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Trends in internationalisation of universities and the impact of
COVID-19 pandemic



Current trends of internationalisation of universities

University World News 
THE GLOBAL WINDOW ON HIGHER EDUCATION

**New inequalities in
internationalisation
?**

**Will COVID-19
pandemic kill off
internationalization
of universities?**

**UNITED STATES: COVID-19
vaccine quandary for
international students**

**OECD warns UK universities over
high fees for 'online' learning**

**NEW ZEALAND: Universities hope
partnerships will build foreign enrolments**

**AUSTRALIA: University
income from foreign student
fees collapses**

**Post-Covid, internationalisation
must be more flexible:
Balancing the potential of
remote learning with the
benefits of student mobility for
skills will be crucial**

**Erasmus+: over €28
billion to support
mobility and learning for
all, across the European
Union and beyond**



Let's deepening three surveys/documents

**International higher
education at a
crossroads post-
COVID**

**[Philip G Altbach](#) and
[Hans de Wit](#) 12 June
2021**

**Indian Guidelines
for
Internationalisation
of Higher
Education**

(July 2021)

**Report of
University of
Bologna on the
impact of Covid-
Pandemic on
internationalisation**

(June 2021)



International higher education at a crossroads post-COVID I

“we do not think that an academic revolution is about to take place. But we also fear that inequality between the Global North and China, on the one hand, and the Global South on the other, will deepen”

- moving forward, digitalisation will become an ever more important aspect of higher education – impacting in particular on student and faculty mobility, professional development and teaching and learning.
- will take time for global patterns of student degree mobility to return to pre-COVID-19 levels, and these patterns and related numbers are likely to change (china, India, some degree mobility trends towards Australia)



International higher education at a crossroads post-COVID II

- Short-term study abroad as part of a home degree, a strong component of student mobility in Europe and the United States, came to a halt during the pandemic. It is more likely, however, that short-term mobility will gradually move back to normal levels, although other factors might have an influence.
- The COVID-19 crisis convinced many that international research collaboration contributed significantly to finding scientific solutions, in particular developing vaccines as well as advancing knowledge. This positive perception is likely to remain.
- In the Global South, where short-term physical mobility, which was too expensive, was never a serious option on a large scale, models of virtual mobility may provide ways of strengthening the international and intercultural competences of students.



International higher education at a crossroads post-COVID III

- While global science will continue, it is not clear how the pandemic or other headwinds will affect patterns of global mobility of academic staff and doctoral students.

We are undoubtedly at an important crossroads for international higher education. While we do not anticipate a revolution, we do see serious challenges, in particular concerning access and equity. But there is also an opportunity for governments and universities to learn from the experiences of the past one-and-a-half years and address systemic social and educational issues that were compounded by the pandemic



Guidelines for Internationalisation of Higher Education (Indian Ministry of Education July 2021)

Main policies

- Internationalisation at Home
- Credit Recognition under Twinning Arrangement and mobility
- Global Citizenship Approach
- ICT based Internationalisation
- Academic and Research Collaboration
- Brand Building Abroad
- Alumni Connect



Guidelines for Internationalisation of Higher Education (Indian Ministry July 2021)

The most important of all strategies related to internationalisation is “Internationalisation at Home”, which means integrating the dimensions of international learning environment within our higher education institutions.

Mobility under Twinning programme will equip the learners with best practices, approaches and methods of teaching and learning in international institutions. This will aid in capacity building of our institutions and help our students in career choices

One of the foremost qualitative changes is fostering global ethos within our universities and making our learners ‘Global Citizen’, someone who is aware of and understands the wider world and actively works towards making our planet more equal, fair and sustainable.

ICT brings with it new educational opportunities along with flexibilities in approach. ICT can overcome traditional barriers to internationalisation. The borderless nature of ICT has the potential to transform the internationalisation process.



Guidelines for Internationalisation of Higher Education (Indian Ministry July 2021)

Academics around the world faces a number of wide ranging and interlinked global challenges such as food security, energy security, infectious disease etc. Collaboration among the top universities is essential to identify causes, addressing concerns and dealing with the impacts

This will include using all forms of communication and outreach, including social media. Higher Education Institutions are encouraged to undertake brand building exercise to make India and their institutions attractive study destinations.

Alumni of foreign origin as well as Indian alumni living abroad can play a crucial role in brand building of the Indian Higher Education Institutions abroad and making India a global study destination



20/21 outgoing student mobility less than 60% of 19/20. Approval of more flexible mobility rules

20/21 incoming student mobility less than 60% of 19/20. Very few mobilities from Non-Eu countries. No mobility with Erasmus plus International Credit Mobility, including academic staff

Not many students accept to substitute physical mobility with virtual mobility experiences when it was possible to follow online classes of the foreign host university. Students were and are looking forward to start moving again. Boom of applications for 21/22 Erasmus plus programme!

Unibo offered new virtual mobility programs to include students from the Global South (Africa) into classroom as virtual students. In fact, all lesson have been provided also online in 20/21. With those programs, we increase the number of «virtual» incoming students from Africa

Groups of academic staff and students have joined online international collaborative learning initiatives (such as summer schools or hackathon) with excellent results. All these initiatives were pilot and not necessary linked to normal study programs

International student desks, all meetings and welcome events moved online. The decision was generally appreciated by the students also thanks to the adoption of user friendly tools and platforms

All psychical mobilities linked to international cooperation projects were stopped. Only in May 2021, some professors started to travel again in countries outside Europe. Nevertheless, all projects continued and new way to deliver online meetings, seminars, training were designed and put forward

The number of international degree seeking students did not decrease in 20/21 comparing to 19/20. Of course, many international students started their studies online without moving to Italy

**Impact of
Covid-
Pandemic
on
internationalisation at
UNIBO**



Governance and organizational models for internationalisation of universities



University governance models for internationalisation

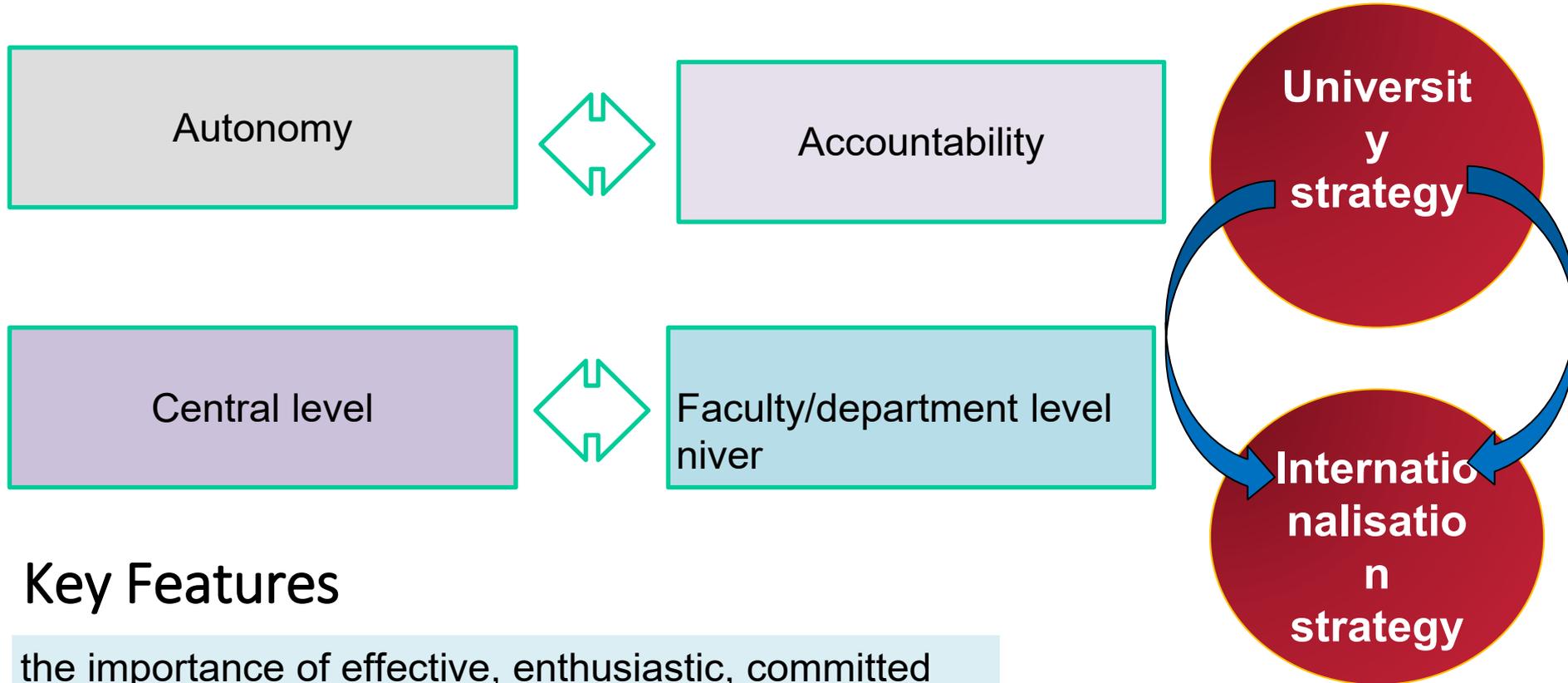
- 1) which are the leading actors promoting and implementing internationalisation strategies at university level?
- 2) In the definition and implementation of internationalisation strategies, which role and function do the leadership play?
- 3) Which are the key features that a leadership for internationalisation must have?



Governance model
for
internationalisation



Key decisions

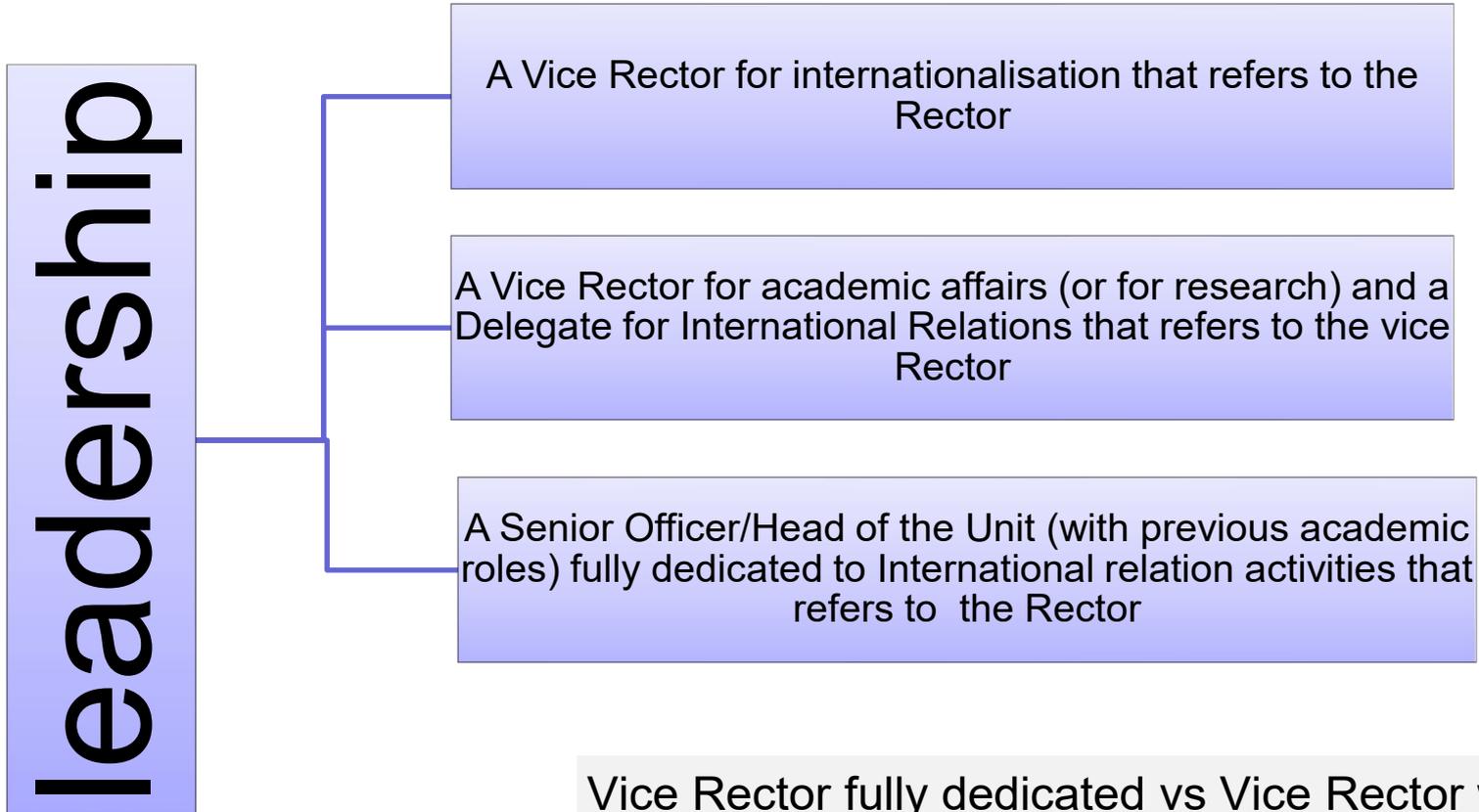


Key Features

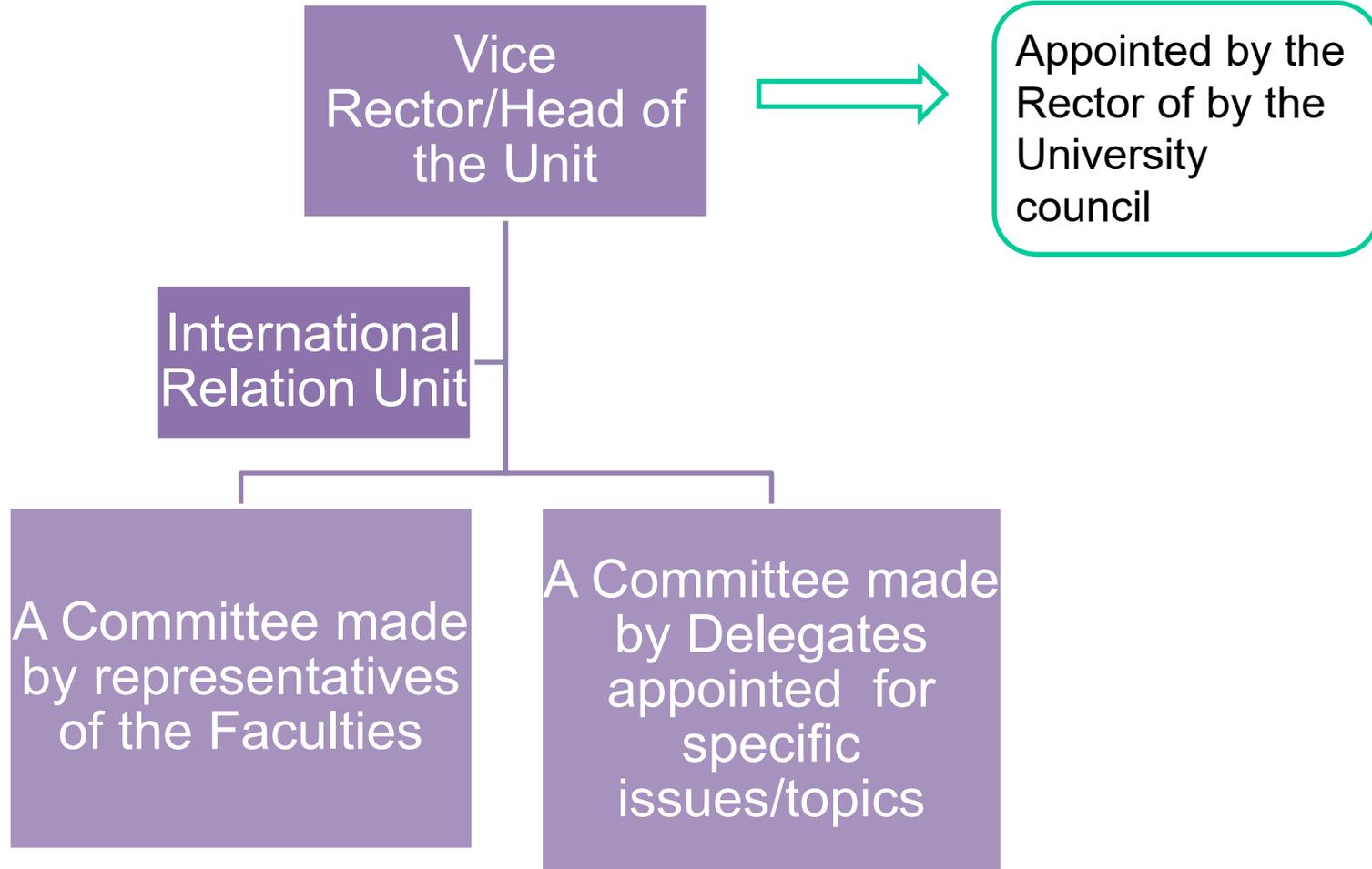
the importance of effective, enthusiastic, committed leadership for internationalisation (Knight 1994)



- Generally speaking, at least at European level, the leadership of the university referring internationalisation follow some common patterns:



Vice Rector fully dedicated vs Vice Rector with only partial or no reduction of teaching contact hours





International
relation Unit



Can be lead directly by the Vice Rector or by the Head of the Unit (the last is more frequent)

Can include academic staff that works full time or part time for internationalisation or only administrative staff or both

Can vary from a small office made only by few employees to a structured office with sub-units and a clear division of tasks

Vice Rector

Head of IRO

IRO

Sub
Unit a

Sub
Unit b

Vice
Rector/he
ad of Unit

IRO with
few staff

The Committee made by Delegates appointed for specific issues/topics

BASED ON TASKS/ISSUES

- Delegate for student mobility
- Delegate for agreements
- Delegate for internationalisation at home initiatives
- Delegate for academic staff mobility

BASED ON GEOGRAPHIC SPECIALISATION

- Delegate for Europe
- Delegate for Middle East
- Delegate for United states
-
-

**Universit
y
strategy**

**Internatio
nalisatio
n
strategy**



The case of University of Bologna and the role of Rector's
Delegates for geographic area



Innovative Governance Practices
in the Higher Education Institutions in Iraq

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