

Internationalization of higher education in Slovenia: Cross-border perspective

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Internationalization has become a major topic of debate in the European Higher Education Area in last two decades, especially because of the meaning of internationalization and its set of activities has changed. Today's activities go beyond mobility of students, teachers, knowledge and values and consist on a new form of programs, providers and projects that crossing borders. The nature of higher education in Europe is changing; hence we have entered the period of cross-border education, which has become a key aspect of internationalization. This paper provides a critical reflection on cross-border higher education development in Slovenia as part of European Higher Education Area. More specifically it will try to answer the following research question: What are the risks, benefits and alternatives in terms of cross-border higher education in Slovenia? For the purpose of the paper, we have used the descriptive method, especially in conceptualizing key points. In addition to that, analysis of the primary and secondary sources' content was done, where the data was drawn from the domestic and foreign literature, internet resources, and legal documents. Our preliminary findings based on a brief reflection of cross-border education development in Slovenia, regulation framework, rationales and potential risks indicate that Slovenian Higher Education has to consider the possibility to be oriented towards skilled migration approach of cross-border education?

Keywords: Higher education, Internationalization, Cross-border education, Slovenian higher education system, European higher education

Introduction

Internationalization has become an important topic of many debates in the European Higher Education Area (Teichler, 2009), mostly for two reasons. Firstly, it is because it's a very important element to reach the objectives of Bologna declaration and Lisbon strategy¹. According to Van der Wende (2009, p.320) "although the documents appeared in very different ways and have some different patterns, and the origin of ownership, seems to be slowly converging into one overarching common approach". They both contribute to the promotion of internationalization, but in the context of achieving different goals. The role of internationalization in the Bologna process can be seen in the creation of a common European space and its harmonization. So-called internal internationalization represents the major component of "developing shared values and strengthening the common European culture, new forms of cooperation, development and implementation of programs, as well as the acquisition of various sources of funding" (Štrbac, 2011, p.57). To achieve the objectives of the

¹ European Higher Education system and internationalization process as we know it today is a result of Bologna declaration, which presents the basis of the common pats and interactions to create an open and competitive European Higher Education Area (Zgaga 2004, p.24). The challenges caused by globalization and the knowledge based economy, have also been identified in the "European Ara" in a broader political context by the European Union in Lisbon in March 2000, where the new strategic goal was set "to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion" (COM 2003, p.2).

strategy - to create a competitive knowledge-based society, the internationalization is directed outwards (from Bologna to the world) to other parts of the world, so we are talking about external internationalization (Zgaga, 2004). Secondly, it is because in the last twenty years the internationalization has been changing dramatically, and this tendency is forecasted to continue (Teichler, 2009; Altbach and Teichler 2001; Olcott, 2009) so, what has changed about it? Trend takes place in the direction of increasing education across national borders, which has become one of the main issues of internationalization and an increasingly important aspect of higher education (Knight, 2008). We are facing with a growing number of new types of providers, new modes of delivery, new programs and qualifications, and with the changing nature and form of cooperation between higher education institutions (Chapman and Sakamoto, 2011).

However, with regard to cross-border education as well as internationalization in general, we must be aware that the liberalization of trade in higher education can bring new opportunities and potentials as well as risks (Knight, 2008). It is important for countries to have an overview of the current condition, which allows prediction of trends and strategic actions in the future. As the author Knight (2008) says is very necessary and useful to collect data on cross-border education and to develop good strategies, policies and regulations to monitor new opportunities, risks and benefits of higher education. In this respect, our basic aim is to get an answer to the research question “What are the risks, benefits and alternatives in terms of cross-border higher education in Slovenia?”

What is cross-border education and way it is important?

In the beginning, we will define the concept of cross-border education and its relation with internationalization. The definition of internationalization in our research paper is based according to Knight (2008, p.21) “internationalization at national/sector/institutional levels is the process of integrating an international, intercultural or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of higher education at the institutional and national levels”. Internationalization is an ongoing, continuing and complex process, which is combined with two main parts, internationalization at home or campus oriented internationalization and cross-border education. Theoretically, country or institution can have access to international higher education without crossing any borders but in practice, these two parts are in many cases very connected and have different sets of activities or elements with which main goals of internationalization can be accomplished. Cross-border education is classified as “movement of people, knowledge, programs, providers, policies, ideas, curricula, projects, research and services across national or regional jurisdictional borders” (Knight 2008, 98; Knight 2011, p.19). We prefer this definition because it specifies the awareness and the recognition of national borders, furthermore, emphasizes the various national aspects as political, social, economic and cultural. That is very important, since governments policies have major impacts on cross border education development.

Cross-border education is not a new phenomenon, because students and teachers were crossing borders for centuries, but nowadays it presents the most growing and developing part of the internationalization, which has been significantly changing in last decades (Van der Wende and Middlehurst, 2004; Knight 2008; Olcott, 2009; Chapman and Sakamota, 2011). We can find a whole range of new providers of higher education, programs, qualifications, new ways of delivery and also new ways of collaboration among higher education institutions (Chapman and Sakamota 2011). The trend (see Table 1) is moving from mobility of students and teachers to different forms of programme mobility, provider mobility and presently to development of the education hubs (Knight, 2012).

The significant impact on the expansion of the cross-border education was made by the GATS agreement (General Agreement of Trade in Services). Its core objective is to liberalize higher education trade. Higher education has become the international tradable service, which is defined in four modes:

- a. Cross-border supply - provision of services, where consumers do not physically move they remain in their own country. This defines a set of mobility services, such as distance education and e-learning
- b. Consumption abroad - consumers are migrating across borders to other countries. It identifies the customer mobility and service users.
- c) Commercial presence - the presence of a provider in another country.
- d) Movement of natural persons - The presence of staff in another country (Tilak 2011; Knight, 2008; Knight 2011).

TABLE 1. TREE GENERATION OF CROSS-BORDER EDUCATION

Cross-border Education	Primary Focus	Description
<i>First Generation</i>	Student/People Mobility Movement of students to foreign country for education purposes	Full degree or for short-term study, research, field work, internship, exchange programmes
<i>Second Generation</i>	Programme and Provider Mobility Movement of programmes or institutions/companies across jurisdictional borders for delivery of education	Programme Mobility Twinning Franchised Articulated/ Validated Joint/Double Award Online/Distance Provider Mobility Branch Campus Virtual University Merger/Acquisition Independent Institutions
<i>Third Generation</i>	Education Hubs Countries attract foreign students, researchers, workers, programmes, providers, R&D companies for education, training, knowledge production, innovation purposes	Student Hub Students, programme providers move to foreign country for education purposes Talent Hub Students, workers move to foreign country for education and training and employment purposes Knowledge/Innovation Hub Education researchers, scholars, HEIs, R&D centres move to foreign country to produce knowledge and innovation

Source: Knight 2012, p.4.

Rationales, opportunities and risks of cross-border education on the national level

In some degree, GATS has an impact on reputation of cross-border education, which is mostly seen as an income generation tool. However, cross-border education can provide positive as well as negative effects for countries, which are affected by it, in many different ways and extents. Overall, when analysing

rationales for cross-border education author Knight (2011) points out that it is very important to look on them from various points of views. The evaluations can be made based on stakeholders, students, a foreign provider, the home higher education institution, a governmental body, or as the country receiving or offering cross-border education etc. Reasons vary depending on our position in cross-border education, but for this paper we will focus only on it, from the national perspective.

Income generation rationale is highly associated with cross-border education, mainly because of GATS agreement. Countries that have well developed and highly reputable education systems are exporting education abroad, usually to developing countries. They can acquire the basic aim, resources - students and money. Hence, with cross-border education, the competitive higher education system can be created, which is connected with the concept of knowledge based society and economy. Another reason to use its activities is for capacity building. Here the main goal is to import various providers and programs because of the lack of the human capital and the financial resources to meet the higher education demand. Countries can also import human resource, for many reasons and with different cross-border activity. Mostly, they want to increase scientific, technological and economic competitiveness that will be achieved with developing and recruiting highly qualified people and with the decrease of brain drain. Another reason to use cross-border activities is to develop influential strategic alliances, which are very crucial for closer geo-political ties and economic relationships (Knight, 2008). In the future, cooperation will be even more important, as it will enable global business and education in specific areas (Olcott, 2009). Another noteworthy but often forgotten rationale is mutual understanding. Mobil students, teachers, staff and all other stakeholders in the higher education process can gain a cross-cultural skill, which is more and more important in today's multicultural world.

The major tool for achieving these rationales is cross border education. Countries have different priority and actions for accomplishing them. "This can depend on the overall development and economic policy of countries, existing initiatives of regional integration and trade agreements, local purchasing power, local tuition fees and existing student support systems, then on the development of the local higher education system and, in particular the extent to which higher education systems are able to satisfy social demand" (IIEP-UNESCO, 2011, p.42). The attention should be given on national and regional priorities, policies and practices (Knight, 2012). Governments have major effect on cross-border education of various kinds of policies, because they are mostly "involved in the process of deciding who can provide education services, the sorts of content of those services and the accreditation and recognition of the finished results. Governments vary considerably, however, on the extent to which they have specific policies relating to cross border exchange or where these policies are the indirect result of broader policy settings" (CIE, 2008, pp.19-20) (see Table 2).

Although cross border education can gain a lot of benefits, it can have a negative effect for the country too. With emerging new types, we are facing new benefits and new risks, and we will present some of them for whom we think are most polemic and threatening.

"Critics of cross-border education believe that relying on foreign expertise to prepare and teach courses introduces issues of dependency, sometimes neo-colonization, and also sustainability" (Knight, 2012, p.18). This risk implies growth of exporting education, mostly because as we stated earlier, countries with strong and well-developed higher education systems have precedence in developing cross-border activities and to generate income. Between developed and developing countries, there are an inequality, domination and subordination. Some countries

have deliberately and consistently invited and accepted foreign education providers, but it is too early to assess the impact of this strategy” (OECD, 2008, p.3). Nevertheless, what is even more important is that inequality is present among countries with well-developed higher education systems and countries with smaller higher education systems. For last ones, it is much harder to compete for resources on the global market (Marginson, 2004).

One of the most common mentioned risks in the literature is the brain drain. The possibility that the students will gain foreign degrees and will then prefer to stay or go abroad to work is very possible. The same is for postdoctoral students, young researchers and other highly skilled people. Cross-border education is certainly not the only key factor that affects the brain drain in the country. Nevertheless, it greatly contributes to the growing migration of academic, scientific and professional capital as well as students. In this context, we are faced with “the drain of brains” of already educated workforce and students studying abroad. Like author, Knight said: “It is likely that the competition for the brightest of students and scholars will only increase, bringing with it benefits for some countries and higher education institutions and losses for others” (Knight, 2012, p.19).

TABLE 2. BROAD CATEGORIES OF GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT IN CROSS BORDER EXCHANGE

	General business regulations	Education regulations	Regulation of Movement of persons	Other regulation
Mode 1 Cross-border supply	Restrictions on trade in particular printed or other materials.	Broad recognition of qualifications, NA. particularly for employment purposes.		Protection intellectual property.
Mode 2 Consumption abroad.	In the host economy, consumer protection measures.	Recognition of qualifications (obtained abroad). In the host economy, restrictions on fee paying students and rules regarding accreditation, registration and quality assurance of providers.	In the host economy: migration and visa requirements, including ability to work while studying.	Regulations on currency exchange. Labour market regulations.
Mode 3 Commercial presence	Rules regarding the establishment and operation of foreign businesses, including foreign ownership restrictions	Rules relating to accreditation, registration and quality assurance. In the host economy, rules regarding provision offshore of accredited courses.	Visa restrictions on foreign nationals that may be part of the transnational operation.	General labour market regulations relating to employment of nationals.
Mode 4 Presence of natural persons	NA.	Rules relating to accreditation, registration and quality assurance for enterprises that employ nationals.	Migration and visa requirements. Taxation foreign treaties obligations.	General labour market regulations relating to employment of foreign nationals.

Source: CIE 2008, p.20.

Note: NA - none affection.

Corruption occurs at all levels of higher education system, and all stakeholders can be involved in it. Teachers, faculty members, supervisors, officials and employees of government administration, managers of courses, programmes, institutions, universities, and so on, can be corruptive (Hallak and Poisson, 2007). “Corruption is not limited to countries that may have a reputation for less than fully circumspect academic practices, but that problem occurs globally” (Altbach, 2011, p.2). It is becoming more relevant as new forms of cross-border education create more opportunities for corrupt practices, which are now associated with private universities, accreditation, problems with agents to recruit foreign students, falsification of documents, etc. Lack of transparency in accelerating cross-border

education in the global market, and the involvement of different actors expresses the importance of the awareness. “Corruption is making internationalization more difficult for the entire higher education sector. It is perhaps significant that continental Europe seems to have been less affected by shady practices perhaps in part because international higher education is less commercialized and profit driven” (Altbach, 2011, p.3).

Growth of cross-border education has been also raising the questions about the quality of education. Some countries arranged quality assurance systems for domestic high education institutions, but have not yet considered cross-border education regulations, which are nowadays inevitable reality. That can lead to open and uncontrolled higher education era or too an enclosed higher education space, which is not responding to the demands of the environment. However, all challenges considering cross-border education have to be addressed appropriate with local strategies or regulatory frameworks for foreign and domestic’s education (OECD, 2008).

Approaches and national regulatory frameworks for cross-border education

Four different approaches of cross-border education (see Table 3) can be defined (OECD 2004; Vincent-Lancrin, 2011). First approach is the mutual understanding where countries seek openness to the world and strengthened ties between them. Thus, cooperation, collaboration and creation of international networks of political and business elites are very important. Policy instruments are directed towards student mobility, academic partnership programmes, development assistance projects and so on. Purpose is not income generation but to reach academic, political, cultural and social rationales through broad and articulated economic policy (OECD 2004).

TABLE 3. FOUR APPROACHES TO CROSS-BORDER HIGHER EDUCATION

Import strategies	Export strategies
CAPACITY BUILDING	REVENUE GGENERATION
<p><i>Rationales</i> Same as mutual understanding plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting demand for higher education - Enhancing the country’s human capital - Building a better higher education system thanks to spillovers coming from partnership with foreign institutions <p><i>Main policy instruments</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Encouraging education institutions and scholars to come to the country under regulated conditions - Facilitating the study abroad of domestic students and their return 	<p><i>Rationales</i> Same as skilled migration plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Developing higher education as an expert industry - Using cross-border education to finance domestic higher education sector and change its governance <p><i>Main policy instruments</i> Same as skilled migration plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Full tuition fees for international student - Possibility for public educational institutions to have for-profit operations abroad
MUTUAL UNDERSTANDING	SKILLED MIGRATION
<p><i>Rationales</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Academic - Cultural - Geostrategic - Political - Social - Economic (through the creation of an international 	<p><i>Rationales</i> Same as mutual understanding plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Attracting highly skilled people to build or maintain the receiving county’s knowledge economy - Enhancing the competitiveness of one’s higher education sector

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Import strategies	Export strategies
network of elites and enhancement of human capital)	<i>Main policy instruments</i>
<i>Main policy instruments</i>	- Marketing of domestic higher education
- Student mobility programme	- Special programmes for international students
- Development assistance	- Facilitation of labour and migration in the receiving country subsequent to study

Source: adopted from OECD 2004, 232; Vincent-Lancrin 2011, pp.93-95.

The skilled migration approach contains goals of the mutual understanding and is directed toward aim of supporting economic growth and competitiveness in a knowledge based economy. Cross-border education is a tool to attract talented people, skilled students, postgraduates, researchers, and post doctorates. The main target is to recruit larger numbers of selected foreign students who can become skilled immigrants and therefore, stimulate the competitiveness of the higher education system. International students are considered as crucial for the economic growth in a knowledge economy, especially in the ageing society. Some actions toward those objectives are different scholarship programmes, promotion of higher education system and immigration regulations.

The revenue-generating approach to cross-border education shares the rationales of the mutual understanding and skilled migration approaches; hence it is focused towards the higher education services on a full-fee basis. Foreign students generate additional income for institutions, which are encouraged to become entrepreneurial in the international education market. Several actions for achieving those goals are: recruiting international students, promotion of reputation of higher education sector abroad, adaptation of visa regulations, active policy to lower the barriers to cross-border education activities and promotion of programme and institution mobility.

The capacity building approach similarly shares the rationales of the mutual understanding, while in addition, it is aimed toward to meet demand and to build capacity for quality higher education, which is a common strategy for developing countries. Cross-border education is encouraged to build an emerging country's capacity through mobility scholarship programmes, private for-profit ventures, twinning arrangements and partnerships with foreign providers and branch campuses. "In the short run, this approach results in large numbers of outgoing students and of foreign revenue-generating educational programmes and institutions" (OECD, 2004, p.233).

Before selecting the approach for cross-border education it is important to "determine its existing scope and the role it plays in any given country, at a specific moment in time" (IIEP-UNESCO 2011, p.16). On the basis of a selection country should adopt the appropriate regulative framework. Authors Verbik and Jokivirta (2005 in IIEP-UNESCO, 2011) distinguish between four models of a regulatory framework for cross-border education, which vary between no regulations to very restricting regulations. In the first one, there are no special regulations and controls over foreign providers, who are free to operate in different ways and without seeking any permission or qualifications from the host country. The liberal model requires certain minimum conditions for foreign providers. One of them is the official recognition in the home country. The moderately liberal model, requires some qualifications prior to commencing operations for foreign institutions. They must gain accreditation and/or other formal permissions by the host country (e.g. Ministry of Education). "This category is diverse, ranging from compulsory registration to the formal assessment of academic criteria" (Verbik and Jokivirta 2005 in IIEP-UNESCO 2011, p.17). In the very restrictive model, there are strict

requirements for foreign providers. The government or another authoritative higher education body may require a physical presence in the country and no virtual providers, or only institutions and programmes, which are accredited in the host country.

Assuming adapting to new trends and directions of cross-border education the regulation framework is also changing. “Strategies can impact national competitiveness through attracting international research initiatives, corporate partnerships and facilitating the mobility of student and faculty talent” (Henard, Diamond and Roseveare 2012, p.10).

Slovenian higher education system

In June 1999, Slovenia has become one of the signatories of Bologna Declaration in which they chart a path and guidelines for the development of the European Higher Education by 2010. Slovenia has been entering into the process of creating a European Higher Education Area. On this base, many documents for promoting and developing internationalization in general and more specific for cross-border education on a national level were adopted. We will reveal some of them, which in our opinion are wary important.

The National Programme of the Republic of Slovenia was accepted in 2002, which is the first major document in the field of the higher education in general, not only in terms of internationalization. The national program is one of the first documents that stresses out the importance of promoting international cooperation, in accordance with the Bologna Declaration. One of the strategic objectives is promoting international cooperation in European higher education through specialized EU mobility projects (e.g. Socrates - Erasmus) and regional programs (e.g. Ceepus) (NPVS 2002).

Based on the guidelines of the Bologna Declaration the Higher Education Act was adopted in 2004 (ZViS-UPB2, 2004), which is extremely important in terms of internationalization and more specific in terms of the mobility development. Act also defines joint study programs, which are study programs leading to a degree and are adopted and implemented, together with one or more higher education institutions in Slovenia or foreign higher education institution (ZViS-G, 2009). The Higher Education Act (ZViS-UPB3, 2006) from 2006 primarily regulates relations between the old and the new Bologna requirements.

In a year 2007 the Resolution on the National Higher Education Programme 2007-2010 (ReNPVS, 2007) was adopted. Accordingly, Slovenia must be responsive and adaptive to the challenges of modern society to promote the internationalization of higher education (research and academic activities) and to improve reputation and quality of higher education institutions (ReNPVS, 2007). In 2008, the new Higher Education Act (ZViS-F, 2008) was approved, which manages the establishment and operation of International universities in Slovenia.

New Higher Education Act (ZViS-G, 2009) from a year 2009 regulates a transnational education. Transnational higher education in Slovenia can be realized and organized in according to a contract between domestic accredited higher education institutions, and foreign higher education institutions that have implemented state-approved curricula and public documents issued in the country where the institution is established. Domestic accredited higher education institutions in accordance with the law can implement transnational higher education abroad under a contract with the relevant higher education institution.

A new National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education was established in 2009 (ZViS-G 2009). The new national agency is responsible for the independent external evaluations, for the implementations of the curricula and for

decisions on accreditation and re-accreditation. Agency is also obliged to manage detailed conditions, methods and forms of transnational higher education and mandatory elements of the contract for the implementation of this type of education in accordance with the "Code of Good Practice and the Provision of Transnational Education. The basic objective of its activities is also cooperation with international institutions and bodies and to ensure the quality and care for the compliance of the agency with European directives and international principles in the field of quality assurance (MIZS, 2013).

In 2011, a new National Higher Education Programme 2011-2020 was adopted, and it is one of the fundamental factors for the development of higher education. Programme defines the basic goals from internationalization perspective (MVZT 2011), which are:

- a. Enhancing the attractiveness of higher education for students from the Western Balkans and the Euro-Mediterranean region
- b. A national strategy for the internationalization of the higher education will be developed in 2013, which will also include measures to increase the attractiveness of higher education system
- c. Preparation of international institutional strategies in accordance to the national strategy
- d. Enhancing the international cooperation of Slovenian higher education institutions.

Moreover, the need for improving the environment conditions for attracting foreign experts on the institutional and national level is necessary. In the year 2011, Recognition and Evaluation of Education Act was adopted, which enabled flexible and open recognition of education acquired abroad for employment purposes.

In a year, 2012 the National Agency for Quality in Higher Education accepted a document - Criteria for transnational education. Paper defines the conditions, methods and forms of transnational higher education, and mandatory elements of the contract for the implementation of transnational education for higher education institutions seeking approval for the contract.

Brief overview of developing internationalization and cross-border education in Slovenia shows its late response to the changing higher education environment in internationalization perspective in general and more specific cross border perspective. Slovenia still doesn't have the international strategy on a national level and neither a cross-border strategy. From avoiding risks of cross-border education is very important that government takes responsibility for ensuring the quality and the transparency of cross border education.

Regulations regarding cross-border education in Slovenia

Higher education institutions can be established by Slovenian or foreign natural or legal entities. They can offer accredited higher education programmes when first, are accredited by National Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education and second, when they are entered into the register of higher education institutions of the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport. Therefore, the establishment of institution is alike for domestic or foreign entities. If the institutions do not have accreditation, they are still required to some regulatory conditions from the Higher Education Act (like conditions regarding technical equipment, occupational safety and other regulatory requirements) if they want to use a higher education name. The law is protecting the terms universities, faculties, art academies and professional colleges and may be used in legal transactions only by institutions, which are established in accordance with Higher Education Act

and comply with the conditions for the provision of higher education activities (ZViS-UPB7, 2012).

Slovenian and European citizens are free of tuition fees for education in the undergraduate programs carried out as a public service (ZViS-UPB7 2012). Private institutions can provide tuition fees for their programs, but excess of revenues over expenses must be used for the performance and development activities (ZViS-UPB7, 2012).

The Slovenian law is using the term transnational education and is defined as: “all forms of higher education and ways in which state-approved program of study (as a whole or its individual parts) seated in one country are realizing in another country, as the seat of the institution of the higher study program” (ZViS-UPB7, 2012). Definition is stated on program mobility and excludes institutional mobility or all other forms which are defined in the definition of cross-border education. Law specifies two conditions for foreign higher education providers. The first is, if they want to implement state-approved study programmes and issue official documents in Slovenia, they are required to have a contract with higher education institutions accredited in the Republic of Slovenia. The second is, that they must have state-approved curricula and public documents issued in the country where they are established. The exact reverse procedure is required for accredited domestic institutions. If they want to export study program abroad they must have a contract with the relevant higher education institution in a foreign country (ZViS-G, 2009). In the contract, it must be specified the cooperation among the higher education institutions in form of:

- a. information on the programmes, obtained diplomas, participating institutions and their roles
- b. appropriately qualified personnel and suitable premises
- c. internal quality assurance mechanisms
- d. appropriate records on the cooperation and implementation
- e. regular external evaluations.

Joint programmes were legally allowed in 2004 in accordance to the Higher Education Act and are not defined as a part of a transnational education. They are described as “study programs leading, to a degree, adopting and implementing together with one or more higher education institutions Slovenia or foreign higher education institutions” (ZViS-G, 2009.). These study programs are leading to a joint diploma/degree, which lists all the higher education institutions involved in the implementation of the program. A joint degree is a public document. Foreign higher education institution which wants to be involved in the implementation must be accredited or duly recognized in the country in which it operates (NAKVIS, 2010, 11-12).

Brief policy analysis and Verbik and Jokivirta’s (2005 in IIEP-UNESCO 2011, 17) regulative models, indicate the Slovenian regulatory framework as moderately liberal. It is not impossible for foreign institutions to implement study programs, while there are some conditions as agreement requirement. “This approach is effective when there are adequate regulations in place for local providers, since franchising operates through them” (IIEP-UNESCO 2011, 30). It’s not an era for the commercial oriented foreign providers, because it’s non-profit higher education system and also the law is protecting the names higher education institutions. The data shows that the number of programs with foreign institutions is very low. Only 8 from 86 higher education institutions in Slovenia (MVZT, 2011) have some kind of agreement for programme implementation (see Table 4). We also see that the collaboration is not regional focused as we would expect because of historic engagement with the local countries.

What cross-border strategy Slovenia should adopt?

Knowledge based society and economy are very important concepts for Slovenia as a part of the European Higher Education Area and European Union. Educational policies in this notion are aimed at improving the competitiveness of the national higher education system and on the treatment of universities as key players for the successful developing of the state economy (Luijten-Lub, Van der Wende and Huisman 2005, 150). Additionally, the core objective is to build an attractive and competitive higher education system. This can be achieved with different forms of cross-border education through highly skilled people like talented students, young researchers, post doctorates and teacher or by enhancing the partnership in the regional and international context.

Regarding these rationales we must also consider some country's features from cross-border education perception (see Table 5). Slovenia is a small country with the unattractive higher education system; hence it is hard to compete with traditional and reputable higher education systems, which are mostly focused in exporting higher education. Nevertheless, Slovenia can compete for the knowledge in the sense of producing and importing it. Attractive and competitive education system can be achieved through knowledge. However, the brain drain can be a threatening factor in our opinion for two main reasons. First reason is the demographic trend that indicates a significant decline in population until 2060. The decline will be seen already in 2020, when the number of nineteen year-olds, which is the generation that usually enters the higher education institutions, will decrease (MVZT, 2011, 2). Second reason is, that Slovenia has a small percentage of students and teachers from abroad (in 2008, 0.9% of foreign students and 2.7% of employees, the majority of lecturers), as well as a very small share of mobile Slovenian students and teachers (around 1%) (MVZT, 2011, 3).

We do not see the potential risk like neo-colonialism and corruption in cross-border perspective as the data shows that the number of study programs with foreign institutions is very low (MVZT, 2011, 3). Likewise, the quality of higher education should be considered not only for perspective of foreign providers but because enormous growth of domestic institutions and study programs, which has in recent years significantly increased, from 48 institutions in 2002 to 86 in 2010. In accordance with the mentioned demographic trend, it is apparently known that they should be directed in foreign students, collaboration and cooperation with institutions abroad. As we mentioned earlier for a small country, it is hard to compete on a global level, however, one can considerably benefit from regional development.

TABLE 4. CROSS-BORDER PROGRAMS FORM REGISTER OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS OF THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION, SCIENCE, CULTURE AND SPORT, YEAR 2013

<i>University and faculty</i>	<i>Study program (ISCED)</i>	<i>level</i>	<i>Programme type</i>
University of Ljubljana, Biotechnical Faculty	Fruit Growing (62)	2. cycle	Joint study program with partner institutions: Free University of Bolzano and Medel University of agriculture and Forestry Brno.
University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Economics	Public sector and economics (31)	2. cycle	Programme is implemented also on Economic faculty on University in Sarajevo.
University of Ljubljana, Faculty for Social Science	Human rights and democratization (31)	2. cycle	Programme will be implemented also in University Ca Foscary in Venice, Italy
University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Social Work	Social Work (76)	3. cycle	Joint study programm with partner institutions from Austria, Finland, Germany and UK.
University of Ljubljana,	Finances and Accounting	2. cycle	Programm is implemented also in Slovakia,

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Faculty of Administration	(34)		Czech republic and Netherlands.
University of Ljubljana, Faculty of Philosophy	Cultural diversity and transnational processes (31)	2. cycle	Programm is implemented also in Dunaj, Stockholm, Lyon, Barcelona and Maynoth
	History of South-Eastern Europe (22)	2. cycle	Programm is implemented also in Clujju and Gradc
University of Primorska, Faculty of Mathematics, Natural Sciences and Information Technologies	Marine Biology (42)	2. cycle	Program is implemented also in University Trst
DOBA Faculty of Applied Business and Social Studies Maribor (DOBA Faculty)	Marketing (34)	1. cycle	On-line distance program for study in Beograd
	Business Administration (34)	1. cycle	On-line distance program for study in Beograd
	Business (34)	1. cycle	On-line distance program for study in Beograd
	International Business (34)	2. cycle	On-line distance program for study in Beograd
	Organisation and Management of Social Activities (34)	1. cycle	On-line distance program for study in Beograd
	Organisation and Management of Social Activities (34)	2. cycle	On-line distance program for study in Beograd

Source: Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, realised on March 2013.

According to our brief preliminary study of development of cross-border education policies, regulation framework, rationales and potential risks, we think that Slovenia should be oriented towards skilled migration approach (see Table 5). Rendering strategy the basic aim is to attract skill workers and also import and develop knowledge. As mentioned, cross-border education is a tool with many uses, from which we can achieve our goals.

In our opinion, policy instruments should focus on enhancing the short term mobility for domestic students, mainly because of the brain drain risk, but for the foreign students, instruments should be focused on long term mobility. Some studies show that many students remain in the country where they have completed their studies; consequently, there is a close link between foreign students and migration (Dreher and Poutvaara 2011, 1294). The target population ought to be young researchers, doctoral students and post doctorates as there are essential for a knowledge based economy and for future cooperation and collaboration among institutions and countries.

However, for attracting people and new opportunities, state should be investing also in marketing or better to say in promotion of domestic higher education. The government must increase franchised courses and joint study arrangements, which can be considered as new opportunities for domestic institutions to provide the home student with new knowledge and the ability to enter on the foreign education market. Maybe the way should go towards education hubs, which present the latest development, the third wave of cross-border education and a wider and more strategic configuration of actors and activities. "An education hub is a concerted and planned effort by a country (or zone, city) to build a critical mass of education/ knowledge actors and strengthen its efforts to exert more influence in the new marketplace of education" (Knight, 2012, 13).

TABLE 5. RATIONALES, POTENTIAL RISKS, REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND MAIN POLICY INSTRUMENTS
IN CROSS-BORDER PERSPECTIVE FOR SLOVENIA

Main rationales for Slovenia
Building attractive and competitive higher education system, orientation towards knowledge society and knowledge economy: -attracting knowledge, - attracting highly skilled people – talented student, young researchers, and post doctorate and so on, - enhancing the partnership and collaboration in the regional and worldwide context, - educational hubs.
Potential risks
Small and unattractive higher education system. Brain drain: demographic trend, small percentage of income students and teachers. High proportion of domestic higher education institutions.
Regulatory framework specific
Higher education institutions must not be operated for profit. Protected use of the term, university and all other terms for higher education institution. The government is responsible for quality assuring of a study program (not higher institutions itself). Foreign programmes can be delivered only with cooperation and contract agreement with Slovenian institution. Slovenian higher institutions programs can be delivered abroad with contract agreement with foreign institution. No fee for undergraduate Slovenian and European students for education in the undergraduate programs carried out as a public service (government founding).
Main policy instruments oriented towards skilled migration approach
Enhancing the study abroad (short term mobility because of the brain drain risk) and their return. Enhancing more incoming long term mobility. Marketing/promotion of domestic higher education. Special programs for income mobility for students, young researchers and post doctorate. Enhancing the cooperation and collaboration. Enhancing the franchised courses and twining/joint study arrangements (new knowledge, new opportunities for domestic higher education institutions). Facilitating regulations for Slovenian higher institutions programs delivered abroad. Common framework for cross-border strategy and regulations.

Source: Author

Conclusion

This paper provides a brief reflection on cross-border education development in Slovenia, through preliminary study of development of cross-border education, regulation frameworks, rationales and potential risks. Although it is very important for analysing cross-border education from different points of view, we examined it from the national perspective. The aim was to study the question: what are the risks, benefits and alternatives in terms of cross-border higher education in Slovenia?

Our main findings from policy analysis are that even if importance of internationalization and cross-border education is growing in the last decades; however, Slovenia has a late response on changing environment. Moreover, we can see some improvements, especially with the new National Higher Education Programme 2011-2020, where it is stated that the national strategy for internationalization will be developed in the year 2013, and with the “criteria for transnational education” adopted in 2012. This can be the basic for the development of more oriented cross-border strategy. Domestic higher education institutions have a small amount of programmes in collaborations with foreign institutions. That can be a result to the late response on the changing environment, or maybe the regulatory framework is perceived as too restricted, or perhaps the

domestic higher institutions are considered to traditional oriented. We do not know what the cause is, but it is a good cue for more in-depth study. Regarding the regulation framework for cross-border education, we can consider the Slovenian regulatory framework as moderately liberal.

Our brief preliminary findings specify that Slovenia ought to be oriented towards skilled migration cross-border approach with strong emphasis on importing knowledge and talented people. In order to achieve that there are many ways, but it is important to choose the right one which will relate with country's academic, political, geostrategic, social, economic and cultural context. Nevertheless, considering the Higher Education policies and the Criteria for transnational education that was adopted in 2012, we do not know in what direction cross-border education will be led. As an added value of this work we are considering that it can serve as a preliminary starting point for further analysis and for designing a national strategy of cross-border education.

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