Article

INDUSTRY & Higher Education

Industry and Higher Education
1–8

DOI: 10.1177/0950422219894924
journals.sagepub.com/home/ihe
SAGE

Are international degree students indeed more employable? The case of Italian physiotherapy graduates in Slovenian higher education

Barbara Toplak Perović
Alma Mater Europaea – European Centre, Maribor, Slovenia

Maruša Hauptman Komotar
Alma Mater Europaea – Faculty of Humanities, Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis, Slovenia

Abstract
International student mobility and graduate employability are interdependently related as two key objectives of the Bologna Process. Although studies widely acknowledge that student mobility enhances the employability of international graduates, in particular cases there remain factors that may pose challenges that will be difficult to overcome. In this article, the authors consider the case of foreign (Italian) physiotherapy graduates who cannot acquire a professional qualification in the Republic of Slovenia which they can take back to their own country because of the legislative stipulation regarding a knowledge of the Slovene language for professional examination purposes. The authors begin by discussing student mobility policies and practices in Slovenian higher education. They then first address the (improper) implementation of Directive 55/2013/EU (concerning the recognition of professional qualifications in European Union Member States) in the national legislation and subsequently discuss the broader and related issue of the language of instruction in Slovenian higher education. In this context, they reflect on a present reality of the European Higher Education Area which stems from inconsistent national legislative efforts. Methodologically, the research is based primarily on the analysis of various documentary sources supported by quantitative and qualitative evidence.

Keywords
Employability, internationalisation, Italian graduates, physiotherapy, Slovenia, student mobility

Student mobility and employability have been from the outset two core objectives of the Bologna Process. Already in 1998, the Sorbonne Declaration (1998: 3) was emphasising the need to build 'a common frame of reference, aimed at improving external recognition and facilitating student mobility as well as employability'. A year later, the Bologna Declaration (1999: 1) also stressed the importance of promoting the mobility of students, teachers, researchers and administrative staff to overcome 'obstacles to the effective exercise of free movement'. At the 2009 ministerial meeting in Leuven, it was recalled that 'mobility shall be the hallmark of the European Higher Education Area' (Leuven Communiqué, 2009: 4) and should foster 'the employability of graduates throughout their working lives in rapidly changing labour markets' (Yerevan Communiqué, 2015: 2).

In the strategy document *European Higher Education in the World*, the European Commission also acknowledged that mobility should be a key priority of European Union (EU) Member States and their higher education institutions, which 'must [. . .] actively promote international mobility of students and staff [. . .] [to] make a stronger contribution to economic growth' (European Commission, 2013: 3). In the 2016 communication on strengthening human capital, employability and competitiveness, it emphasised that '[f]ormal education and training should

Corresponding author:
Maruša Hauptman Komotar, Alma Mater Europaea – Faculty of Humanities, Institutum Studiorum Humanitatis, Ljubljana, Kardeljeva ploščad 1, SI-1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia.
Email: marusa.komotar@gmail.com

equip everyone with a broad range of skills which opens doors to personal fulfilment and development, social inclusion, active citizenship and employment' (European Commission, 2016: 5).

Many studies also agree that international student mobility enhances the employability of graduates. According to Crossman and Clarke (2010), international experiences provide graduates with advantages over those with only local knowledge, because they 'accumulate multiple and mutually-reinforcing forms of capital – mobility capital, human capital (a world-class university education), social capital (access to networks, "connections"), cultural capital (languages, intercultural awareness) and, eventually, economic capital (high-salary employment)' (King et al., 2010: 32).

But there is still the potential for further research on the links between international student mobility and employability, given that concurrent debates on the changing relationships between higher education and the world of work fail to give adequate consideration to country-specific traditions (Teichler, 2011), especially those relating to the less widely known higher education contexts in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA). In Slovenia, for example, there is still limited knowledge on the nature of the relationship between international student mobility and graduate employability, although it is argued that the quality of its higher education system 'will enable internationally comparable and recognised higher education, supporting the employability and mobility of graduates both within Europe and worldwide' (Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, 2011: 7). But, according to Yorke (2006), the governmental aim of graduate employability has been imposed in national higher education systems to varying degrees because in some countries 'inflexible national legal frameworks may hinder development' (European Commission et al., 2018: 241).

In the light of this background, we present a deviant example of foreign – in our case Italian – graduates of the Bachelor's study programme in physiotherapy in Slovenian higher education and examine the (unintended) consequences of degree mobility for their employability. To date, Italian citizens are the only foreign student group who are either enrolled in or have already completed their undergraduate physiotherapy study in Slovenia in a foreign (Italian) language and from whom the Slovenian State (i.e. the Ministry of Health) requires proof of knowledge of the Slovene language as a condition for admission to the professional examination. In this respect, we should add that we selected the case of Slovenia because it is the only EU Member State that maintains both traineeship and professional examination for the full recognition of the professional qualification, while in all other EU countries both have been abolished because the professional qualification is obtained with a higher education diploma.[1]

We first focus on the broader framework of national and institutional internationalisation and student mobility policies and strategies in relation to trends in incoming degree or diploma mobility, which is 'the physical crossing of a national border to enrol in a tertiary level degree programme in the country of destination' (European Commission et al., 2018: 252). In doing so, we provide the necessary background for the subsequent exploration of our conflicting case in the context of the incorporation into the national legislation of Directive 55/2013/EU on the recognition of professional qualifications in EU Member States (European Union, 2013). In this regard, we demonstrate why, despite obtaining a diploma in accordance with the Higher Education Act, country-specific regulations (in the field of health services) may still severely impact the employment of foreign graduates of the physiotherapy study programme. Subsequently, we also consider this issue in the light of the ongoing dispute concerning the language of instruction in Slovenian higher education, given that this is a sensitive national issue which has provoked heated debate among proponents and opponents of teaching in foreign languages. We thus portray a present-day reality of the EHEA which stems primarily from inconsistent national legislative endeavours and challenges not only the key purpose of the Bologna Process but also 'the creation of more and better jobs throughout the EU' (European Commission, 1997).

In presenting our particular case, we base our research primarily on the analysis of various types of relevant documentary sources, such as academic literature, international studies, national and supranational policy documents (e.g. national legislation from the field of higher education and health services, internationalisation strategies and programmes for higher education, Bologna Process declarations and communiqués of the Bologna Process, communications and directives from the European Commission, etc.). These are supported with quantitative and qualitative information; to provide relevant explanations on our key topic of research, we collected statistical data from national and international statistical databases (such as the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS) and UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS)) on flows in incoming degree mobility and, on the other hand, we obtained official responses and statements from actors and stakeholders involved in this case and also from interviewees who participated in our previous research on internationalisation in Slovenian higher education (see the work of Hauptman Komotar, 2018).

By addressing the existing 'differences in the national political culture or expectations of the higher education systems' (Bleiklie and Kogan, 2006: 9) in the EHEA, we provide missing insights into the link between mobility, employability and national (socio-)political peculiarities. We thus aim to add to the existing knowledge and predominantly positive accounts of the relationship between

incoming degree mobility and the employability of international graduates in the EHEA (and beyond). The importance of this contribution increases if we bear in mind that strengthening the international dimension of higher education has become a central concern of institutional, national and international higher education policies all around the world.

Setting the scene: International student mobility as policy and practice in Slovenian higher education

As early as 1993, Article 7 of Slovenia's Higher Education Act stipulated that, in accordance with the principle of reciprocity, foreign citizens could be educated at Slovenian higher education institutions under the same conditions as domestic citizens. Article 8 allowed the implementation of study programmes (or parts of programmes) in a foreign language if the programmes were also delivered in the Slovene language (Republic of Slovenia, 1993). In June 1999, when Slovenia became a member of the Bologna Process, it also ratified the Lisbon Recognition Convention, on the basis of which it introduced into the amended higher education legislation the provision that, with the country's entry into the EU, citizens of Member States would acquire the right to be educated under the same conditions as Slovenian citizens (Republic of Slovenia, 1999: Article 2). In 2004, the new structure of three main cycles and comparable degrees, the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) and the predicted establishment of an independent national quality assurance agency were included in the Higher Education Act (Republic of Slovenia, 2004). The renewed higher education legislation enabled the implementation of 3- or 4-year university and higher professional study programmes (180 to 240 ECTS), 1- to 2-year Master's study programmes (60 to 120 ECTS) and 3-year doctoral study programmes (180 ECTS) (Republic of Slovenia, 2004: Articles 33 and 36).

By signing the Bologna Declaration (1999), Slovenia also agreed to internationalise its higher education system through the mobility of students and higher education staff. In this regard, the national programme for higher education stressed in 2011 that the removal of administrative barriers for international mobility, teaching in foreign languages and flexible and open recognition of study periods spent abroad are, among other things, key to the development of the internationalisation of Slovenian higher education. It also stated that by 2020 'all Slovenian higher education institutions will prepare a set of study programmes to be offered to international [degree mobile] students in foreign languages' which will represent one-tenth of the total student population in Slovenian higher education (Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, 2011). In July 2016, the government also adopted the national internationalisation strategy, in which it declared that the increase in the number of international students studying in Slovenia should be based on 'updated academic offerings for greater employability of graduates' (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2016a: 6). As part of the strategy, it adopted 2-year action plans (2016–2018 and 2018–2020) with more than 50 measures and 25 objectives that would receive financial support to a total value of approximately 57 million Euro (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2016b). It also established an entry point, *Study in Slovenia*, with information on higher education in Slovenia for international students.

Internationalisation strategies are often part of the broader developmental strategies of higher education institutions, but they are primarily adopted at university level while at other types of higher education institution (such as professional schools and art academies) they are much rarer. The priority objectives of internationalisation strategies focus primarily on student and staff mobility; among other measures, they emphasise an increase in the number of courses and programmes taught in a foreign language or joint and double study programmes, the removal of barriers for the inclusion of foreign students, targeted cooperation with strategic partners and the organisation of learning activities in the Slovenian language (see the work of University of Ljubljana, 2014). In addition to their priority orientation to the Western Balkans region, higher education institutions are also striving to strengthen partnerships at the EU level as well as on a global scale. To date, however, only a few have established a strategy focused on the global higher education area (Klemenčič and Flander, 2013).

Because of the predominant emphasis of national and institutional internationalisation policies and strategies on (degree) student mobility, we next focus on the latest trends in incoming degree mobility in Slovenian higher education in order to pave the way for the subsequent discussion of our controversial case.

Trends in incoming degree mobility in Slovenian higher education

The number of students with foreign citizenship studying at Slovenian higher education institutions has gradually increased over the past decade. In the 2018/2019 academic year, they represented 7.8% (5079 students) of the overall population of students enrolled at Slovenian higher education institutions (SORS, 2019). As in previous years, students from former Yugoslav republics (Croatia, Northern Macedonia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Montenegro and Kosovo) represented almost 75% of all incoming degree mobile students (SORS, 2019) – so (only) about 25% came to Slovenia from countries other than former Yugoslav ones.

Figure 1 shows that, among other European (EU/EHEA) countries, neighbouring Italy had the highest proportion of students enrolled at Slovenian higher education institutions in this academic year (5.9% or 299 students), which we

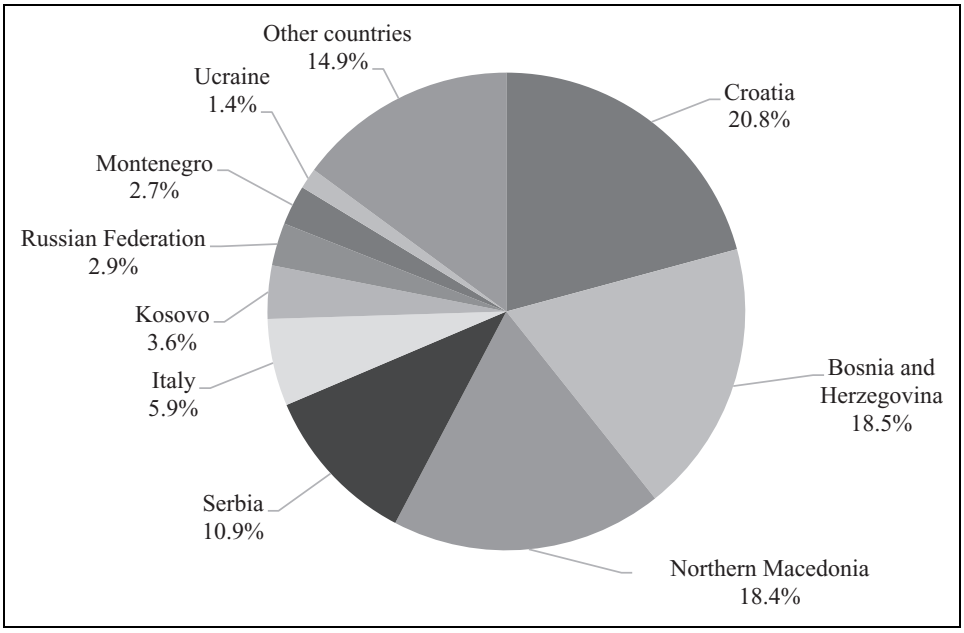

Figure 1. The origin and proportion of students with foreign citizenship enrolled at Slovenian higher education institutions, academic year 2018/2019.
Source: SORS (2019).

relate to 'geographical distance, bilateral relationships and political framework conditions (e.g. the European Higher Education Area) [. . .] as key determinants for mobility' (OECD, 2018: 221). On a more general level, a total of 65,307 Italian students were studying in tertiary education abroad in 2019 (or a 3.6% outbound mobility ratio), most frequently in the United Kingdom (18.5% or 12,086), Austria (13.4% or 8741) and France (13.1% or 8535) according to the UIS (2019). It appears that more Italian students currently choose to study in Slovenia than, for example, in the Russian Federation (209 and 170, respectively) (UIS, 2019), although the latter is a major study destination country for degree students from abroad (OECD, 2018).

However, in Slovenia, not all Italian degree students experience international student mobility as added value for their employability, given that those enrolled in the Bachelor's study programme in physiotherapy are blocked by the Slovenian State's requirement of Slovene language knowledge for professional examination purposes (Republic of Slovenia, 2016). In the next section, we address this highly controversial legislative amendment which prevents foreign nationals who completed their physiotherapy study in Slovenia in a foreign language from acquiring a professional qualification in the Republic of Slovenia which they can then use in their own country. This legislative restriction is first addressed from the standpoint of the implementation of Directive 55/2013/EU (European Union, 2013) in the national health services legislation. It is then discussed in relation to the broader perspective of the language of instruction in Slovenian higher education, given that the provision on necessary language skills is at the core of the conflict we are examining. As is often argued, 'you cannot count on higher mobility rates without increasing the offer of subjects, if not all study programmes in a foreign language' (Independent expert, cited in Hauptman Komotar, 2018). In this way, we explain why, despite all the benefits of international student mobility for graduate employability, our Italian example confirms quite the opposite.

The controversial case

In December 2016, Slovenia incorporated Directive 55/2013/EU into its national legislation. This Directive amends Directive 36/2005/EU on the recognition of professional qualifications for the pursuit of regulated professions and stipulates that language knowledge should be proportionate to the activity pursued. In this respect, it states that verification of language knowledge 'may be carried out only after the issuance of a European Professional Card [. . .] or after the recognition of a professional qualification, as the case may be' (European Union, 2013: Article 53).[2] On the other hand, Paragraph 7 of Article 4 of the amended Health Services Act requires that all foreign nationals (in our case Italian graduates in physiotherapy) should have proficiency in Slovene language to level B2 in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages when they apply for a professional examination (Republic of Slovenia, 2016). More precisely, it stipulates:

> Knowledge of the Slovene language is proved by evidence of a completed secondary school education in the Slovene language in the Republic of Slovenia or with a certificate from an authorized educational institution on the successful completion of a test of knowledge of the Slovene language. The proof referred to [. . .] shall be submitted when applying for a professional examination. (Republic of Slovenia, 2016: Article 4)

However, according to Directive 55/2013/EU, language proficiency can be requested only at the time of employment and not for study or professional examination purposes (European Union, 2013). In a similar vein, the amended Health Services Act also stipulates that a graduate nurse or a graduate midwife should submit proof of language proficiency only 'upon employment', while healthcare professionals with qualifications acquired in other EU/EEC countries or in the Swiss Confederation must submit proof of their English language knowledge 'in the procedure of entry in the register' (Republic of Slovenia, 2016: Article 4). Therefore, it is apparent from the reasoning of the law that the aim of the 2013 Directive was to consider the language proficiency of EU citizens at the beginning of the activity; that is, 'prior to the first provision of health services in the Republic of Slovenia' (Republic of Slovenia, 2016: Article 2) and not at the time of the professional examination.

Prior to the legislative amendments to the Health Services Act, foreign graduates were allowed to pass this examination with an interpreter – which is consistent with the stipulation of the General Administrative Procedure Act that 'participants in the procedure who do not know the language in which the procedure is being conducted [. . .] have the right to monitor the course of the procedure with an interpreter' (Republic of Slovenia, 2006: Article 63, Paragraph 7). But officials from the Ministry of Health have since argued that

> there is no exception in the current legislation that would allow a narrow set of individuals to access the professional examination without an adequate knowledge of the Slovene language for the acquisition of a full professional qualification [. . .]. From the point of view of the whole procedure, the mere fact whether or not the profession will actually be practiced in the Republic of Slovenia is not relevant in this respect. (Response from the State Secretary at the Ministry of Health to the letter of the representative of Italian physiotherapy students and graduates, official communication, 20 August 2018)

In the opinion of the Ministry, Italian graduates could have passed a professional examination with an interpreter 'on the basis of procedures that started before the new Act Amending Certain Acts in the Field of Health Services came into force' (Response from the State Secretary at the Ministry of Health to the letter of the representative of Italian physiotherapy students and graduates, official communication, 20 August 2018) but now, when the certificate of language knowledge at the level B2 is required, the Ministry claims that 'these are not new facts that [. . .] [students] did not know' (Rednak, 2018). On the other hand, an ex-Minister of Health was quoted in the newspaper *Finance* as stating that such a requirement is 'a nonsense. I do not see the need for foreign physiotherapy students to know Slovene if they do not work with us. It is right that this is required from health professionals when they start to work with patients' (Rednak, 2018).

In other words, it is inappropriate and in obvious contrast to the aims of Directive 55/2013/EU (and hence, also to those of Directive 36/2005/EU) to make it necessary for candidates to speak Slovene when applying for the professional examination, in particular if the professional activity is not intended to be pursued in the Republic of Slovenia – as is the case for Italian physiotherapy students and graduates who intend to return to their homeland after finishing their studies. As Teichler (2017: 199–200) underlines, those international students 'intending to spend a whole study programme in another country certainly will consider the successful completion of the study programme and the award of the respective degree as the most obvious criterion of success', but as regards the affected Italians, international student mobility has not been a 'success story' (p. 206).

We may thus argue that the provision regarding the necessary Slovene language skills was either prematurely or incorrectly incorporated into the national health services legislation (Legislative proposal for amendments to the Health Services Act, n.d.). Moreover, the incorporation of the Directive into the national legislation was also adopted through an urgent procedure because the European Commission urged Slovenia to implement it no later than the end of November 2016 (the amendments to certain acts in the field of health services were adopted on 20 December 2016 and entered into force on 31 December 2016; see the work of Republic of Slovenia, 2016). Here, we should also add that, in the case of the Italian physiotherapy students, these legislative amendments were introduced retroactively during the course of their study but such legislative alteration is inconsistent with Article 66 of the Higher Education Act, which states that, if students progress regularly, they must complete their studies under the conditions that were in force at the time of their admission (Republic of Slovenia, 2012).

In sum, international students who successfully complete a physiotherapy study programme in another EU member country, with the exception of Slovenia, are immediately employable after graduation. This is in accordance with the key purpose of the Bologna reform 'to use qualifications from one country to apply for a job or a course in another' (European Commission, n.d.). We may therefore argue that the additional requirement (or barrier) in Slovenian higher education for foreign physiotherapy graduates to have Slovene language skills strongly undermines the Commission's emphasis on learning mobility as a key condition for strengthening employability 'in an increasingly

integrated European labour market' (European Commission, 2011: 3). In the words of Kerr (1990: 17), 'the idea of a common market for learning may be welcomed in principle, but resisted in detail'.

This resistance may also be viewed in the light of the ongoing dispute on the language of instruction in Slovenian higher education, and therefore, we include the following brief discussion in this article.

The language issue

Given that it is currently permissible to deliver study programmes in foreign languages if they are conducted in parallel in Slovene (Republic of Slovenia, 2012: Article 8), the national internationalisation strategy emphasised in 2016 that relevant legislative amendments on the language of instruction should be adequately regulated by 2020 (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2016a). At the same time, the internationalisation strategy also stressed that higher education institutions must offer foreign students the option to learn Slovene (e.g. in through short-term or long-term language courses funded by the state), since informing international students about Slovenian language, culture and society is among the main objectives of internationalisation and mobility policies and strategies at both national and institutional levels of higher education (e.g. Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2016a; Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, 2011; University of Ljubljana, 2014).

At present, the ministry responsible for higher education is, on the one hand, preparing legislative alterations which would more clearly define how teaching in foreign languages should be implemented. On the other hand, opponents of the implementation of study programmes in foreign languages believe that an increase in the number of study programmes delivered in foreign languages will intensify the commercialisation of the higher education system. But many think that '[t]his [commercialisation] will not happen in Slovenia; it won't be an issue, it's not a problem' (Independent expert, cited in the work of Hauptman Komotar, 2018) because among 22 European countries Slovenia was ranked lowest in 2014 with regard to the proportion of higher education institutions delivering English-taught study programmes (8.6%) (Wächter and Maiworm, 2015).

The resistance from both the opponents of delivering study programmes in foreign languages and those responsible for the introduction of the controversial legislative requirement on Slovene language knowledge for international graduates in physiotherapy may therefore be viewed as an outcome of the (more or less) closed nature of the higher education system as a whole. According to some, we (still) have 'a sphere [. . .] [in Slovenia] that relies on a rather traditional – black and white – binary understanding of what is domestic and what is foreign' (Representative of the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, cited in the work of Hauptman Komotar, 2018), so 'these debates around the language [. . .] indicate how phobic we are when we are opening up to the world' (University Rector, cited in the work of Hauptman Komotar, 2018).

Conclusion

In 2018, the ministers responsible for higher education from 48 EHEA participating countries underlined that '[t]hrough the EHEA, we have paved the way for large-scale student mobility and improved not only the comparability and transparency of our higher education systems, but also increased their quality and attractiveness' (Paris Communiqué, 2018: 1). In a similar vein, the European Commission continuously emphasises that students should be able to move freely across Europe when choosing to study abroad (e.g. European Commission, 2016). However, the example of foreign (in our case Italian) physiotherapy graduates in Slovenian higher education demonstrates that not all mobile students can benefit from all advantages that international mobility brings for their employability (European Commission et al., 2018) and, in some cases, they do not 'develop a more positive view of the host country' (Teichler, 2017: 206). Hence, the Bologna Process, in practice, remains 'a bit of a double-edged sword, smoothing mobility for some, but creating obstacles for others, due to a combination of bureaucratic rules and the rigidity of national HE systems' (King et al., 2010: 46).

Despite the emphasis of the Slovenian government on increasing the proportion of incoming degree students as the chief objective of the internationalisation of higher education (Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2016a; Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology, 2011), the case presented in this article reveals an obvious lack of coordination among decision-making authorities (in this case, the ministry responsible for higher education and the ministry of health). While the Higher Education Act allows the implementation of study programmes in foreign languages (if the study programme is also conducted in Slovene) (Republic of Slovenia, 2012: Article 8), the Act Amending Certain Acts in the Field of Health Services preserves the requirement of knowledge of the Slovene language for the acquisition of a professional qualification (Republic of Slovenia, 2016: Article 4) for those foreign graduates in physiotherapy who do not intend to pursue their professional activity in the Republic of Slovenia. The controversial amendment to the health services legislation will undoubtedly discourage future physiotherapy students from abroad from studying in Slovenia, but this is contrary to the governmental aim of increasing the internationalisation of the Slovenian higher education system and its institutions (see the work of Ministry of Education, Science and Sport, 2016a).

Yet, in the words of Rhoades (2017: 2), such 'backlash against internationalization is, well, global' and is also

increasingly affecting policy discourse on the development of higher education in other parts of the world. The conflict between the aim to internationalise higher education systems and 'the escalating trend towards isolationism and inward-looking nationalism [thus] results in a disconnect between the local and the global' (de Wit and Jones, 2017). Institutions of higher education 'are, by nature of their commitment to advancing universal knowledge, essentially international institutions', but 'they have been living increasingly in a world of nation states' (Kerr, 1990: 5), as our case has demonstrated.

In conclusion, we may argue that, in the case of Slovenia, the unintended consequences of international degree mobility for the employment potential of foreign (Italian) physiotherapy graduates also result from the diverse interests, preferences and expectations of national political actors and, hence, from 'national socio-political peculiarities' (Bleiklie and Kogan, 2006: 17). As a result, the transfer of supranational political ideas to diverse national (institutional and disciplinary) higher education contexts (such as facilitating the free movement of students across countries to increase their employability opportunities) is not always as effective as one would expect in the open EHEA.

It is therefore important that, when operating internationally, higher education institutions remain attentive to the specific and sometimes contrasting perceptions of national political authorities on the key purposes of internationalisation and mobility in higher education and that they find an appropriate equilibrium between their own institutional needs and objectives and (supra)national policy choices.

Declaration of conflicting interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

ORCID iD

Maruša Hauptman Komotar https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5061-8357

Notes

1. In Slovenia, on the other hand, hours of clinical practice are transferred from study to traineeship after completing a degree, but this is contrary to all other European Union (EU) Member States where a sufficient number of hours of clinical practice were included during the course of study (Legislative proposal of amendments to the Health Services Act, n.d.).
2. The European Professional Card is an EU-wide electronic procedure that is intended to facilitate mutual recognition of professional qualifications for physiotherapists and four other professions (nurses responsible for general care, pharmacists, mountain guides and real estate agents); its key aim is therefore to facilitate the mobility of professionals across the EU/European Economic Area.

References

Bleiklie I and Kogan M (2006) Comparison and theories. In: Kogan M, Bauer M, Bleiklie I and Henkel M (eds) *Transforming Higher Education: A Comparative Study*, 2nd edn. Dordrecht: Springer, pp. 3–22.

Bologna Declaration (1999) The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999: Joint declaration of the European Ministers of Education. Available at: http://www.ehea.info/cid100210/ministerial-conference-bologna-1999.html (accessed 1 August 2019).

Crossman JE and Clarke M (2010) International experience and graduate employability: stakeholder perceptions on the connection. *Higher Education* 59(5): 599–613.

de Wit H and Jones E (2017) Improving access and equity in internationalisation. *University World News*, 8 December, 486.

European Commission (2011) Commission staff working paper on the development of benchmarks on education and training for employability and on learning mobility. Available at: https://www.eqavet.eu/Eqavet2017/media/Policy-Documents/Commission-Staff-Working-Paper-on-the-development-of-benchmarks-on-education-and-training-for-employability-and-on-learning-mobility.pdf?ext=.pdf (accessed 3 August 2019).

European Commission (2013) European higher education in the world. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2013/EN/1-2013-499-EN-F1-1.Pdf (accessed 2 August 2019).

European Commission (2016) A new skills agenda for Europe: working together to strengthen human capital, employability and competitiveness. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52016DC0381&from=EN (accessed 20 July 2019).

European Commission (n.d.) The Bologna process and the European higher education area. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/higher-education/bologna-process-and-european-higher-education-area_en (accessed 28 July 2019).

European Commission, EACEA and Eurydice (2018) *The European Higher Education Area in 2018: Bologna Process Implementation Report*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union.

European Commission (1997) European Employment Strategy. Available at: https://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=101&langId=en (accessed 23 July 2019).

European Union (2013) Directive 55/2013/EU. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=celex%3A32013L0055 (accessed 17 July 2019).

Hauptman Komotar M (2018) *Internacionalizacija in zagotavljanje kakovosti v visokem šolstvu v Sloveniji in na Nizozemskem [Internationalisation and Quality Assurance in Slovenian and Dutch Higher Education]*. PhD Thesis, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Kerr C (1990) The Internationalization of learning and the Nationalization of the purposes of higher education: two 'laws in motion' in conflict? *European Journal of Education* 25(1): 5–22.

King R, Findlay A and Ahrens J (2010) International student mobility literature review. Available at: http://sro.sussex.ac.uk/id/eprint/12011/1/KingFindlayAhrens_International_Student_Mobility_Literature_Review.pdf (accessed 15 August 2019).

Klemenčič M and Flander A (2013) *Evaluation of the Impact of the Erasmus Programme on Higher Education in Slovenia*. Ljubljana: CMEPIUS.

Legislative proposal to the amendments to the Health Services Act (n.d.) [internal data].

Leuven Communiqué (2009) The Bologna Process 2020 - The European Higher Education Area in the new decade. Available at: http://www.ehea.info/media.ehea.info/file/2009_Leuven_Louvain-la-Neuve/06/1/Leuven_Louvain-la-Neuve_Communique_April_2009_595061.pdf (accessed 9 July 2019).

Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (2016a) Strategy for the internationalisation of Slovenian higher education 2016–2020. Available at: http://mizs.arhiv-spletisc.gov.si/fileadmin/mizs.gov.si/pageuploads/razpisi/Visoko_solstvo/Internacionalizacija_VS_2013/Strategija_internacionalizacije_slovenskega_visokega_solstva_ENG_2016-2020_WEB.pdf (accessed 3 December 2019).

Ministry of Education, Science and Sport (2016b) Action plan strategy for the internationalisation of Slovenian higher education 2016–2018. Available at: http://mizs.arhiv-spletisc.gov.si/fileadmin/mizs.gov.si/pageuploads/razpisi/Visoko_solstvo/Internacionalizacija_VS_2013/Akcijski_nacrt_2016-2018_ANG_WEB.pdf (accessed 2 December 2019).

Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (2011) *Resolucija o nacionalnem programu visokega šolstva (ReNPVŠ 2011–2020) [Resolution on the National Higher Education Programme 2011–2020]*. Uradni list RS [Official Gazette RS], no. 41/2011.

OECD (2018) *Education at a Glance: OECD Indicators*. Paris: OECD.

Paris Communique (2018). Available at: http://www.ehea.info/Upload/document/ministerial_declarations/EHEAParis2018_Communique_final_952771.pdf (accessed 3 August 2019).

Rednak A (2018) Ministrstvo za zdravje spotika italijanske diplomante fizioterapije – kdo bo še povohal Slovenijo [The ministry of health is tripping Italian graduates of physiotherapy – who will still "smell" Slovenia]. *Finance.si,* 3 September. Available at: https://www.finance.si/8938109?cctest&&cookietime=1554082067 (accessed 1 July 2019).

Republic of Slovenia (1993) *Zakon o visokem šolstvu (ZViS) [Higher Education Act (HEA)] (1993)*. Uradni list RS [Official Gazette RS], no. 67/1993.

Republic of Slovenia (1999) *Zakon o spremembah in dopolnitvah Zakona o visokem šolstvu (ZViS-A)* [Act Amending the Higher Education Act 1999 (HEA-A)]. Uradni list RS [Official Gazette RS], no. 99/1999.

Republic of Slovenia (2004) *Zakon o visokem šolstvu (ZViS-UPB1)* [Higher Education Act (HEA-OCT1)]. (2004). Uradni list RS [Official Gazette RS], no. 100/2004.

Republic of Slovenia (2006) *Zakon o splošnem upravnem postopku (ZUP)* [General Administrative Procedure Act]. Uradni list RS [Official Gazette RS], no. 24/2006.

Republic of Slovenia (2012) *Zakon o visokem šolstvu (ZViS-UPB3)* [Higher Education Act (HEA-OCT3)]. Uradni list RS [Official Gazette RS], no. 32/2012.

Republic of Slovenia (2016) *Zakon o spremembah in dopolnitvah določenih zakonov s področja zdravstvene dejavnosti (ZdZPZD)* [Act Amending Certain Acts in the Field of Health Services]. Uradni list RS [Official Gazette RS], no. 88/2016.

Rhoades G (2017) Backlash against "others." *International Higher Education* 89: 2–3.

Sorbonne Declaration (1998) Joint declaration on harmonisation of the architecture of the European higher education system. Available at: http://www.ehea.info/cid100203/sorbonne-declaration-1998.html (accessed 5 July 2019).

Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia (SORS) (2019) Foreign students of higher education by country of citizenship, Slovenia, 2018/19 [internal data]. Ljubljana: SORS.

Teichler U (2011) Bologna – motor or stumbling block for the mobility and employability of graduates? In: Schomburg H and Teichler U (eds) *Employability and Mobility of Bachelor Graduates in Europe*. Rotterdam/Boston/Taipei: Sense Publishers, pp. 3–41.

Teichler U (2017) Internationalisation trends in higher education and the changing role of international student mobility. *Journal of International Mobility* 1(5): 177–216.

UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS) (2019) Global flow of tertiary-level students. Available at: http://uis.unesco.org/en/uis-student-flow (accessed 15 August 2019).

University of Ljubljana (2014) *Strategija internacionalizacije Univerze v Ljubljani 2014–2017 (2020)* [Internationalisation Strategy of the University of Ljubljana 2014–2017(2020)]. Available at: https://www.uni-lj.si/o_univerzi_v_ljubljani/strategija_ul/ (accessed 15 July 2019).

Wächter B and Maiworm F (eds) (2015) *English-Taught Programmes in European Higher Education: The State of Play in 2014*. Bonn: Lemmens Medien GmbH.

Yerevan Communique (2015). Available at: https://www.ehea.info/pid34363/ministerial-declarations-and-communiques.html (accessed 13 August 2019).

Yorke M (2006) *Employability in Higher Education: What It Is – What It Is Not: Learning & Employability Series 1*. York: Higher Education Academy. Available at: http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/documents/tla/employability/id116_employability_in_higher_education_336.pdf (accessed 1 July 2019).