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Constructing The European Education Space

Özge ONURSAL BEŞGÜL*

ABSTRACT

This study analyses the European education policy and traces its evolution, specifically focusing on the Bologna Process that was launched in 1999. The study aims mainly at answering the following two questions: How is the European education space constructed and on which narrative is it built upon? In answering these questions, the article also discusses how the concept of European citizenship is defined in educational documents. The paper argues that the narrative of education policy initially had a regional focus, which later gained an international dimension.

Keywords: EU Education Policy, Education Space, Bologna Process, EU Citizenship

Avrupa Eğitim Alanının İnşası

ÖZET

Bu çalışma Avrupa eğitim politikasına odaklanmakta ve özellikle 1999 senesinde başlatılan Bologna Süreci üzerinde durarak politikanın gelişimini incelemektedir. Çalışmanın cevap aradığı iki ana soru şunlardır: Avrupa eğitim alanı nasıl inşa edilmektedir ve hangi söylemler üzerine kurulmuştur. Bu sorulara cevap verirken, makale, eğitim üzerine olan resmi belgelerde AB vatandaşlık kavramının nasıl tanımlandığını da incelemektedir. Makalede eğitim söyleminin ilk zamanlarında bölgesel, daha sonra ise uluslararası bir boyutunun olduğu savunulmaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: AB Eğitim Politikası, Eğitim Alanı, Bologna Süreci, AB Vatandaşlığı

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Introduction

Education plays a crucial role in the integration process on the way towards an “ever closer union”. It has become one of the significant instruments of the European Union (EU) in its process of constructing the EU identity and EU citizenship. As Ernest Gellner states: “Not the guillotine, but the (aptly named) *doctorat d'état* is the main tool and symbol of state power. The monopoly of legitimate education is now more important, more central than is the monopoly of legitimate violence”.¹ Indeed, education is one of the main tools of mobilization that a centralized state uses to “construct” its citizens. It has also become one of tools the EU employs in its quest for legitimatizing the Union.²

The EU education policy contributes to the construction of European citizenship by bringing into contact different cultures, and increasing people’s awareness of the common European cultural heritage. Cooperation in education is a communicative tool that widens the spheres in which the rationale behind integration can be explained. Education mobility is contributes to EU citizens’ right to freedom of movement. It is an instrument that enhances the EU citizenship rights and has the potential to make Europe more tangible to the public.

The EU education policy has only been made part of the treaty framework with the Maastricht Treaty, yet its history goes a lot further. Over the years, the cooperation process that started with the vocational education has spilled over to general education. Focusing on the historical evolution of the education policy, one can see how the relationship between general education and vocational education was constructed and reconstructed throughout the history of the EU. Most initiatives in education are focused on higher education, which is deemed to be less sovereignty sensitive compared to the other levels of education. While higher education is still a part of the socialization process of the citizens, it has less direct impact than the lower levels due the maturity of the students. The cooperation initiatives on higher education that has started with the Rome Treaty, has evolved into the Bologna Process, which was launched in 1999 with the aim of creating a European Higher Education Area (EHEA). The Bologna Process broadened the actions taken in the higher education policy to a wider geography.

This study aims to show how the European education space in higher education is constructed. This space is built around the EU’s higher education policy as well as the Bologna Process. The study focuses on the policy narrative around which the policy is constructed. A policy narrative is comprised of paradigms, rules and norms that define the policy area. The research relies on primary documents to understand how the policy space is constructed and on which narrative it is built upon. Relevant EU treaties, decisions, regulations, Commission communications, Commission White/Green papers, declarations and *communiqués* are used for a thick description of the evolution of the policy. The official documents are analysed to trace how the norm of “European dimension” within the framework of the education policy was conceptualized. The first part defines the concept of European education space and the second part concentrates

1 Ernst Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, Oxford, Blackwell Publishers, 1983.

2 See Ian P. Bache, “The Europeanization of Higher Education: Markets, Politics or Learning?”, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.44, No.2, 2006, p.231-248.

on the evolution of the European education policy. As such European educational policy is analysed in five phases. The European dimension in education policy is captured by two processes: Europeanization and internationalization. The final section focuses on the conceptualization of European citizenship in the European education policy documents. The paper argues that with the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process the conceptualization of European citizenship in the official documents has changed.

European Education Space

Within the context of the EU, the concept of space should specifically be discussed. Michel De Certeau in his famous work written in 1984 distinguishes space (*espace*) from place (*lieu*).³ James Clifford depicts de Certeau's conception of space in the following manner "space is never ontologically given. It is discursively mapped and corporeally practiced. For instance, an urban neighbourhood may be laid out physically according to a street plan. Let us name it a 'place'. But it is not a 'space' until it is used and practiced by people's active participation, their movements through and around it".⁴ Thus space is established by people's involvement with the place, by the common practices, rules, norms and ideas they come to share. It is an anthropological concept.

The concept of a European space implies a change in the focus of social sciences whose boundaries were drawn by the nation-state for so long. Due to the actual existence of the EU, what is understood from political spatiality is changing. Besides the spatiality of the nation-state, different political spaces have emerged, one of which is the EU itself. Yet, the EU also harbours different spaces within itself, some of which are smaller and some larger than its actual territorial boundaries. The EU is composed of different spaces, which most of the time crosscut each other. This study focuses on the European education space.

The recent literature on education policy has more and more focused on the formation of a European education space.⁵ A dilemma regarding the conceptualization of the education space came to surface during the negotiations of European education exchange programs – Socrates and Leonardo – in 1999, which revolved around a debate on whether the education space should be named the "European education area" or "area of European cooperation in education policies".⁶ Within the framework of the Bologna process, this space was conceptualised as the EHEA.

3 Michel De Certeau, *The Practice of Everyday Life*, Berkeley, California University Press, 1984.

4 James Clifford, *Routes. Travel and Translation in the Late Twentieth Century*, Cambridge, Harvard UP, 1997, p.54.

5 See Antonio Novoa and Martin Lawn, "Fabricating Europe: The Formation of an Education Space", in Antonio Lawn and Martin Lawn (ed.), *Fabricating Europe: The Formation of an Education Space*, New York, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2002, p.1-13; Antonio Novoa, "The Restructuring of the European Educational Space", in T. S. Popkewitz (ed.), *Educational Knowledge*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 2000, p.31-53; Martin Lawn, "Borderless Education: Imagining a European Education Space in a Time of Brands and Networks", *Discourse*, Vol.22, No.2, 2001, p.173-184; Martin Lawn, "Soft Governance and the Learning Spaces of Europe", *Comparative European Politics*, Vol.4, 2006, p.272-288.

6 I. Berggreen-Merkel, "Towards a European Educational Area", *European Journal for Education Law and Policy*, Vol. 3, 1999, p.6.

Lawn defines the education space as a “borderless education”,⁷ arguing that both geographical and conceptual borders are changing in terms of education. The education space is “being produced by national state collaborations, EU guidelines and products, academic networks, social movements, business links and sites, city ‘states’, virtual connections...”.⁸ Gornitzka outlines how a network of administration came into existence in the area of education, specifically in regard to exchange programs.⁹ This network is created around the European Commission, involving actors such as various expert groups, the national agencies, the administrative units in the universities, as well as information networks (i.e. Eurydice), lobbying groups (i.e. Erasmus Student Network) and agency networks (i.e. ENIC/NARIC).

While the EU has been the building block of this space, the space has actually gone beyond what has been drawn by the EU itself. As Soysal states beyond the confines of the intergovernmental nature of EU education policy there is “enormous activity at the European level... which contributes to the production of an *effective* Europeanness in the field education”.¹⁰ An extensive array of non-governmental bodies, international committees and organisations are involved. Ryba focuses on individuals, voluntary associations, national and regional authorities that play a role in the construction of a European dimension in education policy. He also points out that the Council of Europe is an important actor in education policy.¹¹ While the core of the European education space is identified as the EU education policy, which was first based on vocational policy, the space extends further than that. Dale defines this space in the following manner: “European education *space* can be seen as an opportunity structure framed *formally* by Treaty responsibilities, *substantively* by the Lisbon Agenda and the European Social Model, and *historically* the ‘pre-Lisbon’ education activities of the European Commission”.¹²

Thus the European education space is defined as a political spatiality where European educational activities take place and new norms, rules and paradigms in the European level are constructed. This space is not bound by the nation-states, but extends beyond them. The European education space has been framed by the norm of European dimension. In other words, the space aims to construct a European dimension in higher education policy. Although the will to create a European dimension in education can be traced back to four hundred years ago to the time of Comenius, it was through the EU education policy that this concept has been institutionalised. As Novoa and Lawn state “the new education policy space can be treated as more than a regulatory arena – as a

7 Lawn, “Borderless Education”.

8 Novoa and Lawn, “Fabricating Europe”, p.1.

9 Ase Gornitzka, “Networking Administration in Areas of National Sensitivity: The Commission and European Higher Education”, *Arena Working Paper*, No.2, 2007.

10 Yasemin Soysal, “Locating Europe”, *European Societies*, Vol.4, No.3, 2002, p.58.

11 Raymond Ryba, “Unity in Diversity: The Enigma of the European Dimension in Education”, *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol.21, No.1, 1995, p.25-36.

12 Original emphasis; Roger Dale, “Contexts, Constraints and Resources in the Development of European Education Space and European Education Policy”, in Roger Dale and Susan Robertson (ed.), *Globalisation and Europeanisation in Education*, Symposium Books, Oxford, 2009, p.32.

space in which new European meanings in education are constructed”.¹³ The Commission first mentioned “European dimension” in education in 1974. Yet, there are still problems remaining with the operationalization of the concept.¹⁴ The Green paper on European Dimension in 1993 elaborates the concept, but still remains vague.¹⁵ The Bologna Process consolidated the European education space and gave a new meaning to the concept of European dimension. The narrative of education policy at first had a regional focus; later on gained an international dimension. The next section will concentrate on how the policy evolved and the narrative of the space has been constructed.

Evolution of the European Education Policy

Over the years an *acquis communautaire* for the EU education policy has come into existence. While the Union’s competence in education is still low and it is primarily supplementary, the initiatives carried out under the rubric of education policy in the Union suggest that the importance attached to this policy area has increased over time. The *acquis* on education is very thin compared to the most elaborate policy areas of the EU – such as regional or agricultural ones –, yet it is undeniable that the EU has acquired a defining role in the education policies of its member states. In the Lisbon European Council that took place in March 2002, a new method, which is called the “open method of coordination”, was set out to strengthen cooperation. This method, along with the launch of the Bologna Process, aims to create a coherent policy and opens the way towards more activities in the field of education. The member-states’ competence in the area of education is being challenged.

From the onset of its history, the education policy of the EU always emphasized diversity. The policy narrative of the space is built around first and foremost on the “respect for diversity”. Ryba argues “The dimension notion has clearly been taken to imply something additive to what already exists rather than something that provides a wholesale replacement”.¹⁶ This mainly has to do with the “sensitive nature” of the policy area. Gornitzka argues that “the national sensitivity rests moreover on the mutual dependencies between education institutions and the nation state: political institutions sustain schools/universities and schools/universities sustain other institutions of a political system”.¹⁷ This relationship might constitute a barrier to deeper integration.

Within the framework of the Bologna process, starting with the Sorbonne Declaration of 1998 “respect for diversity” was also underlined frequently.¹⁸ In the Bologna Declaration of 1999, the signatories similarly reiterated “full respect of the

13 Novoa and Lawn, “Fabricating Europe”, p.5.

14 Hubert Ertl, “The European Union and Education and Training: An Overview of Policies and Initiatives”, in D. Phillips and H. Ertl (ed.), *Implementing European Union Education and Training Policy: A Comparative Study of Issues in Four Member States*, Secaucus, NJ, Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2003, p.21; Commission of the European Communities, *Green Paper on the European Dimension of Education*, COM (93) 457 final, Brussels, 29 September 1993.

15 Commission of the European Communities, *Green Paper*.

16 Ryba, “Unity in Diversity”, p.27.

17 Gornitzka, “Networking Administration”, p.8.

18 Joint Declaration on Harmonisation of the Architecture of the European Higher Education System, “Sorbonne Declaration”, 1998, http://www.bologna-bergen2005.no/Docs/00-Main_doc/980525SORBONNE_DECLARATION.PDF, (Accessed on 7/9/2012).

diversity of cultures, languages, national education systems and of University autonomy”.¹⁹ The Berlin *Communiqué* in 2003 also emphasized that “the aim is to preserve Europe’s cultural richness and linguistic diversity, based on its heritage of diversified traditions, and to foster its potential of innovation and social and economic development through enhanced co-operation among European Higher Education Institutions”.²⁰ The reactions to the Bologna Process, in terms of the process standardizing the education systems, or creating a “one size fits all” recipe were the reasons behind this emphasis.

While placing emphasis on diversity, the educational space also aimed to create a European dimension in education. The concept of European dimension can be linked with both the Europeanization and internationalization processes taking place in Europe. Focusing on different phases of the policy, one sees that till the 1990s European education policy had a regional focus. This has changed with the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process, the education policy acquiring more of an international dimension.²¹ Today the European education policy is both a “response to” and “a manifestation of globalisation”.²²

The education policy can be analysed in five phases: from 1951 to 1968, 1969 to 1980, 1980 to 1992, 1992 to 2000; and 2000 onwards. These phases were categorised chronologically taking into account both the changing relationship between vocational training and general education; and also the actions taken in the area of higher education. Two important trends in European the education policy can be identified: “in addition to the goal of strengthening the EU’s economic and technological competitiveness worldwide, an important goal of current EU programmes is to construct a “people’s Europe” and an “ever-closer Union”.²³ The education policy has contributed both to Europeanization as well as internationalization processes in the EU. The following two sub-sections focus on the evolution of the policy area. The first sub-section covers the first four phases of the policy, where the narrative was Europe-centred and regional. The second one focuses on the fifth phase in which the narrative of the policy area becomes international.

Europeanization of Education Policy

Europeanization is a contested concept. One encounters many definitions in the European integration literature, which can be deemed as a theoretical exercise in itself. In its simplest form, Europeanization may be defined as “processes of a) construction, b) diffusion and c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles,

19 Joint Declaration of the European Ministers of Education. “Bologna Declaration”, 1999, http://www.bologna-berlin2003.de/pdf/bologna_declaration.pdf, (Accessed on 7/9/2012).

20 Communiqué of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Higher Education in Berlin, “Realising the European Higher Education Area”, 2003.

21 Susan Robertson and Ruth Keeling, “Stirring the Lions: Strategy and Tactics in Global Higher Education”, *Globalisation, Societies and Education*, Vol.6, No.3, 2008, p.221-240; Susan Robertson, “Europe, Competitiveness and Higher Education”, in Roger Dale and Susan Robertson (ed.), *Globalisation and Europeanisation in Education*, Symposium Books, Oxford, 2009, p.65-83.

22 S. J. Bulmer and C. M. Radaelli, “The Europeanisation of National Policy”, *Queen’s Papers on Europeanisation*, No.1/2004, 2004.

23 J. Trondal, “The Europeanization of Research and Higher Educational Policies: Some Reflections”, *Scandinavian Political Studies*, Vol.25, No.4, 2002, p.333-55.

‘ways of doing things’ and shared beliefs and norms.”²⁴ This study argues that while EU’s competence in education policy is only supplementary, a Europeanization process in higher education is taking place. The basis of this process was first drawn by the Rome Treaty. In time, in the area of education policy a European dimension has been constructed.

The education policy initially developed due to the requirements of the internal market. The Rome Treaty did not cover education and only narrowly referred to vocational training. The first phase of the education policy covers the period from 1951 to 1968, when vocational education was closely connected to the economic goals, which in turn constituted the basis of the EU education policy. The European Community had a weak competence in vocational training, which was linked to the functioning of the common market, as the development of vocational training was regarded as essential for the promotion of free movement of services and people.²⁵ The Rome Treaty included provisions for vocational training (Articles 41, 118, 128) and a provision for mutual recognition of certificates (Article 57). Transnational recognition of qualifications, along with the encouragement of foreign languages, was essential to cope with the barriers in front of freedom of movement.²⁶ Initially, education was considered only within the remit of economic policy.

The second phase covers the period between 1969 and 1980. In 1971, general education was mentioned for the first time as a policy area. In 1971, the Commission set up two working parties on education matters, which initiated projects for the collection of data on education matters and stressed the need for “greater Community effort”. This was the first time general education “appeared directly as an area of interest to the Community”²⁷ and in 1973, education for the first time became part of the responsibility of one of the Commissioners. A year later in 1974, the Commission presented the first communication on education, “Education in the European Community”. Through the communication, the Commission stressed the reasons behind why cooperation was essential. The communication asserted that: “a Community perspective in education is increasingly important, and what is required is a common commitment to the development of education co-operation and a systematic exchange of information and experience”.²⁸ Specifically, increasing mobility in education and developing a “European dimension in education” was stressed. As the integration process deepened, the education policy began to be pursued independently from economic policies and concerns. In 1974, the ministers of education proclaimed that education should no longer “be regarded merely as a component of economic life”.²⁹

24 C. M. Radaelli, “The Europeanization of Public Policy”, in Kevin Featherstone and C.M. Radaelli (ed.), *The Politics of Europeanization*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2003, p.30.

25 N. Johnson, “From Vocational Training to Education: The Development of a No-frontiers Education Policy for Europe?”, *Education and the Law*, Vol.11, No.3, 1999, p.199.

26 E. Beukel, “Education”, in S. S. Andersen and K.A. Eliassen, (eds.) *Making Policy in Europe: The Europeanization of National Policy-making*, London, Sage, 1993, p.155-170.

27 E. Beukel, “Educational Policy: Institutionalisation and Multi-level Governance”, in Andersen and Eliassen, *Making Policy in Europe*, p.127.

28 Ibid., p.128.

29 Resolution of Ministers of Education Meeting within the Council, 6 June 1974 on Cooperation in the Field of Education, *Official Journal C 098*, 20/08/1974, p.0002-0002.

In the third phase, that is, from 1980 to 1992, general education gained its independence from economic concerns and began to be linked closely to the cultural dimension of the integration project. During this period, the concept of European dimension in general education was widely discussed. Vocational training was gradually decoupled from employment policy and began to be pursued not as a policy on its own, but as part of general education policy.³⁰ The resolutions at the end of the 1980s began to emphasize the “European dimension in education that was characterized by a marked attachment to European culture and European ideas”.³¹ The mid-1980s were characterized by a boost in education policy. Between 1986 and 1989, the Council launched three education programs, which were to be implemented by the Commission. “These programs created a form of ‘soft law’, where the Commission intervenes in education indirectly through offering the ‘carrot’ of financial incentives designed to encourage pan-European education initiatives”.³² Furthermore, they paved the way toward both the Europeanization and internationalization of higher education. The countries participating in these programs saw the main impediments in their national system and these opened the way toward more cooperation in the area of higher education.³³

In the fourth phase, from 1992 onwards, general education acquired a legal status with the Maastricht Treaty. In terms of the relationship with vocational training, a “twin track” system was created: vocational training and general education were to be pursued together, alongside each other.³⁴ With the Maastricht Treaty, the *de facto* position of education turned into a *de jure* one. As Berggreen-Merkel states “by introducing Articles 126 and 127 into the Treaty of Rome, the Treaty of Maastricht had taken into account the fact that in spite of the lack of explicit Community powers to deal with education as a whole, a common education policy had gradually been established”.³⁵ With the Treaty of European Union, the policy gained “a much firmer legal basis for Community competence” both in terms of education and as well as vocational training.³⁶ The Treaty added a new section to the Treaty of Rome entitled “Education, Vocational Training and Youth”. During the same period, the education programs were reformed, restructured and geographically extended.

In the course of the first four phases of its history, the education policy was “regional in its focus, politics and outcome”.³⁷ The focus of the policy narrative was Europe. Education policy was seen as serving both economic and political aims within the integration process. The education policy, while still considered under the remit of the

30 Johnson, “From Vocational Training to Education”, p.211.

31 Beukel, “Educational Policy”, p.131.

32 Johnson, “From Vocational Training to Education”, p.201.

33 Huisman, J. and M. van der Wende. “The EU and Bologna: Are Supra and International Initiatives Threatening Domestic Agendas?”, *European Journal of Education*, Vol.39, No.3, 2004, p.349-357.

34 Johnson, “From Vocational Training to Education”, p.211.

35 Berggreen-Merkel, “Towards a European Educational Area”.

36 Johnson, “From Vocational Training to Education”, p.200.

37 Robertson and Keeling, “Stirring the Lions”, p.222; Robertson, “Europe, Competitiveness and Higher Education”.

nation-state, is used as an instrument to create a Europe of meaning, to “affirm to European citizens their place in a new, shared space, Europe”.³⁸ The concept of Europeanization captures the changes that took place in the policy area. New norms, rules and paradigms in the European level were created.

Internationalization of Education Policy

The fifth phase of the education policy, from 2000 onwards, is the Lisbon and the Bologna phase. In this phase, the education policy’s narrative moved towards internationalization. Teichler defines internationalization in higher education in the following manner “increasing knowledge transfer, physical mobility, cooperation and international education and research”.³⁹ In the recent years, globalization has been used interchangeably with internationalization in the public debates. Globalization signifies the blurring of borders. In the context of the European education space, internationalization implies that the policy narrative of higher education is shifting, acquiring a global tone. While during the first four phases of the policy, the focus of education policy was Europe and its aim was to further the integration process, during the last phase of education policy, the narrative of the policy became internationalized. Education policy is used as an international instrument situating Europe globally in a competitive manner.

Since the end of the 1990s, the idea of knowledge economy has become “a major aspect of the new Europeanization” narrative in education policy.⁴⁰ In *Agenda 2000*, knowledge-based policies were declared to be the one of the four fundamental pillars of the Union. In March 2000, Lisbon European Council set the achievement of “knowledge-based economy” as a goal, to be completed by 2010.⁴¹ The Lisbon agenda was declared in the Lisbon Summit, with the goal of making the EU “the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-driven economy”. The aim of economic growth has been closely linked with the emphasis the EU put on education. “Education and Training 2010” and “Education and Training 2020” programs were formed for the purpose of strengthening education. The 2010 program was reformed with the EU 2020 program, which put forward five targets for the year 2020.⁴² Education also became one of the Open Method of Coordination policy areas, introduced by the Lisbon European Council of 2000.

38 Lawn, “Borderless Education”; “Soft Governance and the Learning Spaces of Europe”, p. 276.

39 U. Teichler, “The Changing Debate on Internationalisation of Higher Education”, *Higher Education*, Vol.48, No.1, 2004, p.22-3.

40 Martin Lawn and Bob Lingard, “Constructing a European Policy Space in Educational Governance: The Role of Transnational Policy Actors”, *European Educational Research Journal*, Vol.1, No.2, 2002, p.291.

41 European Council, *Presidency Conclusions Lisbon European Council*, 23-24 March 2000.

42 The 5 targets for the EU in 2020 are “1. Employment: 75% of the 20-64 year-olds to be employed; 2. R&D / innovation: 3% of the EU’s GDP (public and private combined) to be invested in R&D/innovation; 3. Climate change / energy: greenhouse gas emissions 20% (or even 30%, if the conditions are right) lower than 1990, 20% of energy from renewables, 20% increase in energy efficiency; 4. Education: Reducing school drop-out rates below 10%, at least 40% of 30-34-year-olds completing third level education; 5. Poverty / social exclusion: at least 20 million fewer people in or at risk of poverty and social exclusion” (see Europe 2020 Website).

With the Lisbon Strategy, the EU was able to take more active role in education. As Gornitzka argues “the reference to the knowledge society/economy and the urgency of facing up to global competition seems to have lifted to some extent the ‘European ban on education’”.⁴³ In terms of the goals set out in the Strategy, “some of the indicators go much further into areas traditionally considered to be very close to areas of national sovereignty in education, such as curricular content, teacher training, language learning, and strengthening the ties to work life”⁴⁴, for instance in the secondary level, where cooperation is very limited.

The Lisbon Strategy also linked education with the European social model making emphasis on “investment in people”, “building an active welfare state” and “productive social policy”.⁴⁵ Yet this emphasis on social model is very modest compared to the economic narrative. This process where higher education was closely linked with the economic concerns covered by the Lisbon Treaty goes back to 1991 Memorandum on Higher Education.⁴⁶ Robertson explains the politics behind the Memorandum: the recession in European economies in the early 1990s and the implications of economic globalisation⁴⁷. With the Lisbon Strategy, the narrative of education changed and education began to be defined “as human capital, as an engine for economic growth, as a private rather than public good, and as a new services sector within the economy”.⁴⁸ Thus the European space is today “shaped by the opportunities and fears of globalisation”.⁴⁹ This also means that the policy is much more international, situating Europe globally in a competitive manner. The narrative of education is more and more shaped by the language of global competitiveness.

Parallel to the Lisbon Strategy, the launch of the Bologna Process has brought a new impetus to the EU education policy. Robertson and Keeling explain the relationship between the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process as follows: “The re-launched Lisbon competitiveness agenda gave these ‘low-register’ developments political traction, providing the mandate and the political philosophy for further progress, while the Bologna Process provided a range of useful tools”.⁵⁰ Keeling similarly argues “the framing of EU research policy as consistent with the Bologna Process enhances the political legitimacy of the Lisbon objectives in education and research”.⁵¹

Zgaga in his report indicates that the Bologna Process was a turning point. It was “a reconsideration of the European emphasis of internationalization. In the mid-

43 Ase Gornitzka, “Can Policies be Coordinated Cross-nationally in Areas of National Sensitivity?”, *Arena Working Papers*, No.16, 2005, p.21.

44 *Ibid.*, p.17.

45 Dale, “Contexts, Constraints and Resources in the Development”.

46 See Huisman and Wende, “The EU and Bologna”.

47 Robertson, “Europe, Competitiveness and Higher Education”.

48 *Ibid.*

49 Lawn and Lingard “Constructing a European Policy Space”, p.292; Robertson and Keeling, “Stirring the Lions”; Robertson, “Europe, Competitiveness and Higher Education”.

50 Robertson and Keeling, “Stirring the Lions”, p.232.

51 Ruth Keeling, “The Bologna Process and the Lisbon Research Agenda: the European Commission’s Expanding Role in Higher Education Discourse”, *European Journal of Education*, Vol.41, No.2, 2006, p.212.

1990s, attention shifted towards the relationship between higher education in Europe and higher education in the wider world”.⁵² The Bologna Declaration was an attempt both for domestic reform as well as internationalization of the higher education policy:

The very beginning of the Bologna Process was characterized by the belief that changes in the structure of European higher education systems could be the main vehicle for raising attractiveness worldwide. Of course, this sentence could and should be read also in a reverse way: efforts to increase worldwide attractiveness are an important lever to improve European higher education systems “internally”, as well as to establish European higher education as such.⁵³

Similarly, Lawn and Lingard argue that “the Europeanization of education occurs as an element of a wider globalisation in education”.⁵⁴

While the challenges they face are different, the US initiatives taken in the field of education are very similar to the Bologna Process. Both parties are responding to the challenges of globalisation, the initiatives taken in both regions are justified in terms of globalisation. Furthermore, the US is legitimizing its domestic reforms by referring to the challenges Europe is posing to itself with its education policies, which shows that Europe has become a reference point for the wider world.⁵⁵ As such one important aim of the Bologna Process is “to extend its ‘spheres of influence’ to other parts of the world”.⁵⁶

Consequently, whereas the EU started its initiatives in higher education with a regional focus – the aim was to enhance cooperation in this policy area and contribute to identity construction in Europe–, today the policy acquired a global dimension. As Lawn argues “education has moved from the position of a sensitive area for cooperation, due to the concerns of individual states for their areas of responsibility, through an increasingly symbolic area of identity formation and into a crucial part of the new knowledge economy”.⁵⁷ Europe “is involved in the construction of the globalisation *and* that globalisation frames economic, political and cultural (etc.) possibilities for Europe”.⁵⁸ The changes in the narrative of European education policy since the 1990s came about as a result of globalization. In other countries as well, such as US and Australia, “higher education has become regarded as a critical ‘motor’ for national and regional competitiveness in the global economy and a global battle has begun for the minds and markets to support this”.⁵⁹ These changes in the narrative of European education policy can be captured by the concept of internationalization.

52 Pavel Zgaga, *External Dimension of the Bologna Process*, Report of the Working group of the External Dimension of the Bologna Follow-up Group, Oslo, 2006, p.6.

53 Ibid., p.10.

54 Lawn and Lingard “Constructing a European Policy Space”, p.293.

55 Robertson and Keeling, “Stirring the Lions”

56 Ibid., p.232; Robertson, “Europe, Competitiveness and Higher Education”.

57 Lawn, “Borderless Education”, p.174; also see Martin Lawn, “The ‘Usefulness’ of Learning: The Struggle over Governance, Meaning and the European Education Space”, *Discourse*, Vol. 24, No.3, 2003, p.325-336; Bache, “The Europeanization of Higher Education”.

58 Original emphasis; Dale, “Contexts, Constraints and Resources in the Development”, p.25.

59 Robertson and Keeling, “Stirring the Lions”, p.232.

Constructing the European Citizens

Integration in the area of education is specifically crucial, because it is one of the most tangible areas of integration. It has the potential to further the concept of EU citizenship. Therefore, in all of the educational documents, one encounters references to the concept of EU citizenship. This part will analyse how the relationship between EU citizenship and education is framed.

In many of the EU documents, European citizenship is conceptualised purely as a right of free movement, which Ollikainen calls the most “banal conception of the European citizenship”, linked with the Single Market project.⁶⁰ Education mobility first and foremost is linked to the EU citizens’ right to freedom of movement, thus enhances the EU citizenship rights. The Youth survey of 2007 indicated that 94% think that being a citizen of the EU is being able to study in any EU country.⁶¹ Student mobility in higher education was 3,244 in 1987/8. In the 2009/10 academic year, this figure rose to 213,266. During the same period, the total number of mobile staff was 37,766. Overall, since the inception of the program 2.3 million students were mobile. There is no doubt that education policy of the EU gives rise to high levels of mobility. The education programs contribute to one of the rights that was granted to the EU citizens under the Maastricht Treaty: the right to circulate and reside freely in the Union.

In the education documents, there is also emphasis on a shared European heritage. Education cooperation has the potential of bringing into contact different cultures, and increasing people’s awareness of existing common norms. One such example is the 1988 Resolution, which underlined this aiming to “strengthen in young people a sense of European identity and make clear to them the value European civilisation and of the foundations on which the European peoples intend to base their development today, that is in particular the safeguarding of the principles of democracy, social justice and respect for human rights”.⁶²

While there was no mention of European dimension, the Sorbonne declaration referred to the construction of European citizenship by stating that the creation of such an area gives Europe “a solemn opportunity to engage in the endeavour to create a European area of higher education, where national identities and common interests can interact and strengthen each other for the benefit of Europe, of its students, and more generally of its citizens”.⁶³ The Bologna Declaration also made reference to a common shared space:

A Europe of Knowledge is now widely recognised as an irreplaceable factor for social and human growth and as an indispensable component to consolidate and enrich the European citizenship, capable of giving its citizens the necessary competences to face the challenges of the new millennium, together with an awareness of shared values and belonging to a common social and cultural space.⁶⁴

60 A. Ollikainen, “European Education, European Citizenship”, *European Education*, Vol. 32, No. 2, 2000, p.6-21.

61 European Commission, “Young Europeans”, *Flash Eurobarometer 202*, 2007.

62 Resolution of the Council and the Ministers of Education Meeting within the Council on the European Dimension in Education, 24 May 1988, *Official Journal C 177*, 06/07/1988.

63 “Sorbonne Declaration”.

64 “Bologna Declaration”.

In the Sorbonne declaration, the past is cherished as a time when “students and academics would freely circulate and rapidly disseminate knowledge throughout the continent”.⁶⁵ The Ministers therefore aimed for “an open European area for higher learning”. In the Report of 2001 the promotion of the European dimension is linked to existence of shared values:

...higher education has broader aims of the social, cultural and human development and an irreplaceable role in a Europe of Knowledge. The EHEA will be the result of shared values and a common social and cultural heritage, but also of the goals established in the Bologna Declaration.⁶⁶

In May 2007, the Education Ministers adopted the “EHEA in a Global Setting” strategy and emphasized Europe’s shared heritage and norms:

Innovation and renewal can... only be successful if they build on an awareness of traditions and values. Like the EHEA as a whole, also in its global setting it should build on Europe’s heritage, values and achievements, while adapting to changing circumstances across the world”. These principles are deemed to be “belief in democracy, human rights and the rule of law. It is based on the ideas of cultural and religious dialogue and tolerance.⁶⁷

Therefore, as seen from various official documents, in education policy the European dimension has become an inseparable part of the national dimension. This is indicated by the references to and emphasis on EU citizenship in the documents. The European education policy, while as argued above was initially solely linked with the economic goals of the Union, has in time gained a political dimension. Moreover, education cooperation is an important tool of communication for the Commission: explaining the rationale behind the integration. Education programs have especially become an “image enhancing” activity for the Commission.⁶⁸ These programs are one of the few tangible benefits of the European integration process that aims to bring the EU closer to its citizens. The 1988 Resolution aims to raise awareness in terms of the “advantages, which the Community represents, but also of the challenges it involves, in opening up an enlarged economic and social area to them”.⁶⁹ Similarly, the Green Paper on European dimension underlines that through education policy “a better understanding of Europe today, and of its construction for tomorrow” is possible.⁷⁰ The EU documents also tend to conceptualise education in terms of the potential contributions it can make to the European integration process and strengthening identification with the process in the long run.

65 “Sorbonne Declaration”.

66 Bologna Follow-up Group, “Furthering the Bologna Process”, Report to the Ministers of Education of the signatory countries by Pedro Lourtie, Prague, 2001.

67 Bologna Working Group on External Dimension, “European Higher Education in a Global Setting. A Strategy for the External Dimension of the Bologna Process”, 2007.

68 Ollikainen, “European Education, European Citizenship”.

69 Resolution, 1988.

70 Commission of the European Communities, *Green Paper*.

As argued the Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process signified a change in the education narrative.⁷¹ This also meant a change in the understanding of European citizenship. The concept of European citizenship starting from the 1990s is linked to the aim of increasing political participation among European citizens. This conceptualisation is called “active citizenship”. The concept of “active citizenship” is used very frequently especially since the beginning of 1990s. In March 2001, the European Council stated that active citizenship was one of the three strategic goals of European education. In 2004, the European Commission established a *Community Action Program*, for the enhancement of “active citizenship”.

In the European education policy and space, the individual is put to the forefront. Analysing one of the communications of the European Commission entitled *Towards a Europe of Knowledge* of 1997; Lawn sets out what the EU narrative is in regard to the concept of European citizenship.⁷² He argues that European citizenship has been “located in the individual”. In other words, “the individuals of this ‘area’ would enter or become members, if they had attained, or would attain knowledge and competence”.⁷³ The EU expects its citizens to be lifelong learners, responsible for themselves in catching up with the knowledge-based economy and responsible for their own employability. Novoa argues “the European education policies are creating new conceptions of the ‘reasonable’ and ‘responsible’ lifelong learner and, at the same time, constructing an ideology that blames individuals who are unable to take care of their ‘own life,’ that is their ‘own education’”.⁷⁴ In 2007, the education programs were re-structured under the name Lifelong Learning Program on the basis of Education and Training 2010 work program to contribute to the Lisbon Strategy.

The concept of “active citizenship” in connection to life-long learning is frequently underlined in the Bologna Process. The London *Communiqué* stated that:

Our aim is to ensure that our HEIs have the necessary resources to continue to fulfil their full range of purposes. Those purposes include: preparing students for life as active citizens in a democratic society; preparing students for their future careers and enabling their personal development; creating and maintaining a broad, advanced knowledge base; and stimulating research and innovation.⁷⁵

The Leuven *Communiqué* also employed the concept of active citizenship:

European higher education also faces the major challenge and the ensuing opportunities of globalisation and accelerated technological developments with new providers, new learners and new types of learning. Student-centred learning and mobility will help students develop the competences they need in a changing labour market and will empower them to become active and responsible citizens.⁷⁶

71 Lawn, “Borderless Education” and “Soft Governance and the Learning Spaces of Europe”.

72 Also see Lawn, “Borderless Education”.

73 Ibid.

74 Antonio Novoa, “Ways of Thinking about Education in Europe”, in Novoa and Lawn, *Fabricating Europe*, p. 142.

75 *Communiqué of the Meeting of European Ministers in Charge of Higher Education in London*, “Towards the European Higher Education Area: Responding to Challenges in a Globalised World”, 2007.

76 *Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education*, “The Bologna Process 2020 - The European Higher Education Area in the New Decade”, Leuven and Louvain-la-Neuve, 2009.

The measures taken to promote European dimension are meant to enable the students to “achieve their full potential for European identity, citizenship and employability”⁷⁷ and “prepar[e] the student for the labour market, for further competence building and for active citizenship”.⁷⁸ Here higher education is constructed as something “extending beyond the university”, which is exemplified by the emphasis put on life-long learning.⁷⁹

This has been criticized; as education is characterised as “no longer a public good, it could be an individual necessity, as in lifelong learning”.⁸⁰ The focus on competence can also be read in a similar manner where the aim is “to develop employability through the acquisition of competencies made necessary through changes in work and its organization. This means that it is necessary to promote on a lifelong basis creativity, flexibility, adaptability and abilities to “learn to learn” and to solve problems”.⁸¹ This indicated the change in conceptualisation of both the European dimension and European citizenship. Lawn argues:

Education was seen in the EU as a way of driving integration, but in its new version, the individuation of learning responsibility, it also represents an abdication of its own responsibility. There is no vision offered but an endless circulation of plans and partnerships: no hope but only necessity, and no desire but only private compulsion.⁸²

One of the main concerns surrounding education is whether the Bologna process is commercialising higher education. Therefore, the communiqués from 2001 onwards have answered these concerns by indicating that education is still a public responsibility. Still the documents in recent years have shown a changing conceptualization of EU citizenship, where the individual is put to the forefront. This relates to the change in the policy narrative as a response to globalisation.

Conclusion

This article focused on the European education space and the policy narrative of the space. The education policy was analysed in five phases. The education space was built around the policy narrative of “European dimension”. The research showed that education policy at first was Europe-centred and regional in focus. The initiatives in the area of education were taken to complement the economic integration project of the Union.

The economic overtone of the policy later gained a cultural and political one in the 1980s. With the emphasis it put on the construction of the European dimension, the education policy has also come to be seen as an instrument that had the potential

77 Communiqué Berlin.

78 Communiqué of the Conference of European Ministers Responsible for Higher Education in Bergen, “The European Higher Education Area—Achieving the Goals”, 2005.

79 Keeling, “The Bologna Process and the Lisbon Research Agenda”.

80 Martin Lawn, “The ‘Usefulness’ of Learning”, p.330.

81 Ibid., p.331.

82 Lawn, “Borderless Education”, p.179.

to play an important role in the construction of European citizenship. It is one of the policy areas that is the most tangible to the public. The frequent emphasis on the concept of European citizenship in the education statements is an evidence of this.⁸³ The biggest problem the EU is facing today is its legitimacy crisis. The European education policy, with its substantial programs, is a step forward in coping with this problem. Education holds a key role in the debates surrounding the democratic deficit of the EU. It can be concluded that the European organs, by promoting cooperation in education, are in fact affecting national education systems; by setting standards and thus indirectly influencing the political socialization of the Europeans.

After 2000, European education policy acquired an international dimension. The Lisbon Strategy and the Bologna Process changed the narratives of the education policy to an international one, linking education with the goal of knowledge-based economy. The education policy today is both a response to and a manifestation of globalisation. Education is not only crucial for EU's regional integration, but also for its international presence.

83 See Ollikainen, "European Education, European Citizenship"

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