

Aalborg University

Faculty of Social Sciences



**AALBORG UNIVERSITY**  
DENMARK

**How has the top-down process of Europeanization influenced Czech higher education, with the focus on the Erasmus Programme from 2004-2019?**

Master Thesis

Student: **Halina Kudlickova**

Supervisor: **Laura Anne Landorff**

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## **Abstract**

This thesis is researching the question of Europeanization process projecting into higher education in the Czech Republic. Higher education has gained a lot of importance in the last couple of years. It is important for growth of individuals as well as for development of institutions of higher education and its systems. The European Union plays a big role in shaping higher education in Europe, through educational programmes, like the Erasmus Programme, it contributes to development and enhancement of higher education and therefore provides individuals with better and quality education. I am starting with description of higher educational policy and the Erasmus Programme. There is no higher educational policy in the European Union which would affect all Member States, only cooperation among the EU and its Member States through joint goals, support or educational programmes. The cooperation even started through European educational programmes back in 1971 and has been effectively shaping higher education in Europe since. In the Czech Republic, higher education is autonomous and is therefore mostly in the hands of institutions of higher education, but in some aspects, the institutions have to act according to the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Czech Republic which implements some aspect in accordance with the institutions of the European Union. The Erasmus Programme is one example. It is a student mobility programme and since 2014 it has been expanded to academic/non-academic staff mobility and it does not only offer student with the possibility to study at universities abroad but also to participate in traineeships in foreign countries. Since Erasmus is a European programme, Member States have to comply with its rules in order to participate in it. To explain the adaptation of some aspect in higher education through the Programme, I have chosen the Europeanization theory, more precisely the top-down process of Europeanization. It is focusing on adaptational pressure from the EU level, deriving from, for example, European policies or procedures, and projects into national level as changes of domestic policies, structures or systems. Because I am researching the Europeanization process of higher education only in the Czech Republic, I have done a case study. Case study, according to Bryman, means that only one case, which can be anything from an individual to an organisation, in my case, a state, is thoroughly analysed. Case study is mostly connected to qualitative research methods, and that is why I have chosen to use qualitative data analysis as a method for the analysis. This method is based on assigning data into categories, which were created based on the research question and findings are later interpreted and concluded. It ensures a systematic and empirical process of analysis. I have analysed documents from the

EU and the Czech Republic in order to find out what did the Czech higher education had to implement regarding the Erasmus Programme. The most important thing is the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education which universities have to obtain in order to participate in the exchange. Institutions of higher education had to adapt their study programmes and offer courses in English language. Every participating university has to establish the ECTS credit system to enable student taking a semester in another country. Also, a National Agency which manages the Programme in a national level had to be established in every participating country and there are administrative and legal requirements tied to Erasmus which everyone has to comply with. In the Czech Republic, all forms of requests coming from the EU institutions were implemented and they reflected into a more international and Europeanized higher education.

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## Introduction

My Master thesis will be focused, as seen from the title, on Europeanization<sup>1</sup> of higher education in the Czech Republic, in particular through the Erasmus Programme<sup>2</sup>. Higher education is gaining more and more attention in recent years in terms of its development and reforms, and in the European Union (EU), it is the desire for an integrated area of higher education in Europe. Higher education in the Czech Republic has gone through a lot of changes in the last few decades, for example, transformation of higher education system in 1990s, after the end of the communist regime, or adaptation of Czech higher education in order to gain access to a full membership in the EU. Higher education is in the competences of Member States of the EU, there is therefore no European policy on higher education. Member States only cooperate<sup>3</sup> with the European Union regarding higher education, the EU for example sets joint goals or offers advice. Nevertheless, the EU institutions are trying to advance higher education in a national level through European educational programmes. One of the most significant one is the Erasmus Programme, which is helping to develop higher education in Europe and functions as a tool for European Integration. It is amazing how it developed and what was this Programme able to achieve since its beginning. Thanks to Erasmus, many young people have gained valuable experience and education for a good job. It helps to gain cultural experience, improve language, expand horizons, etc. and not only from student point of view, but the benefits of staff and academic exchange as well. Learning about all this brought me to my thesis topic:

How has the top-down process of Europeanization influenced Czech higher education, with the focus on the Erasmus Programme from 2004-2019?

I would like to use the Europeanization theory in order to analyse the influence of the Erasmus Programme into the Czech higher education, the national structure of higher education in the Czech Republic. I have been inspired by a research done by Petr Pabian who analysed Europeanization of Czech higher education governance, but in a different time frame. He focused on a period starting in the late 80s and ended around 2004. I would like to

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<sup>1</sup> Europeanization “*is a process of structural change, variously affecting actors and institutions, ideas and interests*” (Featherstone 2003, p.3). Europeanization theory will be described thoroughly in the second chapter.

<sup>2</sup> The Erasmus Programme is an educational programme managed by the European Union and it is enabling student mobility in institutions of higher education. It will be explained in detail in the second part of the first chapter.

<sup>3</sup> Cooperation among the EU and its Member States regarding higher education will be explained in the first chapter on higher education.

continue in a similar direction of his research and find out if Europeanization has occurred in Czech higher education with a focus on the Erasmus Programme from 2004, which is when Czech Republic became a member of the European Union, until now, 2019. I have chosen to do so, because Europeanization of Czech higher education, mainly through the Erasmus Programme, has not been analysed before in the time frame from 2004 until 2019. Most scholars focus on Europeanization of higher education in the Czech Republic in general and usually focus on the timeline from early 1990's until around 2004, which is the case of Petr Pabian.

Next, I will move into chapter one, in which I will talk about higher educational policy. I will state what it entails in general, how was it developed in the European Union and then I will describe higher education in the Czech Republic. Also, the Erasmus Programme will be depicted in the first chapter, in terms of its history, what it presents, what other similar educational programmes does the EU support/ed and lastly, I will describe the Erasmus Programme in the Czech Republic.

Chapter 2 is given to a description of Europeanization theory. I will define its meaning and state some of the most important scholars behind this theory. I will also describe typology and framework of Europeanization and what can be Europeanized.

Chapter 3 introduces research design and methods. First, I will state ontological and epistemological perspective of my thesis. Then, I will cover qualitative research and describe what case study is, as that is what I am researching. Another thing that will be stated in that chapter is what data have I selected and in what time frame I am conducting the analysis. Lastly, I will describe method used in the thesis, which is qualitative content analysis, and also how will I use the method.

Chapter 4 will comprise of the main analysis. I will analyse all data that I have gathered by applying it to qualitative content analysis using the Europeanization theory. I will also conduct an interview which will enlighten the main analysis part and lastly, I will compare my research to a research by Petr Pabian.

Conclusion, the last part, will of course conclude the whole thesis, but mainly, I will summarize all my findings from the analysis and hopefully will be able to clearly answer my research question.

# 1. Higher educational policy and the Erasmus Programme

## 1.1. Higher educational policy

In this part, I will focus on higher education and its policy, which is an important aspect of this thesis, as higher education in the Czech Republic is what is being analysed. First, I will cover the development of higher education in the European Union and then describe higher educational policy on a national level, specifically in the Czech Republic. Before I begin, I would shortly like to describe what educational policy is in general. Educational policy can be described as:

*“principles, priorities and methods of decision-making about educational institutions. This decision-making involves strategic goals towards development in education, legislative framework of educational institutions, financing methods, setting objectives and content of education, influencing conditions of activities of educational institutions and the way of their control” (Pařízek, 1993, p. 115 [translated from Czech]).*

Interest in higher education policy is rising in many countries, highly-educated people became an eminent part of economic prosperity and development, therefore quality education available to everyone is one of the priority topics in today's world. Now, I will move onto development of educational cooperation in the European Union.

### 1.1.1. European educational cooperation

The EC<sup>4</sup>/EU's first steps taken towards cooperation in education were in 1971, in that year, first meeting regarding education was held by six Ministers of Education. This was evoked by interest from Member States to create educational programmes. The outcome was a creation of 'European co-operation in education', which was described in a document called the "Janne report". The name comes from one of the former Ministers of Education, Hanri Janne (Hingel 2001, p.8). In 1974, the Education Committee was established and in 1976 an action programme was adopted. It did not contain a large number of competences for the EU, it was mostly concerning different studies and research, and collection of newest information and data (Hingel 2001, p.8). Not to forget, the Erasmus Programme was first mentioned in this period<sup>5</sup>. Higher education was properly incorporated as an EU competence with the

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<sup>4</sup> EC - acronym for The European Community, former European Union.

<sup>5</sup> Development and history of the Erasmus Programme will be examined in the next subchapter 1.2.



Treaty of Maastricht in 1992 (European Parliament, 2018). Article 165(1) in the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU) states that:

*“The Union shall contribute to the development of quality education by encouraging cooperation between Member States and, if necessary, by supporting and supplementing their action, while fully respecting the responsibility of the Member States for the content of teaching and the organisation of education systems and their cultural and linguistic diversity”* (TFEU 2012).

Article 165(2) in the TFEU is dealing with development of the European dimension in education<sup>6</sup>; it also focuses on student and teacher mobility and acknowledgment of diplomas; another point is to support cooperation among educational institutions, etc. (TFEU 2012). Another large turning point for education was in 1994, when education was stated in the White Paper on “Growth, Competitiveness, Employment”<sup>7</sup> from the European Commission. The White Paper states that it is necessary for education to adapt so that societal challenges of the Community can be tackled and puts education as a primary area for development (Hingel 2001, p.8). In 1996, a new White Paper on “Teaching and Learning – Towards the learning Society” was published and 5 main goals were presented; they included for example recognition of skills and mobility, internships, gaining proficient level of secondary languages, etc (Hingel 2001, p.8-9).

Cooperation in the area of education is stated in Article 165 and 166 TFEU treaty base, *“that grants the European Union only supporting competences, excluding legally binding Community initiatives”* (Drachenberg & Brianson 2016, p.207). Harmonisation between educational systems is difficult due to an extensive contrast between them (Drachenberg & Brianson 2016, p.207). Nevertheless, with the Bologna Process in 1999, a certain level of harmonisation in higher education was introduced. Ministers of education from European countries agreed to a cooperation among them. A three-level system<sup>8</sup> of higher education was adopted by the majority of countries in Europe and another agreement was

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<sup>6</sup> The European Dimension in education is a concept representing a ‘pro-European educational trend’, which was occurring mainly in politics, but has not substantially affected policies or activities. This notion originated through educational policies in the EU and the Council of Europe, but without ratification of the Member States (Fernández & Blanco 2016, p.1).

<sup>7</sup> The Write Paper is also recognised under the name the “Jacques Delors White Paper” (Hingel 2001, p.8).

<sup>8</sup> Three-level system comprises of bachelor’s degree (first level), master’s degree (second level) and doctorate degree (third and final level) (INCE 2018).

towards a unified grading system, the ECTS System<sup>9</sup>. Both systems are known and used today (INCE 2018).

As we can see, higher education has been acknowledged by the EU in the last three decades, but the beginning step in gaining rights in the area of education by the EU was implementing a ‘rolling agenda’ of the Council in 1999. It provides a certainty that the EU Council will continually focus on strengthening and supporting education. In 2000, at the European Council meeting in Lisbon, policy-making in regard to education started and two demands were defined. The European Union aims *“to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world, thereby creating an important link between education and employment policies and making improvements in Education and training a necessity for the EU’s competitiveness”* (Drachenberg & Brianson 2016, p.207). The other demand was for the European Union to reflect and focus on future goals of education systems (Drachenberg & Brianson 2016, p.207). This cooperation and strengthening of European integration in the policy area of education among Member States can be defined as an Open Method for Coordination (OMC)<sup>10</sup> (Drachenberg & Brianson 2016, p.207-209).

Future plan by the European Commission is to build a ‘European Education Area’ by 2025. The aim is to create a strong and quality education and training area accessible to everyone and help with a future career. The main goals are to make studying abroad and knowing two secondary languages a norm, ensure recognition of education diplomas all over the EU, provide quality education to everyone and create a strong European identity (European Commission 2019c).

In conclusion, even though, higher education policy is managed on a national level, the European Union is aware of the importance of higher education and the EU institutions are indirectly influencing educational policies in Member States and are working towards Member States embracing certain aspects, goals and principles. The EU is helping to improve

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<sup>9</sup> ECTS grading system stands for European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System, with this system, students have to gain 60ECTS per academic year (INCE 2018).

<sup>10</sup> *“The Open Method of Coordination (OMC) is an EU policy-making process, or regulatory instrument, formally initiated by the Lisbon European Council in 2000. The OMC does not result in EU legislation, but is a method of soft governance which aims to spread best practice and achieve convergence towards EU goals in those policy areas which fall under the partial or full competence of Member States. Since binding EU rules cannot be used as the means to achieve convergence among Member States in such cases, OMC relies on other mechanisms. These mechanisms involve establishing guidelines, quantitative and qualitative indicators and benchmarks, and national and regional targets, backed by periodic evaluations and peer reviews. The evaluations are aimed at helping Member States learn from one another and consequently improve their domestic policies”* (European Parliament 2014).

education in Europe in different ways, for instance, through European action programmes (like the Erasmus Programme), which work as a tool for development of European higher education.

### *1.1.2. Higher education in the Czech Republic*

Higher education in Czech dates all the way back to 1348, in which first university in Czech was built, the Charles University in Prague. The first system of higher education is described as Humboldtian model<sup>11</sup> of academic self-rule, after the end of communism, in which universities had no autonomy, higher education moved again to reintroduced self-governance. In 1990, Higher Education Act was introduced, and universities gained power over vital matters, involving for example admission requirements, research or teaching. The Czech Rectors Conference and Council of Higher Education Institutions<sup>12</sup> had to agree to policy changes submitted by the government (Dobbins & Knill 2009, p. 404-405). A minor change in higher education was made by the OECD<sup>13</sup>, they tried, for instance, to establish a more effective management and funding, modernise higher education, or direct competitiveness. Nevertheless, Czech academics enforced their autonomy and stopped several proposed reformations, like the urge for better management. In 1999, several policy changes were made with the Bologna Process as already stated previously (Dobbins & Knill 2009, p. 406-407). Today, higher education in the Czech Republic is still more or less in the power of universities and its faculties as they are pretty autonomous and act according to their conditions (Pařízek 1993, p.116-117).

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<sup>11</sup> Humboldtian model of higher education is a concept adopted from Germany and the rudiments lies on university systems being based on humanist principles. The approach is to join arts and sciences together with research in order to gain ‘comprehensive general learning and cultural knowledge’. It was named after a Prussian philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt (norseforcenews 2018, p.1).

<sup>12</sup> The Czech Rectors Conference, founded in 1993, is a union in the Czech Republic, made by ‘Rectors of all public, all state and some private higher education institutions’ (CzechInvest 2019). Together, with the Council of Higher Education Institutions, they support interests of students and bargain those interest on a governmental level (esu 2019). Both associations are composed by academics, no external stakeholders are a part of it (Dobbins & Knill 2009, p.405).

<sup>13</sup> OECD stands for the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, which is supporting policies aiming to enhance economic and social welfare of everyone (OECD 2019).

## 1.2. The Erasmus Programme

In this next part, the Erasmus Programme will be described. First, I will define what the Erasmus Programme is and how it was developed. I will also state other European educational programmes and the shift from Erasmus to Erasmus+.

### 1.2.1. What is the Erasmus Programme?

Firstly, it is necessary to explain what the Erasmus Programme is. “*Erasmus is the world’s most successful student mobility programme*” (European Commission 2012) and its acronym stands for “*European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students*” (European Commission 2013). This Programme enables hundreds of thousands of students yearly, to study or work in a foreign country. Young people can therefore study in another university as a part of their degree programme, gain skills by working as an intern, experience living abroad, improve their second language, get independent and gain confidence, learn about new culture and European identity, etc. Erasmus does not support only students, but also academic staff and cooperation between institutions of higher education and that way brings new ideas and methods in learning, teaching and other study relevant areas (European Commission 2012; European Commission 2014). Another noteworthy point of Erasmus is that “*Student mobility contributes to individuals’ personal development and thus supports the broader development of Europe’s economies and societies*” (European Commission 2012). Erasmus Programme is aiming to increase quality and quantity of student and academic mobility in Europe, increase cooperation and compatibility of education systems among universities in Europe, but also to increase cooperation with universities and businesses (European Commission 2012). Because of its exceptionality and numerous activities, the Erasmus Programme is undoubtedly “*enhancing the quality of higher education*” (European Commission 2017).

### 1.2.2. History of the Erasmus Programme

In 1976, an education scheme was introduced by Hywel Ceri Jones, the founder of the Erasmus Programme (Erasmusplus 2017). Among many important roles, he was the Head of the department for education and youth policies under the European Commission and Commission’s director for education, training and youth (EAIE.org). His idea was “*to promote joint programmes of study between universities and other institutions of higher education*” (Jones 2013). Jones thought of the Programme by experiencing it himself at the

University of Sussex, UK and his wish was to enable students in acquiring a university degree partly abroad, and together with changing their lives and attitudes, to show it in their qualifications for a future job (Jones 2013). The meaning of Erasmus acronym was previously stated, but the name actually comes from Erasmus of Rotterdam, a philosopher, theologian and a humanist (European Commission 2013). It took a “*10-year period of a large-scale pilot*” (Jones 2013), before the Erasmus Programme was officially put into action in 1987/8 under education commissioners Manuel Marín and Peter Sutherland, also known as the fathers of the EU’s Erasmus Programme (Erasmusplus 2017; Jones 2018). In those 10 years, universities already started a student exchange to ensure that the Programme will work, trust from potential students and academics had to be gained and negotiations with authorities of Member States about Erasmus started. An important part was to provide universities with a direct power over several aspect of the Programme, for example admissions of students, autonomy, degree qualifications, teaching methods, etc. Another step in the process was to obtain a legal basis for educational cooperation that was set to the Treaty and therefore ensured finances from the EU to the Erasmus Programme (Jones 2013). Within its first year, 3224 students from 11 initial countries were able to participate in the Erasmus Programme (European Commission 2012). Today, all 28 Member States of the European Union, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway, North Macedonia, Serbia and Turkey are participating in the Erasmus Programme and they are considered as Programme countries<sup>14</sup> (European Commission 2019d).

### *1.2.3. Joint Programmes and Erasmus+*

Since the beginning, Erasmus have experienced a number of changes and has been a part of other educational programmes that were managed by the EU. To only name a few, from 1995 until 1999, Socrates Programme was established to enable all student, not only from higher education, to gain quality education with European aspects and give them a chance for a career anywhere in Europe. Aim was also to support educational cooperation and create quality education for everyone, support learning of European languages, etc. (European Commission 2018c). It incorporated other educational programmes, together with the Erasmus one, into it, and that way strengthened cooperation in higher education and increased student mobility (Teichler 2002, p.14). Next was Socrates II running from 2001-2006, which

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<sup>14</sup> These countries are referred to as Programme countries, meaning that they have established a National Agency and do financially support the Programme. There are also Partner Countries, which are all over the world and do not participate fully in the Programme (European Commission 2015).

basically continued on the work of the previous programme only adding few new aspects (Teichler 2002, p.27). Another programme, running from 2007 until 2013 was Lifelong Learning Programme, this programme replaced the Socrates II and other educational programmes, in order to unify them and support mobility, partnerships and enhance the quality of education (European Commission 2018a). After almost 30 years since the Erasmus programme was established, Erasmus changed to Erasmus+. It was set as a programme which will run from 2014 until 2020 (Erasmusplus 2019a). The rudiments of the Erasmus Programme have stayed the same since 1987, the Erasmus+ have not changed the basis, only included more principles (Erasmusplus 2017). The aim was to make the Programme more integrated and worldwide (European Commission 2015). Erasmus+ is offering more opportunities and is intended for education, training, youth and sport (Erasmusplus 2019a). Erasmus + is also following in the footsteps of the previously mentioned programmes, because it is uniting several European educational programmes together (European Commission 2019b, p.6).

#### *1.2.4. Erasmus in the Czech Republic*

Czech Republic is a member of the Erasmus Programme since 1998, which means they participated in the programme before becoming a member of the EU in 2004 (euractiv 2014). It was not deemed that successful from the beginning, but that was caused mainly because of low awareness and propagation of the programme, but nowadays the Erasmus Programme is successful in the Czech Republic and is gaining more publicity. Many Czech people are participating in the programme and the number of both outgoing and incoming students is rising. Since 2007, the Erasmus Programme, together with other European educational programmes, are carried forward and managed by the Czech 'National Agency for European Educational Programmes (NAEP)' (euractiv 2014). All Czech public and private higher educational institutions can participate in the programme if they own the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education issued by the European Commission. The whole process of student and staff mobility, both incoming and outgoing, is then fully executed by faculties of higher education institutions (erasmusplus 2019b). In 2017/2018 the number of outgoing students was 7 176, approximately 4/5 out of that number, were student going abroad to study and the remaining 1/5 were students going for a traineeship in a foreign country. The number of incoming students in the same academic year was 10 559, of which 8 121 were students coming to study at Czech universities and the rest were students coming

for a traineeship. Most of the Czech students were traveling to Denmark and the highest number of incoming students were from France and Spain (erasmusplus 2018).

## 2. Europeanization

The aim of this chapter is to explain the Europeanization theory used in this thesis as it is a necessary tool in the analysis part and one of the main aspects covering the research. I will be using Europeanization theory to try analysing influence of the Erasmus programme into Czech higher education, the national structure of higher education in Czech Republic. First, I will define what Europeanization means and how can it be interpreted, then I will describe its typology and processes.

### 2.1. Definition of Europeanization

Europeanization has its beginning in 1980s, in that time, first articles referred to Europeanization as a way to describe a shift in European and national politics. But it was not until three decades ago that Europeanization gained a lot of attention in social sciences and since has been covered by many scholars. Because it is a very dynamic and constantly developing concept, different notions of Europeanization have been made and presumably will be claimed in the future (Featherstone 2003, p.3-5). I have chosen few authors among many and will incorporate their work into an in-depth description of the theory. My choice is based on a number of citations and references that has been done by those scholars and also by availability of their work. One of the most cited author to mention this concept was Robert Ladrech, for the first time in 1994. His interpretation of Europeanization is: *“Europeanization is an incremental process reorienting the direction and shape of politics to the degree that EC political and economic dynamics become part of the organizational logic of national politics and policy-making”* (Ladrech 1994, p.69). Meaning that the European Union has an impact into a national level of Member States and influences their adaptation into certain environments. It suggests that the change is not forced but that actors alter its preferences to match the EU standards and logic (Fetherstone 2003, p.12) One objection would be that Ladrech only narrows this change/adaptation to national politics and policy-making (Radaelli 2003, p.30). Ladrech states that Europeanization is becoming more and more used by scholars in order to analyse a change and adaptation between supranational and national actors in policy-making (Ladrech 2001). In his later work, he is referring to other authors, among them, is one of the most known author of Europeanization, Claudio M. Radaelli, who, in his earlier work, defined Europeanization as *“a set of processes through which the EU political, social and economic dynamics become part of the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures and public policies”* (Radaelli 2000). Ladrech incorporated Radaelli’s notion into



his work and came to an understanding that the centre of Europeanization is “*on the adaptive response by actors to a changed or changing environment, [...] which has most direct impact on resources, system or organisation maintenance, etc.*” (Ladrech 2001). Emphasis is mostly drawn onto political structures of Member States in which transformation occurs and influence is coming from institutions of the European Union and its policy competences (Ladrech 2001). Likewise, Radaelli, in 2003, examined the work of Ladrech and taking into consideration his definition of Europeanization from 1994, Radaelli drawn into a conclusion that Europeanization can be described as:

*“Process of (a) construction, (b) diffusion, and (c) institutionalization of formal and informal rules, procedures, policy paradigms, styles, ‘ways of doing things’, and shared beliefs and norms which are first defined and consolidated in the making of EU public policy and politics and then incorporated in the logic of domestic discourse, identities, political structures, and public policies”* (Radaelli 2003, p.30)

This has become a widely cited definition of Europeanization and primarily describes a top-down<sup>15</sup> process of Europeanization. Another noteworthy description of Europeanization is by Tanja A. Börzel, she defines it “*a process by which domestic policy areas become increasingly subject to European policy-making*” (Börzel 1999, p.574). In my opinion, the most intelligible definition of Europeanization is by Héri-tier, in his work he explains the term: “*as the process of influence deriving from European decisions and impacting member states’ policies and political and administrative structures*” (Héri-tier et al. 2001, p.3).

As we can see, Europeanization is described in several ways and it is not an easy theory to explain. Nevertheless, it is a theory that sets light to significant transformations in domestic and European politics and society and those changes are what this thesis is examining (Featherstone 2003). Next, I will present typology of Europeanization.

## **2.2. Typology of Europeanization**

The definition of Europeanization was explained in the previous subchapter, but for this part, it is necessary to add one last quote about Europeanization, which describes the notion as “*a process of structural change, variously affecting actors and institutions, ideas and interests*” (Featherstone 2003, p.3). Speaking of the structural change, Europeanization

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<sup>15</sup> Top-down process will be described in a subchapter 2.2.3.

can be divided into two categories, a maximalist and a minimalist one. From a maximalist point of view, the change has to be well connected and have certain qualities linked to Europe. It explains two out of four categories of Europeanization, and that is ‘historical process’ and ‘cultural diffusion’ of Europe, not so much of the EU. From a minimalist point of view which, unlike the maximalist one, is concerned about the European Union and its policies, and which explains the other two categories: ‘process of institutional adaptation’; and ‘adaptation of policy and policy processes’ (Featherstone 2003, p.5). These four processes can also be regarded as a ‘fourfold typology’ of Europeanization (Featherstone 2003, p.6). For my thesis, I will be using only the last two, the minimalist ones, as they are focused on a change in national institutions through Europeanization. Therefore, I will continue with a description of only those categories.

### *2.2.1. Europeanization as a ‘Process of institutional adaptation’*

There is a wide interest among scholars to identify Europeanization as the process of institutional adaptation. It is because of the desire to analyse how is the membership of the European Union affecting changes in domestic environment. To be more specific, how it affects certain actors and institutions on a national level. This shift can come straight from the EU institutions or be more of an indirect nature. It can be observed how institutions on a national level are adapting to the EU and what changes are being made. Europeanization can be used to analyse shift in different matters, for example, in political parties or governance, but the most important aspect for this thesis is, that a pressure from the EU can occur in universities as well (Featherstone 2003, p.7-9).

### *2.2.2. Europeanization as a ‘Adaptation of policies and policy processes’*

The other, even more used, category of Europeanization is studying how is the EU affecting the change in policies and policy processes among Member States. It is apparent of what is examined in this category. It is the adaptation in domestic policy of a certain Member State and the influence is coming from EU regulations or it is achieved through indirect actions by the EU. Europeanization can be considered the other way around as well, meaning that the EU policy making is influenced by contributions from national level. It can for example be an establishment of a new area in the EU level or assigning sovereignty of a certain matter to the EU (Featherstone 2003, p.9-10). The adaptation or influence is also

present among Member States themselves, where one Member State would ‘copy’ specific policies or its processes from another Member State (Featherstone 2003, p.11).

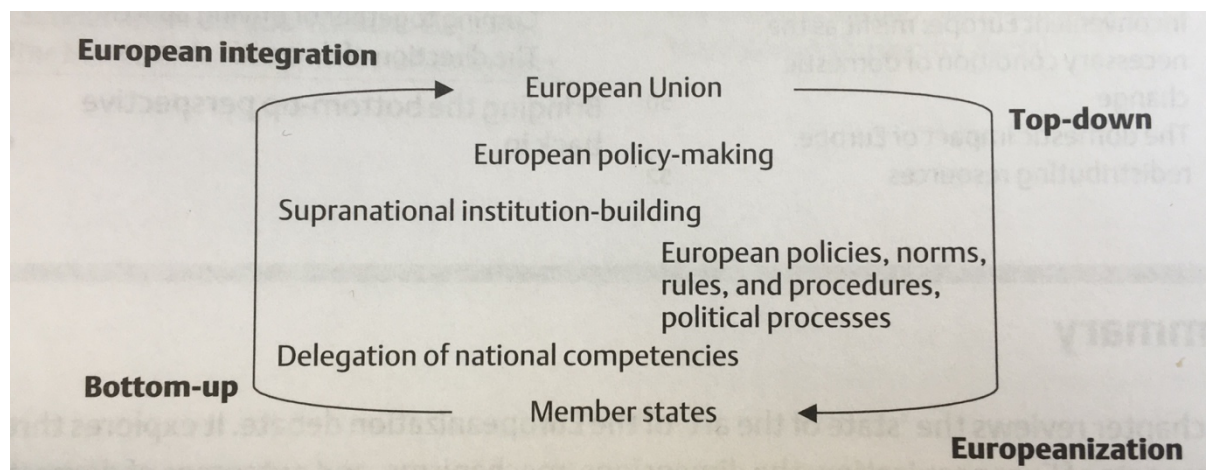
### 2.2.3. *‘Top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ processes of Europeanization*

Europeanization can be divided into two basic groups which are important when conducting a research, they are: ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ processes<sup>16</sup>; these processes analyse the concept of Europeanization from different perspectives (Börzel & Risse 2003, p.57). Some authors specify other categories as well, but first, it is important to distinguish between the two primary ones. For this part I have mainly chosen work by Ben Fonra and Sabine Saurugger, primary because of their basic and clear explanation. The ‘bottom-up’ process is explaining the process of national foreign-policy preferences being represented to the EU institutions and afterwards proceeded by the EU to strengthen foreign policy (Tonra 2015, p.184). The ‘top-down’ process is explaining the influence from EU institutions into the national institutions, processes and politics of Member States (Tonra 2015, p.184). Tonra argues that there is a third process called ‘cross-loading’, which is talking about Member States sharing and using others information, analysis and policymaking structures (Tonra 2015, p.184). Saurugger does not use the term ‘cross-loading’ process, instead he defines ‘circular Europeanization’, in which he argues that Europeanization is not linear process, but it is a combination and interaction between uploading and downloading processes (Saurugger 2014, p.125-126). According to Saurugger, the ‘bottom-up’ process is also referred to as European Integration and ‘top-down’ process is referred to as Europeanization (Saurugger 2014, p.125). This relationship and what is affected through the processes is shown in the figure below.

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<sup>16</sup> Some scholars use different terms for these processes. The ‘bottom-up’ process is also called uploading and the ‘top-down’ process can be called downloading (Saurugger 2014, p.124).

Figure 1: ‘Top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ connection between European Union and Member States (Börzel 2005, p.46).



source: Börzel 2005, p.46

### 2.3. Framework of Europeanization

The framework of Europeanization has likewise been discussed by several authors and therefore can be described in different ways. I chose framework that was designed by Christoph Knill and Dirk Lehmkuhl in 1999, which is explaining mechanisms of Europeanization in a straightforward manner and have been used by many scholars since (Featherstone 2003, p.14). They distinguish three mechanisms that are explaining the effect of policy-making in the EU into the domestic level. These mechanisms are called: ‘positive integration’; ‘negative integration’; and ‘framing integration’ (Knill & Lehmkuhl 1999, p.3). All mechanisms are analysing Europeanization from a top-down point of view (Featherstone 2003, p.14). ‘Positive integration’ is stated as a demand coming as a result from the European policy-making, that Member States have to comply with. These demands are indicated to be of a positive nature. It is like adopting a standpoint based on the EU into the domestic sphere. This mechanism is based on “*the institutional ‘goodness of fit’<sup>17</sup> of domestic and European arrangements*” (Knill & Lehmkuhl 1999, p.9). As an example of this mechanism, they stated environmental protection policy, health and safety at work policy, etc. (Knill & Lehmkuhl 1999, p.4-5). Another mechanism, the ‘negative integration’, is presented as an altering of

<sup>17</sup> ‘Goodness of fit’ is a term that is used to describe a presence of adaptational pressure from the EU level into the domestic level, its policies and institutions. The concept lies on Europeanization occurring only if there is a level of disparity, a ‘mis-fit’ between the European and national policies and institutions, hence Member States have to adapt to the European requirements and change their institutions or policies. If a certain EU policy is already implemented in the national one, meaning that there is a ‘good fit’ among the actors, Member States do not have to transform their institutions, only assimilate in a low scale to the requirements. Therefore, Europeanization is not happening (Radaelli 2003, p.44-45).

domestic opportunity structures by European legislation, which are signified as a power and resources distribution among actors in the national level. For example, the Common Market (Knill & Lehmkuhl 1999, p.4-6). 'Framing integration' as the last mechanism, is described as the 'weakest' one. Domestic arrangements are influenced by indirect means of the EU and not directly by European policy. The influence is reached by modifying beliefs and expectations of actor in the national level (Knill & Lehmkuhl 1999, p. 4).

#### **2.4. What is Europeanized?**

So that analysis can be properly conducted and it is clear of what will be analysed in terms of Europeanization influence, I will describe different areas that can be Europeanized as stated by Claudio M. Radaelli. He presents two main domains which can be affected by the European Union influence, they are: 'domestic political structures', which are further divided into: institutions, public administration, inter-governmental relations, the legal structure, structures of representation, cognitive and normative structures; and 'public policy' (Radaelli 2000, p.7-14).

#### **2.5. Europeanization and analysis**

When applying the effect of Europeanization to different national policies, like the higher education, the top-down process of Europeanization is the one to use. This thesis is analysing how has the Erasmus Programme influenced national structure of a Member State, in this case of the Czech Republic. Because of Erasmus being a European programme, I am applying the top-down process of Europeanization in the analysis part of my thesis. Next, I am moving to a description of higher educational policy.

### **3. Research design and methods**

This chapter is given to a description of different aspects relating to the thesis and ways in which I will perform my analysis. I will start with briefly covering ontological and epistemological perspective of my thesis and then move to a description of qualitative research. Next, I will state what a case study is and why I chose case study for my thesis. I will also describe what data have I selected for my analysis, in what time frame have I been searching for the data and how I gathered it. Lastly, I will define Qualitative Content Analysis which is used for the analysis part.

#### **3.1. Ontological and epistemological perspective**

In terms of ontology, it departs from the objective point of view, higher education has gained a lot of importance in the last couple of years and institutions of higher education are constantly working towards improvement of teaching methods and ways of learning. We can observe economic and technological expansion thanks to the increase of highly educated population. The European Union plays a big role in shaping higher education in Europe and through educational programmes contributes to development and enhancement of higher education in Member States and therefore provides individuals with better and quality education. Epistemologically speaking, it inclines to positivism. Europeanization of higher education should be analysed but also encouraged, because it is apparent that higher education has been prospering through European educational programmes.

#### **3.2. Qualitative research**

The analysis in my thesis is comprising of the qualitative research (QR), as I am interested in words and not statistics which would be the case in quantitative research (Bryman 2012, p.380). “*QR is a way to study the social interactions of humans in naturally occurring situations. The researcher plays a critical role in the process by gathering data and making sense of or interpreting the phenomena that are observed and revealed*” (Lichtman 2017, p. 12). The main feature of quantitative research is that it centres around finding a meaning or understanding of research problems and assumptions. The qualitative approach is used by researches as a way of collecting data and conducting an analysis with an elaborate explanation of findings and expressing a response to the problem (Lichtman 2017, p. 9-10). Main elements of qualitative research are, firstly, that is defines and seeks to comprehend

human and social phenomena. Mostly used research question in qualitative research are beginning with Why and What and the analysis is primarily thematic and set in a natural environment (Lichtman 2017, p. 18). The process of qualitative research is pretty straight forward. After finding a valid research question for analysis and collecting data related to the questions, the step then is interpreting it regards to chosen method and framework. Lastly, all finding must be explained and summarized (Bryman 2012, p.384).

### **3.3. Case study**

Now I will describe what a case study is, since it is a point of departure for my thesis. I chose case study because I am focusing only on one case, one country, and that is the Czech Republic. I specifically chose this Member State of the European Union because I am come from Czech, so it is one of the most interesting cases for me and one advantage is that I can read the language. First, it is important to say, what does a case study mean. “*The basic case study entails the detailed and intensive analysis of a single case*” (Bryman 2012, p.66). A case can be considered as many things, it can be a whole community or a single person, it can also be an organisation, or in my case a state. It can be said, that the specific case is chosen based on interest of the selected subject of investigation. Then, the chosen case is what is being researched and it is the core of the case study. Case studies usually prefer qualitative research methods, like observations and interviews, since these methods are particularly useful when it comes to the intensive, detailed examination of a specific case (Bryman 2012, p. 68). Among different types of cases, I have chosen a representative/typical case for my thesis. The aim of this case is capturing circumstances of common and daily happening situations. This type can be considered to symbolize a wider class of cases (Bryman 2012, p.70).

There are certain criteria to consider when using a case study, they serve as an assessment of the analysis and depict on limits of case study. The first one is reliability. The question here is whether it would be possible for another researched to reach the same results of the study. As a case study, obviously, focuses on one specific, can be a unique, case, it could be difficult to later use the same research. The second criterion is replicability, which deals with other researchers wanting to recreate an already conducted research and whether is it possible to achieve the same results. Research has to be replicable so that other researches are able to recreate the research. If it is not the case, the research might be considered false or a mistake might have been made. Third, and what is considered the most important criterion, is validity. there is validity. It is deemed so, because it is based on a conclusion of a research

being valid or not, if the conclusion is not valid, the research is not of a great value (Bryman 2012, p.46-47).

### **3.4. Data selection and collection**

For the analysis part of my thesis I will be using official documents, such as national documents (the White Paper from the Czech Republic, or strategic and concept documents); and then of course documents from the European Union, specifically from the European Commission and the European Parliament. The complete list of the used and analysed data will be listed in the end of my thesis, in the bibliography section. For one part of my analysis, I decided to conduct an interview with a coordinator of the Erasmus+ Programme at University of Pardubice in the Czech Republic. I have done a semi-structured qualitative interview<sup>18</sup> carried out via telephone with the permission to record the whole conversation. I will therefore transcribe the interview and because it is conducted in the Czech language, I will translate it to English language.

I have specifically chosen a time frame which begins in 2004, which is the year of the accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union and until now, 2019. The Czech Republic, as it was already stated, was participating in the Erasmus Programme even before becoming a member of the EU, but with gaining membership, the cooperation of Czech higher institutions in the Erasmus Programme has gained more value and benefits.

Therefore, I will be analysing the previously mentioned documents in my selected time frame, from 2004 until 2019. The interview will be used as a complimentary part of the main analysis part and to illuminate on certain aspects.

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<sup>18</sup> Qualitative interview is one of the most used interviews in qualitative research. It does not have a fixed design and pattern as a quantitative interview would. It is adaptable to environment and dialogue and it is also far more flexible. Qualitative interview does not have to follow a concrete series of questions and results are elaborate answers in forms of words not measurements, as the interest is on the interviewees expertise and points of view on a specific topic. Qualitative interviews distinguish between two types, semi-structured and unstructured. Semi-structured are interviews which are in to some extent following questions prepared beforehand, and the interview has specific aspects that should be answered. The set of questions or topics are titled as an 'interview guide' (Bryman 2012, p.469-472). The interview guide does not have to be followed step by step, because the interview is flexible, the questions might change, be switched or some might not be used at all, it just offers a sort of a guidelines (Lichtman 2017, p.8-9). Unstructured interviews are also flexible, but unlike semi-structured, the questions are not prepared beforehand. Questions are asked as the interview goes. First question or a topic is of course prepared but then the interview follows similarly to a conversation (Bryman 2012, p. 471).



### **3.5. Data analysis**

In this part, I will describe the method that I chose to use for my analysis, and it is Content Analysis, to be more specific, the Qualitative Content Analysis. I will use it as a tool to analyse documents and an interview. I believe this basic method of data collection will work best for my thesis. Content analysis in general can be interpreted as a tool that “*seeks to demonstrate the meaning of written or visual sources by systematically allocating their content to pre-determined, detailed categories, and then both quantifying and interpreting the outcomes*” (Payne 2011, p.52). The basics of content analysis is assigning found data into categories that were created beforehand based on a research question and that way attaining a useful description of the data. The categories are a part of a ‘coding frame’ which functions as a core of the method and helps to sort out and work with the data accordingly. Qualitative content analysis is a method which aims to analyse data in a systematic and empirical way that is achieved by following specific steps, which will be shown hereafter. This method is very practical because of three reasons. One, it has a certain order of conducting a research and therefore is labelled to be very systematic. Two, it is also very flexible and thereby can be used for all sorts of data, from interviews to letters, documents and websites, etc. and also in various studies, like education, political science or psychology, etc. And three, it minimalizes the amount of collected data, because you only focus on getting data relevant to aspects of each chosen category and the main research question. How many aspects, and also categories, are chosen, is up to the researcher to decide and determine what he/she can manage to do in the research (Schreier 2013, p.171-183; Mayring 2000, p.1-2).

#### *3.5.1. Development of qualitative content analysis*

Qualitative content analysis has its roots in the first half of the twentieth century, where it was used mainly as a tool to analyse data from the media, for instance related to the World War II. The first book written on this topic was by Bernard Berelson in 1952 (Schreier 2013, p.172). He defined quantitative content analysis as: “*a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication*” (Berelson 1952, p.18). This quote is considered a foundation of the method and is still used today but of course qualitative content analysis was since developed by other scholars as well, one of the most known ones is Philipp Mayring, whose work I also use for this chapter (Schreier 2013, p.172).

### 3.5.2. *Process of qualitative content analysis*

When using qualitative content analysis, it is necessary to carry out various steps. The method has to follow this series of stages:

- a. Creation of a research question - for any analysis it is a matter of course to first figure out a research question which functions as a guidance through the whole research, it is the base of the study, the main thing that is being researched and the objective of what is being attempted to find out (Schreier 2013, p.175).
- b. Choosing data - find what data is available and decide what is suitable and relevant for the analysis. It is key to choose data which will ensure a complete diversity of data sources and to divide data into smaller groups to create a well-arranged coding frame (Schreier 2013, p.177).
- c. Construction of a coding frame - as previously stated, the coding frame is the core of the method. When the data for analysis is selected, the next step is to structure it to categories. Therefore, the coding frame is built by selecting a primary category, leastways one, and then selecting several subcategories, in which the required minimum is two. Researcher can select any number of categories, subcategories and even sub-subcategories, nevertheless choosing three or more levels is considered hard to analyse. What knowledge is the researcher looking for is the essence of the primary category/ies and the subcategories consist of data specification related to the primary category/ies. To achieve a fruitful description of the material, it is suggested to select the primary category/ies in a concept-driven<sup>19</sup> manner and the subcategories in a data-driven<sup>20</sup> manner, and that way to merge both forms. All categories in the coding frame have to be properly determined according to several aspects. They have to be clearly named, including an explanation of its name and characteristics related to it. Another thing is to provide the categories with examples of what the content of the category that the researcher is searching for might be. Last, and non-mandatory, aspect is to incorporate decision rules. This is used in cases where subcategories extend into other subcategories, hence decision rule works as a tool to determine to which subcategory the specific content belongs. The last step in creating the coding frame is to

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<sup>19</sup> Concept-driven is characterized as centring the categories around already stated knowledge, like a previously conducted research, logic, etc (Schreier 2013, p.177).

<sup>20</sup> Data-driven in this context means that categories are chosen according to found data and not based on something practiced in the past (Schreier 2013, p.177).

thoroughly go through it and decide whether some alterations need to be made before continuing with the next part which is segmentation (Schreier 2013, p.176-179).

- d. Segmentation - this part of the qualitative content analysis means to establish which data belongs into what category and its subcategories. Term that is used for this found data is called 'coding units'. These coding units can either be a whole book or only a sole word, and they are later used for analysis to convey the meaning of each category (Schreier 2013, p.179-180). Criteria that are used to define which coding units belong to which category are formal criterion and thematic criterion. Formal criterion is considered as "*words, sentences or paragraphs in a legal text*" (Schreier 2013, p.180) and are typically easily detected. Nevertheless, thematic criterion is reckoned to be more beneficial than the formal one, especially when it comes to the qualitative content analysis, as it coincides with a theme of the categories and is thus allowing for a broader choice of coding units (Schreier 2013, p.180).
- e. Trial coding - this is a 'pilot phase' in which one section of the selected material is assigned to the coding frame. This way the researcher basically tries out if the designed coding frame works or not. The coding of the material has to be done twice in order to trace inconsistency between rounds (Schreier 2013, p.180-181).
- f. Evaluation and modification of the coding frame – this step is important in order to evaluate the reached outcomes of the trial coding. This is to ensure that the analysis is consistent and valid and find out if it is easy or hard to work with the selected categories and subcategories. This is done by detecting which categories and subcategories are interpreted in a direct and evident manner. If some categories are deemed overlapping or inconsistent, they have to be modified. When a lot of changes were made it is recommended to do another trial coding before continuing with the main analysis, as no adjustments can be made after the coding frame is finalized (Schreier 2013, p.181-182).
- g. Main analysis – this is the stage in which coding of all the data is performed. Firstly, the material which was not used in the trial coding phase is assigned to the coding frame, so that everything is coded. If many changes were made in the previous part it is better to also double code the main analysis, but if only slight part of the coding frame was tailored then it is suggested to double code only around 30% of the data. Whether any inconsistencies are found they have to be properly interpreted (Schreier 2013, p.182).

- h. Demonstration and explanation of findings - in the last part, the results from the main analysis are presented and delineated (Schreier 2013, p.182-183).

#### *3.5.3. Inductive and Deductive category development*

When selecting categories of the coding frame, there are two approaches of doing that. Either using an inductive category development or deductive category development. In the previous section, the process of qualitative content analysis is based on the deductive category development, which means that categories are developed before coding, as in point (c) and then the material is assigned to those categories, as in point (d). Inductive approach for developing categories, on the other hand, means that categories are created based on and closely related to found data for analysis, therefore not created prior to coding. For my thesis, I will therefore be using the deductive category development, which is in my case based on the Europeanization theory (Mayring 2000, p.3-6).

#### *3.5.4. Qualitative vs Quantitative content analysis*

I have specifically chosen qualitative content analysis, and not quantitative, mainly because quantitative content analysis is based on generating statistical data which are then being analysed. Quantitative content analysis therefore produces a completely different result. It can be described as a 'data collection' method, unlike qualitative content analysis, which is based on furnishing a thorough description of the analysed data and can be described as a 'data analysis' method. To name a few examples regarding similarities, they both apply data in a systematic order through the coding frame and hence the material is analysed by the selected categories. Another similarity is that in analysis they have a trial stage and a main stage and differentiate between them. (Schreier 2013, p.174-175).

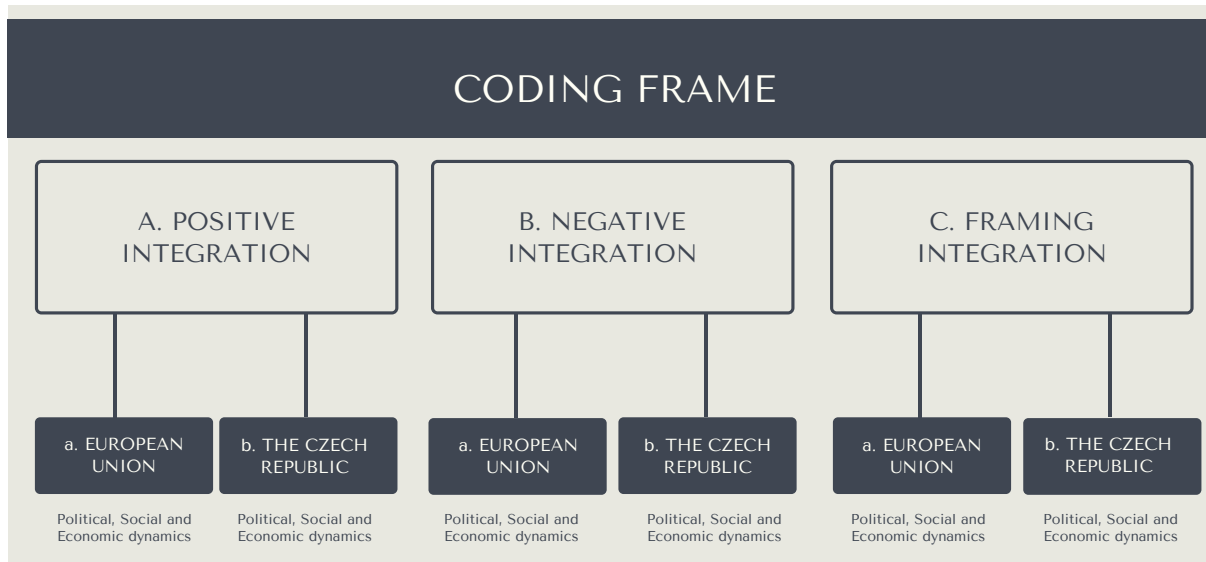
## 4. Analysis

Now that I have finalized the theoretical part of my thesis and everything necessary is described, I will move into conducting the analysis. This chapter will be divided into three parts. First, a main analysis part will be conducted by analysing Czech national documents and data from the European Commission and the European Parliament in order to determine in to what extent can the top-down Europeanization process can be detected in the higher educational environment and policies in the Czech Republic. In the second part, I will include an interview from a coordinator of the Erasmus+ Programme at University of Pardubice in the Czech Republic. This will serve as a complimentary research to the first part. Third, and last part, will compare my results to an already conducted research by Petr Pabian in order to analyse a change over time and add an analytical leverage to my thesis.

### 4.1. Europeanization of Czech higher education

The first part of the analysis is based on the deductive qualitative content analysis, I will therefore follow the stages of its process. My research question as well as data for analysis have been chosen, hence I will move to construction of the coding frame. For a clear overview of the coding frame, I have designed a simple scheme.

Figure 2: Coding frame



source: Author based on Knill and Lehmkuhl's framework of Europeanization and combined with Radaelli's notion of Europeanization.

As can be seen above, I have chosen three main categories with two subcategories each. Because I am using the deductive method, I have selected categories of the coding frame according to the Europeanization theory. The categories are derived from Knill and Lehmkuhl's framework of Europeanization and combined with Radaelli's notion of Europeanization. Each subcategory will be assigned coding units related to political, social and economic dynamic and its pressure to domestic public policies, domestic discourse, identities or domestic political structures (institutions, public administration, inter-governmental relations, the legal structure, structures of representation, cognitive and normative structures).

I will now describe each main category and its subcategories separately.

- A. Positive integration** – the first category is based on adaptation of Member States to requirements from the EU ensuing from European policy making, it can be described as the goodness of fit. So, the data which I will be searching for are educational policies from the European Union and how it affected the Czech Republic. I have selected two subcategories which will describe this relationship, the European Union and the Czech Republic. The European Union therefore represents requirements coming from the EU institutions and EU policy making and the Czech Republic category will search for statements as to how did the Member State's higher education adapted.
- B. Negative integration** – the second category is based on the EU legislation altering domestic opportunity structures on a national level which is brought up by the use of power and resource dispensation. Subcategories are also marked as European Union and the Czech Republic. In this case, the European Union will contain EU legislation and the Czech Republic category will depict what did the Member State had to adapt to in those terms.
- C. Framing integration** – the third category aims to look for indirect influence from the EU onto domestic policy. Again, two subcategories were chosen. The European Union and the Czech Republic. First subcategory will look for statements made by the EU which could influence beliefs or expectation in Member States and the second subcategory will thus look for statements made by the Czech Republic regarding that topic.

This is the final coding frame, which was slightly modified after trial coding and evaluation of my initial coding frame. Now, that the coding frame is designed, I will move onto coding of all data. I will first write down my chosen categories and then insert coding units into them starting with the oldest date of my time frame moving towards the most recent one.

## **A. Positive integration**

### a. European Union

- Several things proposed by the European Parliament which were adopted in 2016 are:
  - Making Erasmus+ available for everyone, and supporting and encouraging disadvantaged groups, people with special needs or individuals identifying as LGBTI to participate in the mobility.
  - Also, to raise number of women in STEM<sup>21</sup> fields of education and then getting a career in this field, the way of achieving this goal is by developing STEM education through Erasmus+.
  - Member States are called to promote Erasmus+ and raise its awareness.
  - Important aspect when implementing the Programme is to focus on mutual recognition of studies, credit evaluation of subjects and exams, certificates and diplomas, levels of language ability, legal aspects, etc.
  - Member States are urged to not use Erasmus+ apprenticeships and traineeships as a tool for lowering the cost of labour (European Parliament 2016).
- The Official Journal of the European Union from 2013 laid down provisions for Erasmus+ Programme in the period from 2014 until 2020. The main objectives which should be endeavoured with the ‘new’ Erasmus Programme are:
  - Enhancement of competences and skills which are eminent in the labour market, higher education should therefore push for more possibilities in learning mobility.
  - Value is given to improvement of teaching and learning languages and also to research activities.
  - Higher institutions are recommended take part in partnerships with other higher institutions in order to innovate and exchange good practices and experience, but

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<sup>21</sup> STEM stands for Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (European Parliament 2016).

also with the world of work which would offer opportunities of work-based learning and development of new curricula and pedagogical approaches. It is also an activity that supports employability. (OJ L347 2013, p.50-62)

- European Parliament put emphasis on higher institutions preparing everyone who will participate in the Erasmus Programme beforehand, in areas such as integration courses purposed for enhancement of living and working or participation in society, also to offer language courses and career guidance. Member States are driven towards support and promotion of education and traineeships programmes by offering quality information and what possibilities do students have (European Parliament 2017, p.13-25).
- New planned Erasmus period starting in 2012 until 2027 will bring regulations to strengthen European identity and common values and encourage involvement in democratic processes and democratic life which are vital for the future of Europe. Also, digitalisation of processes will play a big role, for example the European Student Card should make studying abroad a much easier experience for students and user-friendly online platforms would support virtual cooperation and simplify organization and administration of the Programme in general (European Parliament 2019, p.19-25; p.62). According to the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union, the Programme is supposed to tackle discrimination, foster gender equality and encouraging social inclusion (European Parliament 2019, p.46-47).

#### b. The Czech Republic

- In a revised version of the White Paper from 2009 focused on tertiary education, several goals are proposed. These are:
  - Enabling institutions of higher education in providing world-class education and thereby strengthening the historically-based prestige as a European centre of education.
  - Enabling further development of cultural and social functions of tertiary education.
  - Strengthening responsibility of institutions, academics and students for quality teaching and learning
  - Contributing to achieve increase in innovation of economy through enhanced research and development activities (MŠMT 2009, p.9-20).



- The strategic document of educational politics of the Czech Republic is an umbrella document for education in the Czech Republic published in 2014, which is following the White Paper. The main point that this document state is that quality higher education must be enhanced. The number of students in higher education is rising and outcomes of students are in hands of academic staff. It is therefore necessary to reflect on for example teaching methods. Teaching methods and quality subjects offered to students can be improved by academic staff mobility, so that students in higher institutions get the chance to learn from foreign academics and Czech academics can experience teaching abroad and that way enriching their education. Another objective is to enhance study programmes with to aim of providing students with professional practice. One way of achieving those goals is by the Erasmus+ Programme (MŠMT 2014, p.28-42).
- The concept of higher education reform document initiated by MŠMT in 2004 and later updated in 2005 is a scheme for higher education in the Czech Republic and states objectives of reforms and how to achieve them.
  - A priority is to improve the use of the ECTS credit system, enabling students to spend at least one semester abroad and increase the number of foreign students at Czech universities.
  - Universities also have to be motivated to implement new study programmes in foreign languages to ensure balanced mobility.
  - Another objective is to increase the use of foreign literature in its original language.
  - Important goal is also to fully evolve student and academic staff mobility which strengthens international character of Czech higher educational institutions and economic benefits (MŠMT 2005).
- A concept document which the MŠMT is obliged to issue according to the Higher Education Act is a long-term intention of education and scientific, research, development and innovation, art and other creative activities for the area of higher education and it is released every 5 years. This document evaluates priorities and goals from previous period, states goals for higher education and tools for achieving those goals. The key goal is to change the direction of development of institutions of higher education from quantity to quality (MŠMT 2010). Many goals in achieving that are depicted.

- For example, to expand subjects in foreign, mainly English, languages and promote studying in Czech universities abroad, in order to increase the number of international students.
- To increase language requirements for students, and academic and non-academic staff
- Then to support double degrees and international cooperation in research and development
- To support the combination of higher education with practice
- Or to create study programmes which will support graduates in their future career and the society needs
- To support short-term and long-term student and academic and non-academic staff mobility (MŠMT 2010; MŠMT 2015).

## **B. Negative integration**

### a. European Union

- With the accession of the Czech Republic to the European Union, only one aspect concerning higher education which would into some extent involve the Erasmus Programme was proposed and that of mutual recognition of professional qualifications and education was set as a part of the freedom of movement for persons (OJ L 236 2003, p.491).
- The Official Journal of the European Union from 2013 laid down provisions for Erasmus+ Programme in the period from 2014 until 2020. The new Erasmus+ Programme extended its activities and has taken several other programmes under it, but for this thesis, the only programme I am analysing is for higher education, is the Erasmus one. It is stated that all legal and administrative barriers of the Programme should be removed in each Member State. These barriers are for example administrative problems connected to visas and resident permits or admission procedures (OJ L 347 2013, p.62). Another point is to simplify administrative requirements, for students and staff involved in the mobility, for higher institutions and hosting companies (European Parliament 2016).

- Erasmus+ is also a tool supporting policy reform. Programme countries are required to implement Union transparency and recognition tools, regarding higher education these tools are:
  - the single Union framework for the transparency of qualifications and competences (Europass)
  - the European Qualifications Framework<sup>22</sup> (EQF) (OJ L 347 2013, p.62) - Among many things proposed by the European Parliament which were adopted in 2016 is that the European Parliament and the Council have enacted Member States to establish the European Qualifications Framework which would assure validity and recognition of systems, skills, certificates, etc. between Member States (European Parliament 2016).
  - the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS)
  - the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR)
  - the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA)
  - the provision of support to Union-wide networks and European non-governmental organisations (NGOs) active in the fields of education and training (OJ L 347 2013, p.62).
  
- Member States, under the wings of the Commission, are obliged to control the process and results of the Programme and make statements compared to objectives of the Programme. A regularly control has to be undertaken in areas such as action and activities supporting the European added value, and distribution and the use of funds. Evaluations are submitted to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. (OJ L 347 2013, p.68-69)
  
- On a national level, the Erasmus Programme has to be implemented by national agencies, therefore Member States are obliged to establish National agencies which will be responsible for the Programme in their country. National agencies are for example responsible for removing legal and administrative obstacles in order for the Programme to fully work. They make sure that the Programme is efficiently implemented, and its running will be effective. It is also the National Agency who is dealing with transfers of

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<sup>22</sup> the National Qualifications Framework is a mechanism for understanding and comparing qualifications, also to recognise existing qualifications and all outcomes of education (European Commission 2018b).

funds, monitors management of the Programme and secures the learning mobility and strategic partnerships (OJ L 347 2013, p.71-73).

- It is required, by the European Parliament, to regularly exchange knowledge between *“national authorities, the implementation bodies and civil society organisations at European level and national agencies on both decentralised and centralised programme actions”* (European Parliament 2017, p.18) and also to guarantee cooperation among them. Another important thing coming from the European parliament is for Member States to foster the mobility of teachers, lecturers and non-academic staff in order to acknowledge their involvement in the Erasmus Programme to be a significant aspect in their career development (European Parliament 2017, p.18-25).
- Because the Erasmus+ Programme was planned for the period 2014-2020, new Programme period 2021-2027 is therefore being implemented. There are many regulations proposed by the European Parliament in regard to Erasmus+ which Member States will have to adapt to. Some of which are: *“Legal and administrative obstacles, such as difficulties in obtaining visas and residence permits and in accessing support services, in particular health services, can impede access to the Programme. Therefore, Member States should adopt all necessary measures to remove such obstacles, in full compliance with Union law, and to facilitate crossborder exchanges, for example by issuing the European Health Insurance Card”* (European Parliament 2019, p.19)

#### b. The Czech Republic

- White Paper is a concept and strategic document stating the development and objectives of education in the Czech Republic in following years. The first version published in 2001, the National Programme for the Development of Education in the Czech Republic, already stated that the Czech Republic will focus on fulfilling specific requirements and tasks, also on cooperation with Member States of the EU and a full implementation of European educational programmes connected to the accession of the Czech Republic to the EU (MŠMT 2001). In a revised version of the White Paper from 2009 focused on tertiary education, several goals are proposed. These are:
  - Removing social and other barriers in order to access higher education and diversification of study programmes which will enable all interested applicants to

study, but also expand the offer of study programmes necessary in the current labour market

- It is also stated that the Bologna process regarding establishment of structured studies and new quality evaluation rules based on graduate knowledge and skills need to be fully implemented (MŠMT 2009, p.9-20).
- It is proposed in the concept of higher education reform document that universities have to be open to all Czech citizens and citizens of the Member States and national of other states and get rid of administrative restrictions and regulations (MŠMT 2005).
- The long-term intention of education and scientific, research, development and innovation, art and other creative activities for the area of higher education describes several goals that the institutions of higher education have to adapt to.
  - It states that evaluation quality systems should be adapted to international standards and the need to implement the National Qualifications Framework for tertiary education.
  - Another objective is to fully implement the Bologna process in order to strengthen competitiveness of institutions of higher education in an international level and became a part of the European higher educational area.
  - To support socially and physically disadvantaged students and shape study programme which would be practicable for everyone (MŠMT 2010; MŠMT 2015).
- The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport is responsible for relationships with foreign countries participating in the Erasmus Programme and other European educational programmes. *“It is based on the resolution from the Government of the Czech Republic which were made on the principles of its foreign policy, international agreements and contacts which were established with partner ministries and other certain entities abroad”* (European Commission 2019a [translated from Czech]). The Erasmus Programme and international cooperation regarding education in general is managed by the Centre for International Cooperation in Education established by the MŠMT (European Commission 2019a).

- Institutions of higher education in the Czech Republic have fully implemented Erasmus+ and thanks to the Programme, students, academic staff and also universities themselves are constantly improving. Because of Erasmus+ Programme, teachers are able to participate in it as well, they can experience teaching in another country, or go on traineeships and seminars organized by the Member States. Thanks to the Programme, institutions of higher education are offering courses in the English language, double degrees or scholarships for foreigners (European Commission 2019a).

### C. Framing integration

#### a. European Union

- In a report from a plenary sitting of the European Parliament, it is stated that the learning and training mobility are *“important for personal development, young people’s social inclusion, multicultural dialogue, tolerance, the ability to work in an intercultural environment, and active citizenship”* (European Parliament 2016).

#### b. The Czech Republic

- The concept of higher education reform document states that institutions of higher education are presumed to actively work towards harmonisation of higher educational systems in Europe (MŠMT 2005).

#### 4.1.1. *Demonstration and explanation of findings*

Now, that everything is coded into the coding frame, I will move into interpretation of my findings. In the first category, we can see that the EU has passed several requirements for the Member States to act upon. For example, the institutions of the European Union are propelling for mutual recognition of studies and credit evaluation and the MŠMT in the Czech Republic see these requirements from the EU being important for higher education and is therefore asking institutions of higher education to improve and create new study programmes to assure a balances mobility and also the need to improve the ECTS credit system. Also, the EU is urging for improvements of higher education in general through the Erasmus Programme and a great emphasis is put into this topic in the Czech Republic, the highly support international cooperation and universities are participating in all mobilities of the Erasmus Programme. In the second category, the value is given to simplification of

administrative requirements and removal of legal barriers such as visas, which are connected to Erasmus mobility and it was stated in the legal documents from the Czech Republic that they are working towards removing barriers to ensure easier mobility. With accession of the Czech Republic to the EU, one condition was freedom of movement of persons, when connecting this to the Erasmus Programme Member States have to make higher education in their states accessible to all citizens of the European Union, it is therefore stated in the concept of higher education reform document that higher education in the Czech Republic is open to everyone. The Erasmus+ introduced new aspects of the Programme, one of which was mobility not only for students, but for academic/non-academic staff and graduates as well, and apart from studying abroad to also manage traineeship for students. Everything was implemented in the Czech higher education and Czech universities are therefore offering the Erasmus+ in its entirety. Another thing that called for establishment with the Erasmus+ was for instance the European Qualification Framework which was implemented in the Czech Republic. Lastly, Member States are obliged to establish a National Agency, which will control and make reports on the progress of the Erasmus Programme, manage the Programme, communicate with other Member States and the European Union or distribute funds for the Programme. The Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Czech Republic therefore established the Centre for International Cooperation in Education which is dealing with all tasks. The third category simply states that the Erasmus Programme is important for development of people, personal as well as professional, and that the Programme contributes to the European citizenship. This is acknowledged in the Czech higher education and hence they act in order to harmonise higher education in Europe.

#### **4.2. Interview**

The next part of my analysis will comprise of an interview conducted on 23/05/2019 with Jana Voltrová, who is working at a department for development and international relations of the University of Pardubice in the Czech Republic, and her position is an institutional coordinator of the Erasmus+ Programme at the University. I conducted this interview in order to enlighten the previous findings and to state some examples directly from a higher institution in the Czech Republic. First, I will do attach a translated transcription of the interview which was conducted via telephone and after I will comment on it with a reference to the main analysis. Because I have done a semi-structured interview, a set of prepared questions were to some extent followed. I am going to state only the questions

actually used and how it followed in the interview. My questions will be underlined, so that the transcription is clear.

#### *4.2.1. Transcription of the interview.*

##### What has the Erasmus Programme brought to your University?

Student mobility are very prosperous in financial terms for our University. Finances are calculated by evaluation of numbers of incoming and outgoing students at our University through the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Czech Republic (MŠMT ČR). Grants are of course to support student and staff mobility, but together with other European programmes that we take a part in, finances are used for internationalization of the whole campus, both internal and external, like the classrooms, technology or the campus surroundings and also internationalization of students. Therefore, we can see the influence of the European Union into our campus. The Erasmus Programme is also very beneficial because of exchange of practices and experiences. Thanks to the Programme we are also able to exchange academic staff, employees of for example dorms, or librarians, so even ordinary employees have the opportunity to have a look at our partners foreign institutions, find out how it work in different places, what kind of problems are other institutions facing, to learn and gain examples of a good practice. So that is brought to us by the exchanges. What else has the Erasmus Programme brought to our University? Well, definitely gaining new partners and therefore enlarging our portfolio of the partners, which is a benefit for us. Thanks to the Programme we have the opportunity to organize for example training weeks at our University for academic staff and within this training weeks we hold various lectures in English language from foreign academic staff or our department directly organizes training weeks for our employees in international offices. And because of these training weeks we were able to close new partnership contracts. Now I will talk in numbers. Today, we definitely have more than 300 signed contracts within Europe with partner universities. Because our University has seven faculties sometimes it happens that each faculty has its own agreements with partner universities. I believe that we have at least one, usually several, contract with each country that is a part of the Erasmus Programme.

By Europeanization in my thesis, I mean that the European Union has an impact on higher educational policy and under the Erasmus Programme, higher educational institutions have to adapt to a certain environment. Do you think that this is the case in your University?



In order for us to be able to take part in the Erasmus Programme, we had to get the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education, which we currently have from 2014 until 2020 for the Erasmus+ Programme. We definitely had to adapt the offer of our programmes and change courses, because we are obliged to offer specific courses, which have to be taught in English, have to ensure its quality and assure that those courses will be taught in the stated period. Within the Erasmus Programme there is a specific frame of evaluating courses, so we had to modify the credit evaluation of our courses. We also have to comply with procedures, documents and deadlines, etc. laid down by the EU.

Because the Erasmus+ Programme is in the year 2020-2021 ending, there will be some changes. The programme will of course continue in a new seven-year period. A new idea is to implement Erasmus without papers, which would mean that all documentation of the mobilities would be secured by a specific online platform and therefore we would have to adapt to that. Another thing that the European Commission has stated was for example introduction of European student cards. So, we will probably have to adapt in several ways.

Higher educational policy is very autonomous, but are there some requirements from the EU, probably done through the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Czech Republic that you have to adapt to in terms of the Erasmus Programme, for example a change or establishment of organisational methods or processes?

This is complicated, because as we are coming across partners with other institutions and the cooperation can be with different faculties, for example the management or documentation is more decentralized and therefore each faculty had to establish an international office which is dealing with the Erasmus Programme and its administration. With the processes, every university can have this managed differently, in some cases, it is allowed only for academic workers of faculties to do the management of the Erasmus Programme. But on the required documentation it is stated who has to signed them and authorize. In our University, with student mobility, it is academic staff or administrative workers, and for staff mobility it is usually their superiors or a Dean. But sometimes the authorization of documents has to be coming directly from the rector.

Ok, well how about establishment of an international office. For example, your department, the department for development and international relations, was that established in regard to the Erasmus Programme?

Well, yes that is sort of true. In our University, we have had to establish the department for development and international relations, but that was done before 2003 or 2004 in which we started participating in the Erasmus Programme, it was in relations to other European Educational Programmes like the Socrates. But there were only like two employees, so with the Erasmus Programme we definitely had to hire new employees and enlarge it.

The Centre for International Cooperation in Education which is operating under the MŠMT ČR in the Erasmus Programme matters, requires to appoint a head coordinator, who will communicate with them and who will provide them with final reports, participate in various seminars, can give them feedback and is a person that they can always turn to. Therefore, it is demanded to report who, from the international department, will communicate with them.

Do you feel as if different methods in for example teaching have been shaped by the Erasmus Programme?

It is possible, but I unfortunately do not have this confirmed from our students. We have an intern at our international office right now, she is our student, who was abroad with the Erasmus Programme twice and she shared with us her notes on teaching methods and different styles taught that she noticed. Our academics that repeatedly travel to different universities to teach through the Erasmus Programme change their teaching methods only slightly. Because they teach by their methods in other universities and only observe how it works there. But we can definitely see that their behaviour toward students' changes, in the good way. Also, with the mobility of foreign academic staff to our University, our students have the chance to come in contact with other teaching methods.

What is your perception on the Erasmus Programme and international students? Is it beneficial to your University?

It is positive. As I work at the international office and I authorize all programmes connected to internationalization and Europeanization, all mobility and exchange programme. I think and I can also see it on students that it is needed for different cultures and nationalities to meet; I mean in the academical environment. And the Erasmus Programme is also necessary for the University for gaining more visibility and development. So, there is definitely a positive impact. I do not see a negative aspect of participating in the Erasmus Programme, definitely nothing serious or concerning. But I cannot of course speak for all students and staff at our University as we have around 7000 students and 1200-1500 employees.

Could you give me a number of students and staff participating in the Erasmus Programme at the University of Pardubice?

We have been counting these exchanges recently, of students and academic staff and also of mobility of graduates which was introduced with the Erasmus+ Programme. And in about 15 years we have had thousands of exchanges. We are not that big of a University, so the numbers are not that high. We cannot compare with for example the Charles University in Prague, but we are one of those medium sized universities. Yearly, we sent approximately 150 students to study abroad and around 30/40 students for a traineeship. In the last couple of years, we accept more students, around 200 students to study and less trainees, trainees are coming to our University only minimally, when someone is coming for a traineeship it is mostly to companies and not to universities, so that is why its minimal, one or two. With academic staff, the number of staff mobility is growing. But it is around 80 academical employees per year and when it comes to other staff, like librarians, or us from the international office, it is around 20. And we accept around 30/40 academical employees and 15/20 of other staff.

What is the response from students and staff who took part in the Erasmus Programme? I am aware, that the last question is mostly for students and staff who participated in the Erasmus Programme, but I am assuming that you have a feedback from them.

I am mostly in contact with the students coming back to our University from the mobilities and the response is in 99% positive and students tell us that it was the best spent half a year or a year of their studies. And it has gave them a lot. We can see a positive change in their behaviour and performance. I can confirm that they are more confident, but also polite and their manners are in a different level. They are more confident because, for a semester or a whole academic year, they are able to take care of themselves, live alone, or speak and arrange everything in a language which is not their native and in which they are not used to speak on a daily basis. So, their reaction is positive, and it reflects in the way that many of the students coming back from the Erasmus Programme wants to take a part in other programmes, or they participate in Erasmus repeatedly. Therefore, we can see that their first trip was successful, they were satisfied, and they want to go again. In our reports we can see the feedbacks from all the students, and it shows us that our work is meaningful.

#### 4.2.2. *Inference of the interview*

The interview has brought few examples of Europeanization projecting into an institution of higher education in the Czech Republic, the University of Pardubice. It was confirmed that the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education was obtained by the University and that it is an essential condition for participation in the Erasmus Programme. As it is stated in the Charter and because it is also an obligation coming from the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport of the Czech Republic, the University had to adapt its offer of study programmes, change courses so they are corresponding to the Erasmus Programme and implement courses or whole study programmes in English language. Another requirement was to modify their credit evaluation which was also accomplished. The Erasmus Programme in the University of Pardubice is managed through the Centre for International Cooperation in Education, but every university, or even faculties, have their own international offices which are managing the Erasmus Programme in their university/faculty and are cooperating with the Czech National Agency. One of the results of the main analysis, was that the Erasmus Programme is a tool for international cooperation, and it is beneficial for this University as they cooperate with universities all over Europe and are gaining more contracts thanks to the Programme. The University of Pardubice have fully implemented the Erasmus+ Programme and therefore enabled, apart from student mobility, mobility of academic and non-academic staff and it has been successful so far. It is beneficial because this mobility enables exchanges of good practice and experiences and provides many opportunities. The Programme is beneficial for students as there has been registered personal growth, responsibility and confidence gain or language improvement in students. It is also prosperous for development of the University which is one of the objectives stated both by the EU and by the MŠMT regarding the Erasmus Programme.

#### **4.3. Comparison of two time frames**

In the last part of my analysis, I will compare my results to an already conducted research by Petr Pabian in order to analyse a change over time and add an analytical leverage to my thesis. Petr Pabian, who in a book called *European Integration and the Governance of Higher Education and Research*, analysed Europeanization of Czech higher education governance. He explored the effect of Europeanization in Czech higher education in three eras, first one, is since the end of the communist regime, second is dealing with Europeanization in the time of Czech Republic's accession to the European Union and

adopting the *Acquis communautaire* and third, was after Czech's accession to the European Union and through the Bologna process (Pabian 2009).

He focused on Europeanization as a process of rising European integration in a domestic development of one country, the Czech Republic in this case. The Czech Republic has since 1990 “*undergone development from a position outside the integration processes through the accession stage to full membership in the Bologna process and the EU*” (Pabian 2009, p.257). He has therefore analysed the Europeanization process of higher education in the Czech Republic in a period in which the state went through many changes. He describes the first era of his analysis as ‘the return to Europe’ which was a term used after the end of the communist regime and he is researching how has higher education adapted to the one of Western Europe, which was seen as a model and a reference point. Nevertheless he has not proven Europeanization to be present in that era, since the Czech higher education did not adopt the principle of autonomy of institutions of higher education and did not follow the three degree model (the Anglo-Saxon degree structure), which was recognized on an international level and which is used today (Pabian 2009, p.259-263). In the second era, he is focusing on the accession process of the Czech Republic to the European Union and the impacts it had on higher education through the process, mainly through adoption of the *Acquis communautaire*. He states two main points that played a role in higher education during the accession, these are conditions for the EU in order to gain membership to the EU and programmes financed by the European Union. The Czech Republic has adopted the *Acquis communautaire* in areas of higher education, in its entirety, nevertheless the framework of the *acquis* was not significant and has not shaped higher education. Programmes related to higher education were also adopted, but again, they have not introduced any relevant changes, therefore Europeanization was not shown in the second era either (Pabian 2009, p.263-268). In the third era, he analysed the impact of Europeanization into higher education through the Bologna process. The Bologna process had impact on Czech higher education by introducing the Anglo-Saxon degree structure which was, this time, adopted by the Czech Republic (Pabian 2009, p.268-271). This is the only example of some level of Europeanization being present in Czech higher education but “*the Bologna process has not changed the institutional structure of higher education governance in the Czech Republic*” (Pabian 2009, p.271). In conclusion, Pabian has not proven any change in the institutional level of higher education governance in the Czech Republic but has detected an added European layer of higher education in the Czech Republic (Pabian 2009, p.272-274).

Pabian's time frame has ended with the accession of the Czech Republic into the EU, whereas my time frame has begun in that period. I have found out several requirements coming from the institutions of the European Union which were implemented in the Czech Republic and my research has therefore been more fruitful. I believe, that it is because my research was focused on a period in which the Czech Republic has been a member of the EU whereas Pabian analysed the period before the accession, in which the higher education in the Czech Republic was not focused on cooperation with other Member States in a large extent.

## Conclusion

In the conclusion, I will describe what I have done and summarize the whole thesis, and most importantly, I will conclude the analysis part and answer the research question. As the topic of my thesis I have chosen Europeanization of higher education in the Czech Republic. I have therefore explained what brought me to the topic and why is it interesting in the introduction. It was necessary to describe all theoretical parts connected to my analysis and which method was used for it. Hence, the first chapter is given to a description of higher educational policy, both in the European Union and in the Czech Republic, and of the Erasmus Programme. In the second chapter I have described the Europeanization theory and how am I using it. Third chapter covers research design and methods. I have explained that I am working with a case study in a qualitative research, stated selection of my data and described qualitative data analysis and how to work with it, since it is the method used in the analysis. In the fourth chapter, I finally moved into conducting the analysis. I have followed the qualitative data analysis and therefore I have assigned data into a coding frame and interpreted my findings after. I have also included an interview which illuminated my main analysis by stating some examples connected to the Erasmus Programme at one University in the Czech Republic. In the last part of the analysis chapter, I have compared my research with a research conducted by Petr Pabian, who analysed the same topic but in a different time frame than me.

Now, I will move onto answering the research question: How has the top-down process of Europeanization influenced Czech higher education, with the focus on the Erasmus Programme from 2004-2019?

My time frame begins in 2004, and since then higher education in the Czech Republic had to adapt to some aspects coming from the European Union. The main thing is the need for institutions of higher education to obtain and follow the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education for each Programme period, currently the Erasmus+ from 2014-2020. Also, the Erasmus+ is what brought most changes. Universities started to participate, among student mobility, in academic and non-academic staff mobility and also the mobility of graduates and learning is starting to be more focused on gaining skills and competences for European labour market. In order to ensure participation in the Programme, both for incoming and outgoing students and staff, new programmes and English (or other language) courses had to be

implemented. Also, institutions of higher education had to adapt to the ECTS credit system and ensure mutually recognized study programmes. Several requirements that the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport had to comply with were for example establishing the National Agency which manages the Erasmus Programme, or working towards simplification of administrative requests and get rid of legal barriers in order to ensure easier access to higher education for international students. All forms of requirements, mandatory and optional, have been to some extent implemented into the higher education in the Czech Republic and therefore created a more international and Europeanized area.

In my thesis, I have carried out a case study which was focused on the Czech Republic. For future research, it could be fruitful to do a comparative case study, by using my work and comparing it to another Member State of the European Union. Another suggestion is concerning my chosen third category of the coding frame. The third category was not unfortunately very prosperous as I have not been able to find useful data. But I think that a lot of data which would fit that category could be gathered by analysing for example newspapers and it could therefore create a whole new perspective on the topic.



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