, committees for decision-making related to international education, and student or/and staff mobility (selection) bodies.

In the 2010s, all the institutions included in the sample had implemented decisive organisational changes related to international training, education, and scientific activities. The main reasons for organisational change were the following: the institutional integration; rethinking the tasks and responsibilities of both rector and chancellor level; change in the various positions (rector, deputy rector, central director, change in managerial position); rethinking internationalising tasks between the different levels (institution/faculty/institute/departments).

Internationalisation of curriculum

Examining the issue of internationalisation of the curriculum, it is an important conclusion that the development of study courses and programmes in English is a frequently employed tool in the higher education institutions included in the sample. The

interviews identify the following main areas in the field of internationalisation of the curriculum:

- Development of international language courses, which covers increasing the number of courses taught in international language and improving the quality of existing courses.
- Development of foreign language specializations, for instance, in collaboration with different disciplines, primarily in an interdisciplinary framework.
- Development of new international language degree programmes. The languages of the courses are English, German, and French.
- Development of joint courses or so-called double/joint degree programmes, which means that the study programme is implemented in cooperation with other higher education institutions from various countries.
- Development and implementation of professional or scientific events (e.g. professional workshops, study competitions, short-term training) in a non-formal framework; these programmes support the academic progress, and more universities are making them available to international students.

The general experience of the teaching staff is that international students attend small classes (10-15 students) giving a greater opportunity for cooperation and creating a more confidential learning environment. Both the atmosphere and the small class size have a considerable influence on the educational content and methodology. According to the interviewees, there is a greater opportunity to employ the knowledge of international students; lecturers are very open to international students presenting their own experiences and knowledge. Accordingly, the content and methodology of the courses are often developed together with international students. Thus, learning from each other, learning between the teacher-student and the student-student, is more emphasised in their learning process. The use of online tools or gadgets is well-known, although not considered common practice: the telecollaboration projects and the virtual mobility hasn't become widely known practice. According to the lecturers, the forms of feedback and evaluations are also more personalised or individualised.

Current issues of student mobility

Relating the inbound and outbound mobility, the issues of the mobility trends, barriers, benefits, and mobility support were examined in the present study. The interviewees identified several significant changes in student mobility of recent years, especially in the

case of inbound mobility: for instance, the constantly increasing number of international students, and emerging heterogeneous student groups. Examining the forms of student mobility from the perspectives of higher education institutions, inbound student mobility primarily means credit or degree-seeking mobility, while outbound mobility is almost exclusively credit mobility.

In the 2010s, the inbound student mobility received increasing emphasis in the strategy of higher education institutions. Concerning the integration and academic career and progress of international students, the interviewees mentioned many difficulties or obstacles, such as obtaining visas, tuition fee problems for self-paying students, or non-sufficient language skills. In the second part of the 2010s, interviewees said there was a greater emphasis in institutions on recruiting international students than before. This is also indicated by the fact that new staff positions have been created in many institutions included in the sample, and there are institutions where a designated (separate) unit/department is responsible for marketing and communication activities at the institutional or even faculty level.

Exploring the obstacles of outbound credit mobility, it has been the main topic of many research projects in recent years. During the interviews, many types of obstacles were identified, which can be divided into three major groups; (1) obstacles on individual levels, such as lack of self-confidence, lack of motivation, insecurity, and fear of separation from family and work. Among the challenges arising from (2) institutional and system-level processes, we can find such factors as the change in classic student role, the insufficient inter-institutional partnerships, the structure of study levels, and the issue of credit recognition. Besides, there are (3) challenges emerging from the combined effect of several (e.g. social, educational, political) processes such as financial problems, funding difficulties, lack of sufficient language skills, and security issues. As a combined effect of the above processes, the outbound credit mobility in Hungary has been steadily declining in the 2010s. Therefore, according to interviewees, higher education institutions have invested “large energies” to stimulate credit mobility in the past years.

Building collaborations and partnerships

The development of co-operations and partnerships is a priority, fundamental activity of higher education institutions. Many forms of the various partnerships and collaborations were mentioned in the interviews, such as collaborations for education, research, and scientific purposes, teacher-teacher or researcher-researcher partnerships, and

participation in professional networks. Among the inter-institutional partnerships, the joint/double degree programmes and the exchange programmes were primarily mentioned. Besides, the European Universities have been becoming the most important and complex forms of transnational alliances over the past years.

5. Discussion

Here I listed the research hypotheses, and I evaluated them based on the empirical findings.

Table 7: Evaluation of hypotheses

Hypotheses	Evaluation
H1: International (European integration, Bologna process) and national policy goals force internationalising activities of higher education institutions.	Accepted
H2: The main pillar of the internationalisation of higher education in Hungarian context is student mobility.	Accepted
H3: Changes in the organisational environment strengthen the institutional isomorphism.	Accepted
H4: There are similarities between higher education institutions in various pillars of internationalisation (student mobility, curricula, cooperation and partnership).	Accepted
H5: Some Hungarian higher education institutions are proactive in their internationalising activities, while others are less proactive, and less successful in maintaining organisational stability.	Further explanation is needed, ambiguous
H6: The internationalisation of higher education institutions is influenced by the size of the institution and the profile of study field(s).	Further explanation is needed, ambiguous
H7: The increasing of higher education mobility, especially inbound degree-seeking mobility, has an impact on the strategic goals and internationalising activities of higher education institutions.	Accepted
H8: The strengthening of higher education mobility, especially inbound degree-seeking mobility, results in organisational changes in institutions.	Accepted
H9: Internationalisation has a comprehensive impact on the goals and activities of the higher education institution.	Rejected
H10: Higher education institutions approach internationalisation goals based on various institutional logics.	Accepted
H11: Some approaches, such as the concept of Internationalisation at Home, are less common and known, but some of its elements can be found among the goals and activities of higher education institutions.	Accepted

Changes in organisational environment of higher education

In the first question, I examined which international and national policy changes have shaped the internationalisation in Hungary, and how the actors perceive and evaluate these changes.

According to the first hypothesis (H1), international (European integration, Bologna process) and national policy goals force internationalisation processes in Hungary: I find this hypothesis acceptable. Although internationalisation is an important characteristic of higher education, it has a long tradition and history; most recently, internationalisation stepped into a new phase in the last decades. The internationalisation of higher education in Hungary started relatively late by the greater emphasis on the implementation of the Erasmus programme. In the first years of the 2010s, a slow, cautious, but mostly well-defined international opening had started in most higher education institutions included

in the sample; and several institutions determined the focus of their international relations, the geographical directions of their cooperation, and tried to develop their international education, training, and research activities. After 2016, inbound degree-seeking mobility intensified due to various scholarship programmes, especially the Stipendium Hungaricum programme launched by the national government: this programme largely defined and forced the main goals and activities of their international activities.

Based on the empirical findings, it can be said that the main pillar of the internationalisation of higher education in Hungary is student mobility (H2); the strengthening of inbound student mobility had become decisive in the 2010s. One of the key changes in the field of internationalisation of these years was the constant and dramatic increase in both the number of international students and their rate comparing to all number of students. This was not the result of organic development, but a process triggered by the various scholarship programmes. This expansion has called into question the existing practices, mainly in the field of training and education, as well as student services.

I find the third hypothesis (H3) related to the first main question acceptable. According to this hypothesis, the changes in the organisational environment related to internationalisation strengthen the institutional isomorphism, although the question contains further analytical possibilities in some sub-areas. The results of the interviews show that the structural changes and ambitious internationalising efforts had intensified the uncertainty in the organisational environment of higher education institutions, and had strengthened the coercive and mimetic institutional isomorphism.

Organisational changes, institutional isomorphism

In the frame of the second question, I examined what similarities and isomorphic processes can be explored relating to certain institutional elements and pillars of internationalisation (Hudzik, 2011), such as organisational structure, internationalisation of curriculum, and student mobility.

Concerning the institutional pillars of internationalisation, there are similarities between internationalising practices and activities of higher education institutions (H4). The governmental and internationalising goals are ambitious, the institutional actors consider the implementation of which and the sustainability of the various results uncertain. This coercion and the uncertainty in the organisational environment reinforce the need for higher education institutions to adapt or change their organisational structure.

In each institution included in the sample, a significant transformation of organisational structure of higher education institutions was implemented in the 2010s. The aim of changes in organisational structure is to adapt to the organisational environment and to align institutional and governmental (or international) goals with the educational and research activities of universities. Moreover, the transformations cover the dilemma of centralisation-decentralisation, the problem of specialisation, and the possible solution of operational and management difficulties resulting from the loose coupling.

The fact that some Hungarian higher education institutions are proactive in the field of internationalisation, while others are less effective in engaging in international processes and less successful in maintaining their organisational stability depends on several structural and institutional factors (H5). In recent years, higher education institutions have faced with the question of what way they intend to channel the internationalisation processes into their operations, their values, goals and opportunities. Analysing the interviews, it can be said that the extent of commitment at the strategic levels is decisive in implementing international activities. In the higher education institutions where there is a relatively strong commitment at both rector and chancellor level, and they formulate “realistic”, and well-defined goals, slow but long-term thoughtful internationalisation efforts can be observed. To substantiate the hypothesis, a more detailed explanation and examination is necessary.

I partially accept the hypothesis that the internationalisation of higher education institutions is determined by the features of the institution such as the size, the study field; the hypothesis requires further explanation and examination (H6). Concerning the study fields, it can be said that significant steps have been made in the scientific fields of economics, engineering, and agriculture at the system level. Concerning some study fields, such as computer science, we can find some institutional examples that are proactive, attract many international students, while other institutions or faculties relating to the same study field are less open, very close, and have very low numbers of international students. There is also a difference in the administrative processes based on the size, study field, and structure of the faculties or/and institutions.

The impact of inbound degree-seeking mobility

In the next question, I analysed how the intensification of inbound degree-seeking mobility – evidenced by the trends such as the growing number of international students and the increasing student heterogeneity – has affected higher education institutions, what

changes have resulted in each pillar (e.g. curriculum internationalisation, organisational structure, institutional commitment).

I evaluate the hypothesis that the strengthening of higher education mobility has an impact on internationalising strategic goals and activities (H7) to be acceptable. On the bases of the empirical results, the strengthening student mobility due to the scholarship programmes of recent years has had a significant influence on the curriculum development and the student services. The impact of student mobility can be captured in the development of study programmes, however, this effect is recursive; the quality study programmes promote student mobility, but the inbound degree-seeking mobility creates the necessity and demand for curriculum development. Analysing the online questionnaire conducted among international students, I argued that international students are also more satisfied with the higher education institutions that can organise and develop their educational activities in harmony with student expectations, and the integration of students supports students' successful academic and university life.

The strengthening of higher education mobility, in particular inbound degree-seeking mobility, has led to changes in organisational structure of higher education institutions (H8). Examining the institutions included in the sample, there was a significant change in organisational structure affecting international training, educational, and scientific activities, affecting several organisational units, faculties and institutes in the 2010s.

The hypothesis that internationalisation processes have a comprehensive, compensatory impact on the goals and activities of the institution (H9) cannot be evaluated acceptable. According to the empirical findings, the institutions followed the previous practices and prioritised certain pillars; among the internationalising activities, inbound degree-seeking mobility emerged prominently, and the international activities of higher education institutions remained fragmented. Although the trends in the 2010s could be characterised by more intensive, increasing academic and institutional staff mobility, at the same time outbound student credit mobility declined.

Institutional logics behind internationalisation of higher education institutions

The last, fourth question examined the institutional logics behind the institutional practices and activities. Higher education institutions have well-defined institutional logics approaching internationalising goals and activities, – I evaluate the related hypothesis (H10) as acceptable. In their study published in 2012, Edelstein and Douglass identified the various types of institutional logics behind the strategic internationalising

goals and activities of institutions. According to the authors, there are complex reasons and motivations for why institutions participate in international collaborations, why they accept international students, why they develop their study programmes. According to the authors, the institutional logics behind motivations can be well-outlined (Edelstein & Douglass, 2012). Based on the semi-structured interviews, the following two institutional logics can be well identified in the institutions included in the sample: the institutional logic promoting income/resource growth, and the logic of the market and regional integration.

Internationalisation at Home: practices and policies

Relating to the fourth question, I also examined whether certain approaches to the internationalisation of higher education, especially the Internationalisation at Home (IaH), and its elements (e.g. covering all students, strengthening the integration of international students) are present and define certain types of institutional logic (Robson, 2017; Almeida, Robson, Morosini, & Baranzeli, 2019; Beelen & Jones, 2015b). Based on the empirical results, we can say that the concept of Internationalisation at Home is a known but less common practice – I accept the related hypothesis as well (H11). Some elements of IaH can be identified among the goals and activities of higher education institutions. In several cases, the interviewees applied the concept of IaH and the internal internationalisation as synonym. Examining the key elements of IaH, the essential pillar of extending internationalising activities to all students is not widespread. An area that can be identified is the development of student services to support the integration of international students; their important elements are the mentoring services, the orientation programmes organised for students, and the various intercultural training programmes, courses.

The post-pandemic period: what can we learn from the doctoral research?

The first half of 2020 was undoubtedly determined by the crisis caused by COVID-19; the short- and medium-term impact of the epidemic is expected to be felt in the near future in the field of internationalisation of higher education. At the end of February and in March 2020, the cancellation and postponement of exchange programmes were unprecedented, as a result, the precarious situation of mobile students challenged the related institutional systems (Academic Cooperation Association, 2020). At the same time, in addition to uncertainties, the crisis can also create new opportunities. The

transition of educational and research collaborations to a new, virtual field, as well as new forms of support for international students, have placed constant adaptation pressure on higher education institutions, and also required a high degree of flexibility on their part. Based on the doctoral research, I summarised the recommendations in the following three points, which were also explained in detail in the doctoral dissertation:

- A comprehensive approach to internationalisation;
- Ensuring the sustainable forms of student exchanges;
- Effective support to achieve individual activities, ensuring effective initiatives.

Although the basic structure and elements of internationalisation are not likely to change, they remain stable, but the medium- and long-term effects of the epidemic seem to be inevitable: and as the COVID-19 crisis continues, these consequences are becoming significantly serious (Altbach & De Wit, 2020).

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