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Higher Education, Internationalisation, and the Nation-State

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'Internationalisation' became a key theme in the 1990s, both in higher education policy debates and in research on higher education. The process is accompanied by a European policy that seems to favour a de-nationalisation of higher education, a growing responsibility of individual institutions of higher education and an increasing popularity of managerialism. This paper addresses the traditional controversial role of higher education as regards internationalisation and the nation-state, comparing the mainland European and the Anglo-Saxon approach. Assessing the different impacts of internationalisation as a challenge to European and German higher education, it analyses the role of the European Union and the Bologna process, as well as the icebreaker function of internationalisation for higher education reform in Germany. A closer look at the complex and dynamic multi-level set-up of internationalisation in European higher education reveals that it not only means varying border-crossing activities that are on the rise, but rather substantial changes towards systematic policies and a growing awareness of international cooperation and competition in an increasingly global higher education market.

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