

UNIVERSITY OF PADUA



Competing trends in international education: fostering responsible approaches

November 15th, Aula Nievo, Palazzo Bo - Padua, Italy

TOPICS

Geopolitics, demographic changes, regionalisation and marketisation processes are increasingly affecting international education policies and practices.

How to partner with Countries and Institutions where academic freedom is under threat or compromised? How to manage the impact of the demographic degrowth ahead of us?

How to make internationalisation more responsible?

World-leading experts will discuss current trends, challenges and opportunities in the field of internationalisation of higher education. Scholars and professionals from around the globe will bring in different regional perspectives.

TARGET AUDIENCE

Vice Rectors International, International Relations officers, professors and professionals involved in internationalization activities.



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INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS DIVISION

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PROGRAMME

8:30 - 9:00 Registration

9:00 - 9:30 Institutional Greetings

Prof. Cristina Basso, Vice Rector International Relations, University of Padua

MORNING SESSION

Chair: Prof. Cristina Basso Vice Rector International Relations, University of Padua

9:30 - 10:15 What kind of internationalisation of Higher Education for a new era?

Eva Egron-Polak, Former Secretary General, International Association of Universities

10:15 - 11:00 Transforming European higher education: the role of the European Universities initiative

Laura Howard, Director General, European University of the SEAS

11:00 - 11:15 Healthy Break

11:15 - 12:00 Changing Higher Education Environment and University Internationalisation in East Asia: Gap between Policy and Practice

Hiroshi Ota, Professor and Director, Hitotsubashi University Global Education Program (HGP) Center for General Education, Hitotsubashi University

12:00 - 12:30 Q&A AND DISCUSSION

Chair: Dora Longoni, Head of International Relations Division, University of Padua

12:30 - 14:00 Networking Lunch

AFTERNOON SESSION

Chair: Prof. Mara Thiene, Delegate for Joint Degree Programmes and International Ranking, University of Padua

14:00 - 14:45 Strategic importance of global engagement and internationalisation of UK universities – joint work between the UK Higher Education Sector and the UK Government

Suzanna Tomassi, Higher Education Specialist, UK Department for Business and Trade – presenting in a personal capacity

14:45 - 15:30 Responsible internationalisation: the view from the Pacific

Rachel Wellam, Senior Manager - Global Student Mobility, Monash University, Australia

15:30 - 16:15 Internationalisation with a Latin American perspective

Renée Zicman, Executive Director, FAUBAI - Brazilian Association for International Education

16:15 - 16:45 Q&A AND DISCUSSION

Chair: Dora Longoni, Head of International Relations Division, University of Padua with the participation of Prof. Alessandra Petrina, Advisor for Europe and Prof. Ferdinando Fava, Advisor for Latin America, University of Padua

16:45 - 17:00 Closing Remarks

Dora Longoni, Head of International Relations Division, University of Padua



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SESSION 1

What kind of internationalization of Higher Education for a new era?

Eva Egron-Polak

ABSTRACT

Learning from the past several decades of internationalization, assessing and analyzing the present and critically considering what the future may hold for higher education institutions, the presentation will discuss some of the key issues and factors that HEIs are, or will be facing, when designing their internationalization strategies and activities. Noting that the past, present and future are experienced differently by individuals, institutions, countries and regions, the presentation will stress how values and principles may be helpful for navigating a deeply complex and changing era.

EVA EGRON-POLAK BIO



A Czech-born Canadian, Eva Egron-Polak studied in Canada and France. From 2002 to 2017 she was Secretary General of the International Association of Universities (IAU). Previously, she held various positions at Universities Canada, including as Vice President, International.

She has and continues to serve on many Boards and International Advisory Committees of organizations such as the Magna Charta Observatory, the Global Centre for Higher Education, StudyPortals, the European University Institute, the ARQUS European University Alliance and Queen's University (CA). She has consulted for the OECD, the European Commission, the World Bank and UNESCO and has undertaken reviews of higher education in many countries including in Spain, Egypt and Romania.

Eva Egron-Polak initiated and co-authored the IAU Global Survey Reports on Internationalization of Higher Education (2010 and 2014), participated in the study on Internationalization of Higher Education for the EU Parliament (2015) and launched the IAU service to assist universities in developing their internationalization strategy.

She served on the drafting group of the 2020 Magna Charta Universitatum and published many book chapters on various higher education topics. She is the recipient of the Palmes academique from the Government of France and holds a Doctorate *honoris causa* from Mykolas Romeris University, Lithuania and McMaster University, Canada.



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SESSION 2

Changing higher education environment and university internationalization in East Asia: gap between policy and practice

Hiroshi Ota

ABSTRACT

The higher education environment in East Asia is undergoing significant changes due to COVID-19, geopolitical risks, and demographic issues. These issues also had a considerable impact on the internationalization of universities. Higher education and its internationalization in East Asian countries, such as Japan, Korea, China, and Taiwan, have been driven by government initiatives. Governments in these countries have positioned the internationalization of higher education, especially in attracting international students, as a high-level policy and have launched a series of measures. However, these policies often do not carefully consider the situation and reality at universities. In addition, their internationalization policies are not well coordinated with higher education policies as a whole. Thus, these problems have led to unexpected (and sometimes expected) consequences, showing gaps between government policies and university practice. My presentation will attempt to analyze these issues from multiple perspectives.

HIROSHI OTA BIO



Dr. Hiroshi Ota is a Professor at the Center for General Education at Hitotsubashi University, Tokyo, where he serves as Director of the university's Global Education Program. Currently, he is a Visiting Scholar at Yenching Institute, Harvard University.

His research primarily focuses on higher education policies and practices related to internationalization and international student mobility from a comparative perspective. He has more than 150 publications in Japanese and English, including 20 book chapters published by Springer, Routledge, SAGE, Multilingual Matters, and so on. Dr. Ota serves as a vice president of the Japan Association of International Student Education (JAISE) and a board member of the Research Consortium for the Sustainable Promotion of International Education (RECSIE). In addition, he is a visiting scholar for the Japan Student Services Organization (JASSO), a government agency that supports and promotes international education. Dr. Ota received his Ed.M. and Ph.D. from the State University of New York at Buffalo. He was also awarded a Fulbright Scholarship.



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SESSION 3

Transforming European higher education: the role of the European Universities initiative

Laura Howard

ABSTRACT

The European Universities alliances are a flagship initiative of the European strategy for universities, creating strong partnerships between higher education institutions from all across Europe. 50 alliances have now been approved, involving more than 430 HEIs in 35 countries. The aim is to develop long-term structural, strategic and sustainable cooperation between the HEIs involved for the benefit of their students, staff and society, to improve the international competitiveness of HEIs in Europe and promote European values and identity. Faced with these great expectations, and 4 years after the first 17 alliances started their work, is this potential being achieved? What is it like for those HEIs that are part of an alliance? In this session we will take a look at the initiative from the inside and analyse the progress made as well as the challenges encountered.

LAURA HOWARD BIO



Laura Howard has over 25 years' experience in international relations and has published and presented at international conferences extensively on many issues related to international higher education.

She has held various management positions at the University of Cadiz (Spain) where she lectures on language acquisition and is currently General Director of the European University of the Seas (SEA-EU), a European University Alliance.

On a national level, she chaired the Commission for International Promotion created within the International Relations Commission of the Spanish Rectors' Conference from 2008 until 2010 and was part of the initial advisory committee to Universidad.es, a public-sector foundation for the international promotion of Spanish universities. Laura served as President (2014-2016) of the European Association for International Education (EAIE) and was Vice-President of the Compostela Group of Universities from 2007 to 2015. She is one of the authors of the report *Internationalisation of Higher Education* prepared for the European Parliament in 2015 and updated in 2023 <https://libri.educatt.online/books/CHEI/ebook-CHEI.pdf>

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SESSION 4

Strategic importance of global engagement and internationalisation of UK universities – joint work between the UK Higher Education Sector and the UK Government

Suzanna Tomassi

ABSTRACT

Global engagement lies at the heart of what makes UK universities special. There are many reasons why the UK remains the world leader and an attractive study destination for international students. This session will look at the UK and how the UK higher education sector works successfully with the wider government's export agenda. We will also focus on Transnational Education (TNE) efforts that have been embraced by UK Universities for a long time and how the UK government supports these. In 2020/21 approximately 80% of the sector reported students studying through TNE, more than ever before. During that period, just over **half a million** of students were studying on UK TNE programmes abroad, making TNE a strategic activity for many providers in the UK.

SUZANNA TOMASSI BIO



Dr Suzanna Tomassi is a UK based well-known Higher Education (HE) Specialist who has worked across countries and continents and all seniority levels, from junior university staff to rectors and ministers. With 20+ years experience in HE, she spent 18+ years in business development, working with academic partners in the UK and abroad at the top UK Transnational Education (TNE) providers.

In addition to PhD, MBA and two Masters Degrees, she is senior fellow of AdvanceHE. Suzanna has published on HE and has presented on internationalisation and partnerships in the UKinars and works and abroad at over 80 events, including large conferences, webhops.

Suzanna is currently seconded from the HE sector and works as the HE specialist in the UK Department for Business and Trade, where she supports the delivery of the International Education Strategy, promoting the UK HE sector and identifying TNE opportunities for UK HE providers abroad.

Website link: www.linkedin.com/in/dr-suzanna-tomassi



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SESSION 5

Internationalisation with a Latin American perspective

Renée Zicman

ABSTRACT

Questioning the characteristics and regional challenges involved in the internationalisation of higher education in Latin America, the presentation will share diverse perspectives on how internationalisation is understood and experienced in Latin America. Concepts such as diversity, equity, working with the community, dialogue and inclusion are identity drivers for Latin American higher education. They will be addressed and discussed through practical cases within the Latin American Initiative for Internationalization (INILAT), seeking to contribute with innovative approaches on international cooperation in a more diverse and inclusive Latin American perspective with a global integrative approach.

RENÉE ZICMAN BIO



Renée Zicman is Executive Director of the Brazilian Association for International Education (FAUBAI), which brings 220 higher education institutions members. She has been Professor in the School of Social Sciences (1980-2017) and Director for International Affairs (1994-2012) at the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo (PUC-SP).

She has been co-founder of the Latin American Initiative for the Internationalization of Higher Education (INILAT), a space for dialogue and exchange between associations and networks from Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Mexico and Peru. Professor Zicman developed many national, regional and international activities being involved in a variety of programs and projects in the field of internationalization of higher education. She has participated as a panelist in several international events. She has published books and articles on Internationalization of Higher Education, including a chapter at *The Bloomsbury Handbook of The Internationalization of Higher Education in The Global South*. She is member of the editorial board of the peer-reviewed journal *Internationalization of Higher Education*. She has been appointed Knight of the Order of the Legion of Honor, the highest French decoration, and she is the recipient of the Order of Academic Palms from the Government of France (Knight and Officer).



SESSION 6

Responsible internationalisation: the view from the Pacific

Rachel Wellam

ABSTRACT

Over the past decade, the Indo-Pacific region has emerged as a focal point for Australian learning abroad experiences. Empowered by signature policy initiatives, these endeavours have not only positioned the Indo-Pacific as a core destination for academic, intercultural and professional learning for Australian students but have also heightened awareness regarding responsible approaches to internationalisation—especially in areas of sustainability, cultural sensitivity and ethical partnership development.

This session shares insights and lessons learned from Monash University's experience in the region, drawing on our extensive regional presence within the context of this growth. Addressing the diverse challenges of responsible internationalisation, while a continuous learning process, is leading to the development of new models and capabilities for education abroad within the institution. These approaches are not only relevant within a regional context but may offer new perspectives and adaptable solutions across a wider array of settings and partnerships.

RACHEL WELLAM BIO



Rachel Wellam is the Senior Manager, Global Student Mobility at Monash University, a position she has held since 2016. With over 20 years of experience in international education, she has developed a strong passion and focus for learning abroad.

On this topic, she has actively contributed to national discussions and has been a prolific presenter at both national and international conferences, including the Forum on Education Abroad, NAFSA, EAIE and APAIE. In addition, she has collaborated on the publication of journal articles, most recently in 2019 with the article titled 'Interfaculty Collaboration for Improving International Mobility Experiences: Sustaining a Dialogue Across Difference.' Rachel holds Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Commerce degrees, both earned at the University of Melbourne.

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LOGISTICS

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HOW TO GET TO PADUA

BY AIR

Venezia "Marco Polo" Airport (49 km)

From the airport, travel to Padova by:

- SITA coach (every 30 minutes) until 10 pm
- Train from Venezia–Mestre railway station. The airport is linked to the train station by ATVO Fly bus or ACTV city bus n.5
- [Air Service](#)

BY CAR (toll motorways)

A4 Torino – Trieste. Exits at Padova Ovest and Padova Est
A13 Bologna – Padova. Exits at Padova Sud and Padova Zona Industriale

www.autostrade.it

BY TRAIN

The railway station is a 15-minute walk from the old city centre; there are train services to Venice, Trieste, Verona, Milan, Bologna, Florence and Rome.

For timetables and information:

- **Trenitalia (high speed and local trains)**
phone: 892021
www.trenitalia.com
- **Italo (high speed trains)**
phone: 060708
www.italotreno.it

BY COACH

[Flixbus](#)

Bus stop: via vecchio Gasometro (near piazzale Boschetti), Padova

[Megabus](#)

Bus stop: viale della Pace, Autostazione, 15-minute walk from the old city centre. This is near Padua Railway Station for all local connections. There are local bus stops serving Padua nearby and the tram stop outside the station serves line SIR1.

TAXI PADOVA:

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MAIN LOCATIONS

- Aula Nievo
- Palazzo Bo
- Caffè Pedrocchi

Venue

Palazzo Bo, Via VIII Febbraio 2



Aula Nievo

Conference Room



Lunch break



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