

Summary

Only twenty years ago, countries often saw student mobility as a way of reaching out to the world, hoping thereby to create elite international networks. Universities welcomed international students but rarely went out of their way to recruit them. Today, cross-border education is more often perceived as a lever for economic development. Between 1998 and 2004, the number of foreign students in the OECD area rose by 70% to reach 2.3 million students. Increased competition between countries and between institutions to attract foreign students and academics, as well as the emergence of new forms of cross-border education, represent a new context for policy. In addition, the benefits, particularly economic benefits arising from cross-border education, appear to have growing importance. This chapter looks at policies for the internationalisation of higher education, taking into account this new context and objectives.

Cross-border higher education provides countries with real educational, cultural, policy and economic opportunities. To take advantage of these, countries need to define an approach adapted to their situation and objectives, in a perspective that goes beyond the field of education alone. Policy on this needs to be linked to economic and social policies, since it requires policy instruments that lie outside the direct responsibility of the field of education, including visa and trade policies.

Four main approaches to cross-border higher education are identified. The *mutual understanding approach* mainly emphasises political, cultural, academic and development assistance goals. The *skilled migration approach* encompasses the goals of the mutual understanding approach, but also involves a more active and targeted approach to the recruitment of foreign students. It aims to attract talented students (and academics) to work in the host country's economy or to help make its higher education and research sectors more competitive. The *revenue-generating approach* incorporates the goals of the mutual understanding and skilled migration approaches, but it also has directly commercial objectives. Under this approach, international students pay the full cost of their education, generally without public subsidies. The *capacity-building approach* encourages the use of imported higher education, however delivered, as a relatively quick way to build an emerging country's capacity. Not all these approaches are equally within the reach of all countries, and each raises its own problems. The objective is not simply to promote export of education services. As several Asian and Middle Eastern countries have shown, importing educational services can be just as beneficial as exporting them.

The chapter raises many challenging policy questions. How can cross-border higher education equitably benefit both developed and developing countries? Although it can help the latter to build their economic and educational capacities, it could also lead to a brain drain and reduced assistance to post-secondary education. And what is the impact of cross-border education on national higher education systems and countries' education policies in the fields of access, quality and public financing? What position should be adopted in non-English speaking countries regarding English as the language of instruction?