Working in Higher Education International Affairs: Understanding perceptions of organizational structure and experiences with change

Lisa-Sophie Tornier

Master's Thesis in Education
Spring Term 2018
Department of Education
University of Jyväskylä

ABSTRACT

Tornier, Lisa-Sophie. 2018. Working in Higher Education International Affairs: Understanding perceptions of organizational structure and experiences with change. Master's Thesis in Educational Leadership. University of Jyväskylä. Department of Education.

Internationalization arrived in higher education a long time ago. Student mobility is one aspect of this phenomenon, which is facilitated by international affairs staff in higher education institutions. As research to date has paid little attention to this topic, this study investigates the organizational structure as to international affairs staff in a university in Scandinavia to understand and initiate a discussion on the topic. In addition, an organizational change relevant for the staff was examined.

To answer the research questions, an inductive and qualitative research method was chosen. From the university, 12 staff members who are involved in international affairs were interviewed individually or in pairs. The participants presented their perspectives on the organizational structure and their experiences with the structural change occurring during data collection. The data was analysed using thematic analysis.

A result of the study is that the participants have similar perspectives on the organizational structure. They displayed positivity towards the existing structure in international affairs with some aspects that could be improved. However, the interviewees expressed different opinions concerning the change process, which can be placed on a continuum. While the Head of Internationalization sees the change optimistically, the international coordinators in the faculties have a rather negative perspective on the change. The International Office staff expressed both views.

The findings can be used as a basis for deeper research to better understand organizational structures in international affairs at higher education institutions and how leading change processes can be improved regarding involved staff.

Keywords: change management, international affairs staff, international coordinators, international office, internationalization in higher education, organizational change in higher education, organizational structure

CONTENTS

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HoI	Head of Internationalization
HoIO	Head of International Office
HE	Higher Education
HEI	Higher Education Institution
IC	International Coordinator
IDP	International Degree Program
IO	International Office
IOS	International Office Staff Member(s)
ISAO	International Student Advising Office
I	Interviewer

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

1 INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, internationalization is on everyone's lips regardless of the context. Concerning education, internationalization plays an important role in higher education institutions (HEIs). Kondakci and van den Broeck (2009, p. 440) define HEIs

> as value driven organizations, loosely coupled systems, inhabiting multiple power and authority structures, possessing collegial culture, complex decision-making structure, having ambiguous goals, employing tenured staff, and relatively independent of the environment.

These types of organizations do not only consist of HEIs, such as universities, colleges, and universities of applied sciences, but also of other education providers, like media and multinational companies, corporate universities, and "networks of professional associations and organizations" (Knight, 2004, p. 7). While traditional public and private HEIs offer services, research, and teaching, new providers, like the abovementioned, focus on the administration of international education (Knight, 2004, p. 7). Nevertheless, it does not mean that traditional HEIs disregard the topic. In fact, countries in Scandinavia have decided to prioritize strategies for the internationalization of their HEIs (see also chapter 2.1.3 *Role of internationalization in HE in national policies*).

At the time of this study, the thematic focus is on internationalization in higher education (HE) in general and not on narrower topics within internationalization in HE, although internationalization in HE has become more and more important in the recent decades (Knight, 2013, p. 84). With the advancing globalization, internationalization in HE continues to develop. Student mobility being one aspect of internationalization in HE has increased heavily. While in 1975 only 0.8 million students were enrolled in HEIs abroad, in 2012 4.5 million students decided to complete some or all of their studies abroad (DAAD & DZHW, 2016, p. 18). For this mobility to happen, someone needs to organize it. Most student mobility takes place within frameworks of partnership agreements between institutions or part of institutions. These are facilitated by international affairs staff, i.e. the international office staff and the international coordinators, at the involved institutions. To understand how this is structurally being organized, it is of importance to hear the voices of these people, especially concerning their perception of the organizational structure, which they are part of and which they must work with every day. Hence, this thesis represents a novelty within the research in HE concerning the topic. This means that the framework in which the thesis is embedded is rather broad regarding the topic of the thesis.

This thesis presents a qualitative case study placed in a Scandinavian public university examining the organizational structure and collaboration between the international affairs staff and other stakeholders and how this differs from the previous structure due to changes that were being implemented during data collection. The Head of Internationalization (HoI) from the strategic planning unit, five International Office staff members (IOS), as well as six international coordinators (ICs) from departmental and faculty-levels were interviewed on the topic.

The aim of the study is, first and foremost, to give insight into an organizational structure including international affairs staff, how the involved parties see this structure, and how a structural change is experienced. Furthermore, the study is supposed to initiate a discussion on a topic that is sparsely covered in academic literature. The presented findings will hopefully contribute to a better understanding of and more attention to the matter.

The topic is approached by a researcher with a background in education. Before starting the Master's Degree Programme in Educational Leadership, which this thesis is part of, I completed a university training to become a teacher. Furthermore, as a student, intern, and volunteer, I have experience in student mobility, which led the way for the theme of this study. Relating to my field of studies, this thesis tries to provide insight into the viewpoints of relevant personnel at an educational institution so that leaders in such contexts can get an idea of what the organizational structure can look like. Consequently, the thesis can serve as a reference point for leading and changing an educational organization.

Following this introduction, chapter 2 *Theoretical Framework* tries to embed the study into the currently existing literature and research. Necessary definitions, concepts, and models are explained and discussed. The main topics treated in this chapter are internationalization in HE, organizational change and change management, and organizational change in HE.

Next, chapter 3 *Implementation of the Study* first explains the research context and questions. Second, the participants are introduced shortly before the research methods are explained. Third, the used process of data analysis is introduced. Last, reliability and ethical solutions of the here presented study are discussed.

In chapter 4 *Findings*, the findings are presented in a chronological order. That means that first the findings concerning the past organizational structure are being described. Then the chapter moves to the present organizational structure, which is a snapshot of the conditions during data collection. Subsequently, the occurring changes are being discussed, after which an outlook to the future is given.

The final chapter, chapter 5 *Discussion and Conclusion,* reviews the previously presented findings with regard to the research questions and the theoretical framework. In addition, this chapter examines the limitations of the study and gives ideas for further research.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Internationalization in higher education

2.1.1 Internationalization and globalization

Before defining internationalization in HE, the concept *internationalization* in general needs to be explained. *Internationalization* is defined differently by individual people (Knight, 1996, p. 5), which shows the depth and complexity of the concept. Moreover, the diversity of the definition also indicates an evolving confusion (Knight, 1996, p. 5). Furthermore, it is argued that the use of similar, yet different, terms like international education or comparative education, adds to the confusion and diminishes the concept's quality and importance for HE (Knight, 1996, p. 5). Knight (2013, p. 85) explains the difficulty of defining *internationalization*. The concept needs to be appropriate for a variety of contexts and countries and cannot specify aspects that could vary, such as motivations, outcomes, and activities (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2009, p. 9; de Wit, Hunter, Howard, & Egron-Polak, 2015, pp. 137–145). This interpretation of the definition to a broader context has only recently come into existence as the definition used to be mainly based on a US-American perspective (Knight, 1996, p. 16).

Although the term had been used for centuries, it only became popular in the field of education in the second half of the 20th century (Knight, 2003, p. 2; Maringe, 2009, p. 555). However, the beginning of the process of internationalization in HE is unknown. It might have been as early as the founding of the first universities in medieval times when university teachers traveled to gain knowledge (Maringe, 2009, p. 555).

Knight (2003, p. 2) redefines *internationalization* and determines that it should include the national and sector level perspective as well as the institutional perspective, the dynamic relationship between the levels, and the current realities. Hence, internationalization

> at the national, sector, and institutional levels is defined as the process of integrating an international, intercultural, or global dimension into the purpose, functions or delivery of postsecondary education (Knight, 2003, p. 2).

Another aspect of *internationalization* that has been discussed by several authors is its implication of change. The ending *-ization* normally means that there has been an issue in the past which demands improvement or change in the present and future (Knight, 2013, p. 85; Teichler, 2004, p. 6). While Knight uses this definition for the suffix to distinguish it from other concepts, Teichler clarifies that this definition opposes the idea of the present being seen in a negative light. He agrees with other scholars that the definition of the suffix offers "more desirable opportunities than it produces dangers" (Teichler, 2004, p. 6).

A term that often is mentioned in conjunction with internationalization is *globalization*. Nevertheless, both concepts are not to be used synonymously. The reason for the mention of the two concepts with one another could be that globalization is a crucial environmental influence that affects education multilaterally (Knight, 2003, p. 3). Similarly to internationalization, there is an abundance of definitions of globalization (Maringe, 2009, p. 554). Albrow (1990) ascertained a commonality of these definitions, i.e. that globalization means "all processes by which the people of the world are incorporated into a single global socio-economic unit" (in Maringe, 2009, p. 554). Considering that globalization varies in different countries in terms of its speed and efficiency (Maringe, 2009, p. 554) and that it has different effects on countries because of the countries' individual history, traditions, culture, and priorities, globalization is defined as "the flow of technology, economy, knowledge, people, values, and ideas . . . across borders" (Knight, 2003, p. 3).

Against the backdrop of the unclear history of internationalization in HE, scholars see the sequence of the appearance of the concepts, namely internationalization and globalization, contrarily. While Altbach (2005) understands internationalization as the consequence of globalization, Knight and de Wit (1997) see the beginning of internationalization in HE before globalization emerged (in Maringe, 2009, p. 554). Both perspectives are correct, because depending on the definition of the concepts, internationalization in HE affected the emergence of globalization or vice versa. Regarding the latest definition of internationalization by Knight (2003), globalization appeared first and paved the way for internationalization in HE as it is seen nowadays. Internationalization "is changing the world of education and globalization is changing the world of internationalization" (Knight, 2003, p. 3).

2.1.2 Motivations for internationalization of HEIs

A HEI can have various motivations to engage in internationalization. Knight (1996, pp. 9–11; Knight, 2004, p. 21) describes four different motives, which might be used by several stakeholders. Firstly, the *political rationale* emphasizes the need to foster the national identity and control its alteration, as globalization might be a threat to it. Furthermore, it is the motivation to establish future relations in politics and economics. Secondly, the *economic rationale* shows the hope to develop a competitive work force, which illustrates the approximation of the education sector with the economy and technological development. Thirdly, the *academic rationale* is "the achievement of international academic standards for teaching and research" (Knight, 1996, pp. 9–11). Lastly, the *cultural and social rationale* relates to the *political rationale* in the way that it also focuses on the retention of the national culture. Moreover, this rationale means the need for better cross-cultural understanding and communication, which aims at developing global citizens. It needs to be highlighted that the four categories have grown closer and their borders have started to blur (Knight, 2004, p. 21). Moreover, Knight suggests supplementing the four categories with a fifth one, which is the *branding rationale* since there is more competition between HEIs nowadays, and hence, the institutions try to brand themselves on the market.

On top of the aforementioned rationales, there are different stakeholders whose interests are represented in the internationalization of HEIs. Knight (1996, p. 12) names three main stakeholders who are involved in the internationalization of HEIs. Firstly, the *government sector* includes mostly education departments, but also others such as department of foreign affairs or culture. Secondly, the *education sector* comprises not only the system level, but also the institutional and the individual level. Lastly, the *private sector* involves various companies, their products and services, and their geographical interests. The three sectors have different perspectives on the rationales. Hence, the question is whether the differences lead to conflict or whether they can be used to complement each other and collaborate. Furthermore, there can be differences within one sector regarding the motivations for internationalization of the HEI.

2.1.3 Role of internationalization in HE in national policies

The following three examples show what role internationalization of HE plays in national policies in the Nordics. Finland has defined the internationalization of HE as one of the main goals of the national HE policy (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 12; Välimaa et al., 2013, p. 13). The motivation for this strategy is that it will support the society, businesses, and HEIs in becoming more competitive regarding the global development (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 9; Välimaa et al., 2013, pp. 14–15), because the rather low level of internationalization is one of the weaknesses of Finland's HE (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2009, p. 14). The evaluation done by Välimaa et al. (2013, p. 89) concludes that internationalization has been taken seriously by Finnish HEIs in their forming of strategies.

Another example of a country that makes internationalization of HE one of their priorities is Sweden. The Swedish Foundation for International Cooperation in Research and Higher Education (STINT) was established to "enhance the quality and competence of Swedish higher education and research through international cooperation" (STINT, 2012, p. 15). In one of their studies, STINT concludes that the top priority for most universities is internationalization of education where the typical reason mentioned was branding of the university on the education market. The expected outcome of internationalization of HE in Sweden is an improvement in quality (STINT, 2012, p. 29).

Similarly, Norway's pillar of the national effort on internationalization is the internationalization of HE and research, because the internationalization of HE is crucial for the Norwegian society and its working life (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2009, p. 9; Wit et al., 2015, p. 137). This also is expected to lead to a higher quality of education (Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research, 2009, p. 12).

2.1.4 Approaches to internationalization in HEIs

Knight and Wit (1995, pp. 16–17) and Knight (1996, p. 6) identify four approaches to internationalization in HEIs, which are different but at the same time not mutually exclusive, as can been seen in their definitions. The *activity approach* is the most widely used approach. It consists of academic and non-academic activities and does not necessarily regard issues for the development or maintenance of such activities. In this sense, internationalization of HE means activities of HEIs, which are generally provided within the framework of arrangements between several partners. These arrangements increase the institutions′ purview into other countries. Possible activities encompass programs designed especially for foreign students among many others, e.g. staff mobility projects and joint research projects (Van Damme, 2001, p. 417). The *competency approach* focuses on the development of skills, characters, and knowledge in individuals, such as students and faculty. The *ethos approach* puts emphasis on the development of an ethos or culture, which includes intercultural and international aspects. This approach is closely connected to the *process approach*, which concentrates on the integration of an international element into the main tasks of the HEI, for example research or administrative services. As part of the process approach, two main strategies are described that a HEI can use for its internationalization. Firstly, *program strategies* mean activities that aim at the internationalization in research, education, technical assistance, and extra-curricular areas. Secondly, *organizational strategies* include internationalization at the levels of structure, policies, and organizational culture.

Since internationalization of HE is ever-changing, Knight (2004, p. 20) revised the approaches and presents six approaches. While the *activity approach* and the *process approach* remain the same, the *competency approach* gets embedded into the *outcomes approach*, which focuses on the desired outcomes of internationalization. These can include specific competencies in students as well as the number of international agreements. Moreover, the *ethos approach* is enclosed in the *at home approach*, which aims at creating "a culture or climate on campus that promotes and supports international/intercultural understanding and focuses on campus-based activities" (Knight, 2004, p. 20). In addition, Knight introduces the *rationales approach*, which emphasizes the underlying motivations for the internationalization process, e.g. academic standards, cultural diversity, or student development. Another approach is the *abroad (cross-border) approach*, which concentrates on various delivery methods and administrative organization in other countries.

2.1.5 Influence of internationalization in HEIs on staff

Internationalization of HEIs is not a linear or static process but a cyclical process which HEIs can and most likely will pass through repeatedly (Knight & Wit, 1995, pp. 25–28). Firstly, *awareness* about the significance and advantage of internationalization for faculty, staff, and students must arise. Secondly, the reached awareness needs to become *commitment* especially from senior administration, because they will lead the further process, whereas faculty will be "the real engine" of internationalization (Knight & Wit, 1995, p. 26). Thirdly, a *plan* tailored for the institution should be made. The plan starts with the objective and aim, which lead to a strategy based on the assessment of the motive, the characteristics, the objectives of the HEI's internationalization, and the HEI's resources and demands regarding its internationalization. By implementing this plan at several levels, priority manifests itself. Furthermore, the plan serves as a guide through the process. In the institution's mission statement, the plan should be addressed.

Following the structural side of the plan, concrete action steps are needed in form of the *operational plan*, which represents step four. The plan consists of academic activities, services, and guidelines, whose time of implementation is dependent on the institution's resources, demands, and goals. The next step in the cycle is *review*, which on the one hand means the assessment of the progress and success of the internationalization process. On the other hand, review signifies the integration of internationalization into the institution's annual review. Lastly, reinforcement of good results through *rewards and recognitions* supports the work people are engaging in. Furthermore, review causes new *awareness* and *commitment*, which represent the new beginning of the cycle. This means that an institution can run through the phases repeatedly. Therefore, in the cyclical process there is always room for innovation and change.

2.1.6 Quality of internationalization in HE

An assessment of the present status of the institution's internationalization including its internationalization policies is needed in order for quality to receive a higher status in internationalization of HE (Van Damme, 2001, pp. 436–437). Quality is an important appeal for students on the market of student mobility, which is becoming more and more competitive (Van Damme, 2001, p. 430). However, a disregard of quality emerges as the result of a speedy development of activities towards the internationalization of HEIs and the fact that in the beginning of the implementation of internationalization of HEIs much was based on generosity and kindness (Van Damme, 2001, p. 430). Hence, Van Damme sees a lack in quality in the internationalization of HE. He reasons that a lack of finances, a lack of specific strategies on both the national and the institutional level, certain legal and administrative regulations, and discrepancies in the commitment of the institution prohibit an effortless implementation of internationalization strategies (Van Damme, 2001, pp. 428–430). Nevertheless, some study programs and faculties have achieved world class environments (Hoffman, Raunio, & Korhonen, 2010).

2.1.7 Definition of International Office

One of the levels of organizational strategies is constituted of the international office (IO), which serves as catalyst, support, and service in internationalization (Knight, 1996, p. 14; Knight & Wit, 1995, p. 17). At most HEIs, the international activities that the institution engages in are managed by an IO (Van Damme, 2001, p. 417), which Hammer (1992) calls international student advising office (ISAO). While Hammer's term implies that these offices serve incoming students, Van Damme's term means both types of international students, namely incoming and outgoing. Therefore, ISAOs concern problems that incoming students have, their psychological reactions to the new environment, the ISAO's influence on international students concerning social interaction, and teaching international students that adaptation is a culture learning process (Hammer, 1992). Therefore, IOs are communication channels, which ensure the integration of international activities and provision of an infrastructure in a HEI (Chan, 2004, p. 41). Crawford and Bethell (2012, p. 200) explain that "successful intergroup interaction must be facilitated and have structured support by knowledgeable HEI personnel", which can be the staff at an IO. However, since university demographics keep changing, staff development is required to continue adapting to the changes (Killick, 2006, p. 12; de Vita & Case, 2003, p. 394).

IOs do not only facilitate student mobility, but also staff mobility, institutional agreements, and other aspects of internationalization of HE. However, in European HEIs staff working in internationalization was asked to focus on short-term student mobility, i.e. omit taking care of international degree students because of the European Union's focus (Välimaa et al., 2013, p. 32). Despite the EU's focus, international degree programs (IDPs) are perceived as a means to achieve the goals of internationalization within the HEI: "Approximately half of the HEIs explicitly said that the IDPs are at the core of their functions and closely related to their internationalisation strategies" (Välimaa et al., 2013, p. 89). Although, international degree students and short-term visiting students are seen so differently, the services needed for international degree students should be combined with the existing services (Välimaa et al., 2013, p. 93). The sharing of experiences is helpful for all involved. Thus, coordinators of IDPs and international office staff (IOS) need to work together (Välimaa et al., 2013, p. 94).

While IOs were established decades ago, new types of positions had to be created as a response to the European attempt of expanding internationalization.

The people recruited for these positions were in charge of managing the European requests for student and staff mobility (Välimaa et al., 2013, p. 31). Although the tasks are distributed between IOS and other similar positions within the institution, "the actors normally know their role and express an attitude to cooperate and help if it is needed" (Välimaa et al., 2013, p. 93).

This kind of cooperation between IOS and other international affairs staff located throughout the institution will be discussed later in the context of the presented case study. It investigates an existing gap in research literature, namely that of international affairs staff having to manage everyday tasks while at the same time dealing with the challenges of incoming and outgoing students in relation to the organizational structure that they work in. In addition, the presented case study explores an organizational change that affects the work of the international affairs staff.

2.2 Organizational change and change management

Internationalization naturally is dynamic, which means that changes occur frequently. Thus, an internationalized organization sooner or later goes through changes. In the following section, organizational change and change management will be discussed regarding internationalization in HE.

2.2.1 Definition of change

Change is defined as "any alteration or modification of organizational structures or processes" (Lewis, 2011, p. 25). Lewis comments on the flaw of the definition:

> This and other definitions of change often imply that there are periods of stability in organizations that are absent of change or that a normal state for organizations is marked by routine, consistency, and stability (Lewis, 2011, pp. 22-26).

This explains why change is regularly seen as a sign of growth and development. Hence, there is a big pressure on organizations to keep changing and adapting (Lewis, 2011, p. 21). Furthermore, the complex environments which organizations are located in put pressure on organizations to adjust and develop new ideas (Lewis, 2011, p. 22).

Change can be described in different ways. Firstly, change can be planned or unplanned. While an *unplanned change* is caused by external circumstances or emergent processes in the organization, a *planned change* is induced by members of the organization (Levy, 1986, pp. 5–6; Lewis, 2011, p. 37). Planned change "has both intentional (explicitly planned for) and realized (emerged out of the situation) aspects" (Levy, 1986, p. 7).

Other scholars distinguish between *planned* or *episodic change* and *continuous change*. From this perspective, planned change constitutes a different period than the period of organizing in the lifespan of an organization (Kondakci & van den Broeck, 2009, p. 441). Furthermore, continuous change is understood as emergent change coming from within the organization, while planned change is implemented from top to down (Kondakci & van den Broeck, 2009, p. 444).

Secondly, change can be described by the *objects that change*, commonly known as: technologies, programs, policies, processes, and personnel (Lewis, 2011, pp. 37–38). However, Lewis warns that this distinction can be faulty to describe change because change is made up of more than one component and thus more than one object can change at the same time. Zorn, Christensen, and Cheney (in Lewis, 2011, p. 38) suggest a distinction between discursive and material change. While *discursive change* means the renaming of usual practices without changing how things are done, *material change* refers to changes made in e.g. processes, relationships, and decision-making.

Lastly, change can be described by its *size and scope*. One distinction is by first-order, second-order, and third-order. *First-order changes* are small and immediately solve problems so that the organization can keep functioning, *second-order changes* are bigger and more radical, because they introduce new ways of working, and *third-order changes* prepare members of the organization for ongoing change (Bartunek & Moch, 1987, p. 487). According to Levy (1986, p. 10), while first-order changes encompass small changes which arise automatically during the organization's development and which do not affect the organization's core, second-order changes take place in the organization's core and are therefore irrevocable. Second-order change performs a cycle with four stages: decline, transformation, transition, and stabilization and development (Levy, 1986, pp. 14–17). The organization's core that is changed during a second-order change comprises four basic perspectives. Firstly, the *organizational paradigm,* or metarules, mean the underlying assumptions within the organization that shape everything else. Secondly, the *organizational mission and purpose* refer to the strategies, the mission, the goals, and the policies. Thirdly, the *organizational culture* includes beliefs, values, norms, symbolic and traditional activities, and the management and leadership styles. Lastly, *core processes* involve the organizational structure, decision-making, rewards and recognition, and communication. Levy defines second-order change as a change in all four of the abovementioned dimensions. It "is proposed that the less visible the dimension, the deeper the change and the greater the possibility that the change will be irreversible" (Levy, 1986, p. 19).

In a complex organization, like a HEI, change can barely be one-dimensional, because of many different interdependent components that affect each other. Since change has different parts and consequences, which are changes in themselves, *multifaceted change* happens when more than one change occurs during the same time frame. There are two types of multifaceted change: *multiple change* means the occurrence of two or more individual changes, and *multi-dimensional change* describes one or more changes with subordinate components (Laster, 2008, pp. 5–6).

2.2.2 Triggers for change

Just as change can be planned or unplanned, there are different triggers for change from within the organization or from its environment. Some triggers for change can be abidance by legal regulations, changing of customers' needs, new technologies, modified availability of financial resources, and a changing work force (Lewis, 2011, p. 23). Changes could be initiated from within the organization by innovative staff, an accidental discovery, or different arguments by stakeholders (Lewis, 2011, p. 23). For example, in a HEI changes could be initiated by staff in the IO trying to innovate their processes or by the ministry of education trying to make internationalization of HEIs more profitable.

2.2.3 Change model

The classical change model, which many contemporary models are based on, is Lewin's (1951) model of change process. It has three stages: unfreeze, mobilize, and refreeze. The current status is taken apart or unfrozen, so that it can be mobilized, i.e. changed, and then established, namely refrozen (in Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 122). Lewin's model and variations based on it assume that the three phases are singular, that the change process is linear, and that change leads to a new routine, a variation of existing activities, or cessation of actions: "This model grossly oversimplifies the complexity of change" (Lewis, 2011, p. 32). For quite some time, it was assumed that change is a linear process. Meanwhile, many scholars share the opinion that change is far more complex than assumed (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 123).

Not only is change complex, but also the system can be complicated or complex. *Complicated systems* are defined as rich in detail and *complex systems* are rich in structure (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 123). In complex systems, if change approaches do not consider complexity, the chance of failure is higher in any context where the change takes place (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 146). Nonetheless, the results of interactions are not predictable but emergent (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 125). Data suggest that there is "a trend of movement away from 'directive' change and towards a more emergent approach" (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 131). Within this emergent view of change, Jaworski and Scharmer (2000, p. 22) found three activities that lead to success. Firstly, during *sensing*, reality is seen from a new perspective. Thus, the focus is directed outward. Secondly, in *presencing* the focus is directed inward, which leads to an awareness of the own highest potential. Lastly, during *embodying*, the seen potentials are being executed. The vision is defined in this stage.

2.2.4 Failure and success of change

Even though change is common in many organizations, it is yet often arduous or fails to achieve the goal (Lewis, 2011, p. 25). Lewis points out the downside of change:

> Failure of organizational changes may have minor or major consequences for stakeholders associated with an organization and on the ultimate survival of an organization. The energy and resources necessary to undergo moderate to major change are often high (Lewis, 2011, p. 25).

Despite the vast amount of literature on organizational change, many organizations cannot handle changes well and several change efforts fail (Kondakci & van den Broeck, 2009, p. 439). According to Higgs and Rowland (2005, p. 122), some authors explain that as much as 70% of change initiatives fail.

The reason for failure in change often is the issue that managers are used to solving complicated problems instead of complex ones (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 123). The difficulty with solving complex problems is that they demand managers to deal with issues within the system and that there is no definite solution. Furthermore, top-down change and unexpected outcomes from interactions in the organization lead to failure of change efforts, as Harris and Ogbonna (2002) suggest. Moreover, some of the reasons of failure in organizational change are the issue of not acknowledging the human side of change and instead focusing too much on technicalities (Mohrman, Tenkasi, & Mohrman, 2003, p. 320), as well as misjudging the influence of organizational culture on change processes (Kondakci & van den Broeck, 2009, p. 439). Another reason for failure of change efforts is the lack of understanding "the meanings embedded in organizational changes" (Mohrman et al., 2003, p. 303). Moreover, during the process, emerging situations might not be considered, which might lead to failure because they disrupt the plan (Mohrman et al., 2003, p. 303).

Lewis explains that change is only successful under certain circumstances:

> Organizations cannot always benefit from a particular change unless all, or at least most, of the stakeholders are using/participating in the change in a coordinated manner (Lewis, 2011, p. 43).

For change to be successful, it also needs to be managed well, i.e. planned, organized, directed, and controlled appropriately. It is commonly believed that an exact plan and detailed procedural steps are required by the leadership body to implement a successful change process (Kondakci & van den Broeck, 2009, p. 441). However, this is only supportive with effective leadership (Gill, 2002, p. 307), who influence their followers so that they are motivated to do what is needed (Gill, 2002, p. 316). As a result of his three-year study, Gill proposes a model for successful change:

> The model proposes that the leadership of successful change requires vision, strategy, the development of a culture of sustainable shared values that support the vision and strategy for change, and empowering, motivating and inspiring those who are involved or affected (Gill, 2002, pp. 307–308).

Similarly, Hooper and Potter (2001, p. 5) define *emotional alignment* as the development of a vision, creation of strategies to reach this vision, and motivation of members of the organization to work towards this vision. It is important to create a shared vision through dialogue, which is "planned, non-adversarial, facilitated process that helps participants develop a shared understanding of an issue and its potential solutions" (Gudz, 2004, p. 166).

Gill (2002, p. 311) adds that vision, mission, shared values, and strategies are produced when the leadership is able to notice information and engage in a process of comprehending the information, considering it, envisioning possible activities, tackling problems, and making decisions based on it. For that, emotional intelligence is crucial, which is the ability to understand oneself and others, show self-control and self-confidence, and to react to others in a proper way. Gill claims that emotional intelligence is important to identify and advertise shared values in order to reach a common vision, mission, and strategies and to empower people. During change, empowering means the support for others to be capable of doing the necessary tasks for the change process (Gill, 2002, p. 315). Furthermore, fast change is achieved by alignment of the organizational members' personal values and the organization's values (Sullivan, Sullivan, & Buffton, 2001, p. 247).

Nevertheless, only having a vision will not automatically lead to a successful change. A vision needs to be effective, which means that it is imaginable, desirable, feasible, focused, flexible, and communicable (Kotter, 1997, pp. 15–16). Moreover, it needs to be shared by the people involved, because it makes clear where the change leads to and makes sure that everything that is done is aligned to it. Similarly, Senge (2006, p. 192) describes vision as ambition which mobilizes people to a higher extent than without vision, and Covey (2003, p. 19) sees principles as the "true north" leading toward the vision like a compass.

To reach the vision and mission, strategies are required, which are served by the organizational structure (Gill, 2002, p. 314). Structures are defined as the "rules and resources that create organizational practices" (Lewis, 2011, p. 43). Resources here mean processes, beliefs, and other resources that can be used to change. Organizational structures include decision-making outlines, roles, communication methods, and the way how information is shared (Lewis, 2011, pp. 43–44). Since structures are strongly rooted in organizations, they are quite resistant to change. Hence, change that attempts to break the organizational structures often is opposed (Lewis, 2011, p. 44).

Another key component for starting successful change is communication (Lewis, 2011, p. 23-24). Moreover, communication is the center of change processes because stakeholders need to make sense of the processes. If this is not possible, stakeholders might have a difficult time during the change:

> Anecdotal evidence in case studies suggest that stakeholders – primarily employees – often have a difficult time during change and that change takes a high toll on stress levels and feelings of commitment to the organization (Lewis, 2011, p. 25).

Every individual involved in it sees the change differently. Depending on how directly a person is affected by the change, the person perceives the change's size and scope as bigger or smaller (Lewis, 2011, p. 39). Additionally, stakeholders' reactions are connected to their evaluation of costs and benefits of the change for themselves. Nevertheless, it is

> likely that reactions to changes will be rooted in complex social systems, organizational structures, power relations, and other ongoing organizational dynamics (Lewis, 2011, p. 48).

The reactions to change do not necessarily need to be supporting the change process. Individuals might repel the change.

2.2.5 Resistance to and support of change

There are various reasons for resistance towards change. The reasons can be cognitive and behavioral, e.g. lack of knowledge to work in the change, or emotional, i.e. a dislike of change and surprises or a lack of self-confidence and confidence in others (Gill, 2002, pp. 308–309). Furthermore, human and political facets are frequently not well thought through in change. Hence, there needs to be a balance between social and emotional factors, which are dealt with through leadership, and the technical features, which principally is management (Gill, 2002, p. 309).

Not only change influences stakeholders, but also stakeholders influence each other during change (Lewis, 2011, p. 42). Part of this can be sequential or reciprocal interdependence. Thompson (2003, pp. 54–55) defines *sequential interdependence* as the interdependence when one person's work is needed by another to do their job and *reciprocal interdependence* as the interdependence when one person is dependent on another's work to do their job and vice versa. When "interdependence is high, change often requires cooperative and coordinated efforts on the part of stakeholders" (Lewis, 2011, p. 43).

Other people who are supportive in change are those outside of the organization in networks, as Mohrman et al. (2003, p. 320) found out in their study: "This rich constellation of overlaying networks is a critical resource in addressing the learning challenges during large-scale change." Their study gives evidence that planned change and social networks cannot be separated. Organizations in their study that were slower in their change process were integrated into less networks or only built on preexisting networks (Mohrman et al., 2003, p. 321). Hence, executing fundamental organizational change "is a knowledge-creating process in which new structures, processes, and technologies are defined through rich social connections" (Mohrman et al., 2003, p. 320).

2.2.6 Research on change management

The importance of change management has been emphasized by research, such as the following examples. A survey by the American Management Association (1994) shows that the most important aspects for a successful change are leadership (92%), organizational values (84%), and communication (75%) (in Gill, 2002, pp. 309–310). Also Higgs and Rowland (2005, pp. 126–127) cite several authors indicating that there is more and more evidence of leaders' significant influence on the success of change. A study by Higgs and Rowland (2005, pp. 126–127) came to the result that there are five broad areas of leadership competencies that are linked to success in change processes. It is crucial for leaders to make others understand the need for change. In addition, supporting change by understanding the issues and by providing a set of tools and processes leads to success. Moreover, engaging others in the process and providing a sense of commitment is required for successful change. Another leadership competency is good planning and tracking. In addition, leaders who want to be successful in change need to facilitate the capability of others in finding their own answers.

Nevertheless, Higgs (2003) discusses evidence showing that effective leadership has less and less to do with leader-centric and top-down models (in Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 145), which is advocated for by several scholars (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 144). Additionally, Higgs and Rowland conclude from their study of seven organizations that not only leadership behaviors but also change approaches need to be considered within the context of the change. Furthermore, leadership behaviors and change approaches are connected, where this relationship can be seen as a continuum. The study also revealed that the relationship between the change approach and the change context is significant (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 146). Apart from this, "there is relatively little research into what does lead to successful change" (Higgs & Rowland, 2005, p. 128).

In order to achieve change in an organization, there need to be changes in the processes and actions, as well as in the cognitions and behaviors of the members in the organization (Tenkasi, Mohrman, & Mohrman, 1998, p. 342). Since all of these are rooted in social communities, change is achieved through understanding and learning collectively (Mohrman et al., 2003, p. 303). A development of different comprehension and behavior is also reached through activities that provoke intermittent and continuous self-development (Mohrman et al., 2003, p. 302).

The research presented in this subchapter indicates that there is no clear formula for successful change. Instead change is influenced by many different factors leading to failure or success. Nevertheless, this does not mean that leaders cannot intentionally bring their organization's change to success.

2.2.7 Definition of change for this research

Based on the aforementioned information, change is defined as any planned or unplanned process of alteration, modification, or exchange of organizational structures or processes on a superficial or deep level that fails or succeeds depending on the circumstances. Thus, change management means the way in which the change process is managed and led by the organization's leadership.

2.3 Organizational change in higher education

2.3.1 Organizational change in HE compared to other organizations

Organizational change in HE has some similarities and differences compared to change taking place in other types of organizations. The biggest difference is the organizational culture. Hoover and Harder (2014, p. 178) define the academic environment as the promotion of different forms of learning, which pervade the whole institution, i.e. in this case the university. Just like in other organizations, change in HEIs tends to be slow, political, and challenging (Kezar, 2001, pp. 116–121). Nevertheless, HEIs have a unique environment, because external forces have less influence on them (Kezar, 2001, pp. 59–60).

2.3.2 Research on change processes in HEIs

Hoover and Harder (2014) conducted a meta-analysis of 13 qualitative studies on HEIs' change processes. The themes, which the authors identified, cover topics such as the composition of the organization, individuals and the community, and the interconnectedness between those. They suggest that visible behavior by senior staff members can affect dynamics and facilitate a change process. The conclusion drawn on this topic is that the more political a situation is, the higher the chances are that conflict arises (Hoover & Harder, 2014, p. 179).

Another topic covered by the meta-analysis is collaboration: "the studies show a collective emphasis is also placed on collaboration in the processes of change" (Hoover & Harder, 2014, p. 179). Collaboration is not only beneficial for collecting ideas, but also for creating ownership, for ensuring that people's opinions are taken into account (Hoover & Harder, 2014, p. 180), for creating a common vision (Kurland, 2011, p. 408), and for enhancing the momentum (Gudz, 2004, p. 161).

Not only collaboration, but also individuals are crucial for change processes, because they take part in it or they are the ones who take the lead (Hoover & Harder, 2014, p. 180). Moreover, people's personal characteristics affect change processes. One needs "skill, time, patience, and some luck" (Bardati, 2006, p. 65). Additionally, being able to reject 'no' as an answer and believing that the change can be successful are supportive characteristics (Moore et al., 2005, p. 76). Furthermore, various studies discuss the importance of integrity, also known as 'walking the talk', and the difficulty of executing it (Hoover & Harder, 2014, p. 181).

Apart from collaboration, certain new structures are relevant for change initiatives in HE. These structures include committees, responsibilities, and communication channels (Hoover & Harder, 2014, p. 181). However, existing structures can lead to tardiness in change processes, because they often reject new initiatives. Hoover and Harder conclude from their study that structures are "seen as a vehicle for achieving change through both individual and collective processes" (Hoover & Harder, 2014, p. 182). The relationship between individuals and structures is facilitated by processes such as dialogue, relationships, and networks.

Despite all of the abovementioned influences, it is recommended by scholars concerned with transition management that one should flexibly use approaches which relate to the specific context (Hoover & Harder, 2014, p. 186). Nevertheless, one needs to keep in mind that tensions can arise where only committed people participate in the change process. Since in general fewer people take part, a group of experts develops, and this can lead to "complacency and lack of collective responsibility" (Hoover & Harder, 2014, p. 187).

A review by Kondakci and van den Broeck (2009, p. 441) suggests that continuous change approaches are implemented less often in HEIs than planned or episodic change approaches. However, their study provides evidence that continuous change is possible in HEIs (Kondakci & van den Broeck, 2009, p. 461). It needs to be considered that the perspective from which the change effort is seen depends on the receptivity of the management, which creates the required climate for continuous change (Kondakci & van den Broeck, 2009, p. 462).

3 IMPLEMENTATION OF THE STUDY

This section explains the reasoning behind the study, such as the initial motivation and the research questions, as well as introduces the context, participants, research process and methods, along with data analysis, and related topics including reliability and ethical solutions.

3.1 The Context of the Research

As the broader research topic, internationalization in HE was chosen. On the one hand, the topic is of personal interest to the researcher. On the other hand, the topic has not been researched enough although it is pertinent for discussion. In internationalization in HE, there is an ongoing cooperation between different stakeholders, which continuously transforms due to external changes, such as the growing number of international students or changing interests of the government, and internal changes, such as structural adjustments for more efficient work in the field.

The selected HEI happened to have a structure that allowed to study the cooperation between different stakeholders working in international affairs, i.e. the central IO, ICs at faculty and departmental level, as well as the HoI. Coincidentally, this organization was going through a structural change at the time of data collection, which led to the opportunity to not only investigate the relationship between the different stakeholders, but also investigate their attitude towards this change.

As can be seen in the previous chapters, as little research exists on this specific topic, this study seeks to illustrate what such a structure can look like and how it is operating, to demonstrate which aspects could be improved, and most importantly to give detailed insight into the system for clearer understanding. Based on this, the research questions are:

1. How do the different stakeholders view the current structure?
2. What are similarities and differences between the perspectives?

3. How did the stakeholders experience the structural change at the point of data collection?

3.2 The Participants

To answer the research questions, a medium-sized university with a few faculties was chosen. The university is located in Scandinavia and should remain anonymous otherwise because of the ease of identifying the participants with further information due to a rather low number of universities with the same size in the region.

The following participants were chosen, because of their roles and thus, their ability to give information that would lead to answering the research questions. The HoI was selected, because they[1] oversee the advancement of the institution's internationalization. This includes student mobility and other areas, such as the IDPs, teaching and research, administration, or the connection to the wider society. While the role of the HoI is more strategic, the role of the Head of International Office (HoIO) is more practical. They oversee the work of the IOS and to some extent of the ICs in the faculties and departments. The IOS and the faculty-level and departmental ICs are the ones directly working in student mobility. They have the best insights into what their work and perspectives look like.

Personal contact with the university's central IO had already been established prior to the implementation of this study, because of a previous study assignment, from which observation notes were used as data for this study as well. Consent from the staff in question to use the observation notes was obtained via email before collecting further data. Based on the previous contact, all staff members in the central IO were contacted and invited to participate in an interview. At the same time, the HoI at the university's unit for strategic planning was contacted via email as well.

---

[1] Throughout this report, the general pronoun 'they' will be used instead of 'he' or 'she' to conceal the participants' gender and thus prevent their identification.

Once the interviews with the HoI and the HoIO were set, all ICs at the faculties and departments were also contacted via email and asked for an interview as well. Out of all ICs, about 70% answered, out of which six were available for an interview during the inquired month. The other ICs were either not working in the position anymore, were too busy, or only available later. The five faculty-level ICs and one departmental coordinator (IC4) who were available were asked to fill in a Doodle survey with potential interviewing appointments. According to their availabilities, pairs of ICs were determined and invited to the appointment. Different rooms on campus were booked to accommodate both ICs in the same place as close as possible to their offices so that they would not have to spend more time and effort than necessary. Two pairs of ICs were interviewed in a laboratory classroom that also allowed video recordings.

Four staff members of the central IO, apart from the HoIO, were also interviewed in pairs, which were determined according to their availabilities. These interviews were conducted at the offices of the IO. Both the interviews with the ICs and the IOS were conducted within the same week. Prior to this, the interviews with the HoI and the HoIO were conducted at their respective offices. These interviews were conducted first for the researcher to get an overview of the topic before conducting more detailed interviews with the others.

Hence, the twelve participants were the HoI, the HoIO, four staff members of the IO and six ICs from the departments and faculties.

TABLE 1. Participants' position and length of holding the position

Length of holding the position (in years)	Position
Less than 5 years	IOS2, IC3, IC5
5 years or more	HoI, IC2, IC6
10 years or more	IOS1, IC1
15 years or more	IOS3
25 years or more	HoIO, IOS4, IC4

Table 1 shows that all participants had been working in their position for at least four years, some even for decades. Even though IOS2, IC3, and IC5 had been in the current position for less than five year, they have held different positions at before and some had been working in the field for more than five years. Therefore, it can be said that all participants know the structure well enough to give sufficient answers to the interview questions.

3.3 Research Methods

As little prior research has been conducted in this area, an inductive approach was chosen. Most qualitative research is of an inductive nature and because a qualitative approach is an "approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (Creswell, 2014, p. 4), this approach best suits the intended research. After reviewing possible research methods, a case study was selected. Case study is defined as "a detailed analysis of an individual circumstance or event that is chosen either because it is typical or because it is unusual or because there was a problem or because something worked well" (Newby, 2014, p. 53). The presented study is a holistic case study with a single unit of analysis (Yin, 2012, p. 8).

Since the study aimed at finding out how people in the organization view and experience it, interviews were chosen as the method to collect the data:

> The flexibility of interviews and their ability to expose issues creates an understanding of processes, events and emotions, all of which makes them particularly suitable in qualitative research (Newby, 2014, p. 340).

Single and pair interviews were conducted. The two single interviews with the HoI and the HoIO were conducted separately, because these two would give me in-depth knowledge of the structure and how and why it was established. This knowledge was needed to interview the remaining ten participants. These were interviewed in five pair interviews, because as I was working alone, there were not enough resources and because it is likely that interaction between participants provides more useful data (Newby, 2014, p. 365).

Each interview was recorded using two devices to prevent losing the data in case of malfunction. Except for the interviews with IC1 & IC2 and IC5 & IC6, all interviews were recorded with the researcher's smartphone and laptop. The remaining interviews were recorded with the researcher's smartphone as well as with the laboratory classroom's microphones and cameras. Immediately after the interviews, the data was stored in different safe places to prevent unauthorized access.

The interviews were designed to understand the stakeholders' viewpoints on the structure to which they belong. Hence, open-ended questions were used for that (Silverman, 1993 in Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2013, p. 205), for example *How would you describe the relationship between an international coordinator and the international office?* or *What are the strengths and weaknesses of these relationships?* (see all interview questions in Appendices 2 – 5). Moreover, open-ended questions gave the possibility of "important but unanticipated issues to be raised" (Cohen et al., 2013, p. 205). Additionally, some closed questions were used at the beginning of each interview to understand the interviewees' roles, the history of this role, and the length of experience in the position.

Leading questions, which are questions that assume something about the participants (Cohen et al., 2013, p. 205), were avoided as much as possible. For example, instead of asking whether the ICs are satisfied with their cooperation with the central IO, they were asked to describe their relationship, which allowed the interviewees to answer in any way and from their perspective without being led into a certain direction.

Although the case study approach and interviews as data collection method have been determined as suitable for this research, they have their limitations as well, which will be discussed in chapter 5.2 *Limitations of the study*.

3.4 Data Analysis

For the data analysis, I used Braun and Clarke's (2006) *thematic analysis*, which is an analytic method for qualitative research. Although "there is no clear agreement about what thematic analysis is and how you go about doing it" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 79), thematic analysis is commonly used in a variety of disciplines. Among its advantages is its flexibility, meaning that "it can be used within different theoretical frameworks" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 81).

Moreover, because the method is easy to learn and apply, it is suitable for researchers with little or no experience in qualitative research (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 97), which applies to myself as well. In addition, thematic analysis helps to compile the main elements of a big amount of data, as well as to compare and contrast the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 97). Hence, thematic analysis appeared to be the appropriate data analysis method for the here presented research.

Thematic analysis consists of six phases (Braun & Clarke, 2006, pp. 86–93). The first phase of thematic analysis is the transcription of the interviews for further analysis, which allows the researcher to become familiarized with the data at the same time. In this case, I transcribed the interviews by listening to the interviews and reading the transcriptions repeatedly to ensure accuracy of the transcriptions. Then, noticeable gestures or facial expressions as seen in the footage was added as notes to the transcription in the case of the interviews with IC1 & IC2 and IC5 & IC6. Observed gestures and expressions were, for example, rolling of eyes, pointing with the finger into a certain direction, or grinning.

The next phase is the systematic production of initial codes that are interesting for further analysis, which is done throughout the whole data set. Furthermore, I had to go back and forth within the data whenever I assigned new codes to check if they also matched other extracts. This led to 40 initial codes. From this phase onward, I used MAXQDA, a data analysis program, that allows "to import, organize, analyze, visualize and publish all forms of data" ("What is MAXQDA?"). The program facilitated the data analysis especially in the following two steps.

The search for themes is the third phase of thematic analysis. In this phase, the codes are compiled into potential themes by collecting all extracts that correspond to the theme. Codes were combined, sub-themes were defined, and connections and relationships made. In this phase, I built five themes, including one named "miscellaneous" for codes that I could not assign to any other theme.

Next, the potential themes that were built in the previous phase are refined. This means that all themes are checked whether the assigned codes all belong into this theme. Furthermore, a thematic map is drafted with themes and sub-themes to show correlations between the themes. During this phase, I also went back and forth between the codes to make sure all themes and sub-themes cohere, and all codes are assigned to the right themes. Moreover, I moved sub-themes around, combined some again, split themes up, and created new ones.

In the following phase, all themes are labeled with titles for the final report, and clear definitions of the themes are being determined. In addition, a final thematic map helps to get an overview over the themes and their corresponding sub-themes.

Once all themes are clearly defined and named, the report is composed (see chapter 4 *Findings*). For this, striking extracts are chosen to exemplify the presented analysis, which refers to the research questions and the literature.

3.5 Reliability

When studies are conducted, one needs to make sure that they are reliable, because it would otherwise be futile. The concept of reliability can also be described with other terms, such as trustworthiness (Cohen et al., 2013, p. 202; Elo et al., 2014, p. 2), which was one of the terms established by Lincoln and Guba (1985). Five concepts describe trustworthiness: credibility, dependability, conformability, transferability, and authenticity (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006; Elo et al., 2014, p. 2; Zhang & Wildemuth, 2005, p. 6). Credibility means that participants are described in detail. Dependability refers to the stability of data over time. Conformability describes the objectivity, meaning that two different researchers would come to the same conclusion about the accuracy, relevance, or meaning of the data. Transferability is defined as the generalization or translation of the findings onto other contexts. Concerning the here presented study, the findings cannot be transferred one-on-one, because other institutions have different structures. Nevertheless, the transferability of this study can be understood in the sense that its findings lead to a better understanding of the topic, an awareness, and its key considerations, which all can be transferred to other contexts. Lastly, authenticity indicates that researchers present a variety of truths. However, scholars have different opinions on the topic (Cohen et al., 2013).

As I am the only researcher in this study, it must be acknowledged that the findings are presented from the point of view of my interpretation. "Reality is multilayered" (Cohen et al., 2013, p. 202), which allows for more than one interpretation to exist without excluding the other. Hence, it is possible for another researcher to come to different conclusions with the data. Nevertheless, I have tried to avoid my subjectivity to dominate the data analysis. One way of ensuring an accurate interpretation, especially for a single researcher, is to go back to the data repeatedly (Pyett, 2003, p. 1171). Other possibilities are external audits, in which people who are familiar with the research topic check the interpretation, and member checks, which means that participants evaluate the results' truthfulness (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006; Elo et al., 2014, pp. 5–6). Since participants often do not have an academic background to understand the research like researchers, member checks are being advised against. Only the former way of ensuring a truthful interpretation has been made use of in this research due to a lack of resources. Nevertheless, the final thesis will be shared with the participants adding an important layer of accountability for the researcher.

During the interviews, bias was already existing that cannot be circumvented, because "[t]he sources of bias are the characteristics of the interviewer, the characteristics of respondent and substantive content of the questions" (Cohen et al., 2013, p. 204). Moreover, because interviews are interpersonal, a researcher's influence on the interviewees is inevitable (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995, p. 164). To keep this influence as low as possible, I tried not to interrupt the respondents nor evaluate their answers through facial expressions or gestures. Furthermore, I tried to wait for some time before asking the next question so that the respondents could add more if they wanted to.

3.6 Ethical Solutions

At the beginning of each interview, the participants were asked to sign a consent form (see Appendix 1. Consent form), of which they also got a signed copy from the researcher to file. The consent form informed about the research topic, the data recording method, and the handling of the collected data. Also, the participants were informed that their participation is voluntary and that they can withdraw from participating at any point. Moreover, the participants consented to the data potentially being stored and used for further research purposes. In addition, the consent form promised to keep the participants' identity as anonymously as possible. Thus, any identifying information was transcribed indirectly and paraphrased, so that there was no loss of information while restraining information that would easily lead to the participants' identification. Identifiers in research data can be classified as direct and indirect identifiers, as is explained by the Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity (2009, p. 10). Direct identifiers include name, address, birth date, and the participant's voice or picture in e.g. video footage. Except for the latter, no direct identifiers were collected during data collection. However, the participants disclosed indirect identifiers, which are among other locations, education, and job. These could help identify the participants as well as the institution. Since there are not that many HEIs in Scandinavia, and not all institutions have the same structure, especially like the studied one, the institution shall remain anonymously as well. The indirect identifiers have been paraphrased or explained in the transcriptions, as stated above, so that no harm can be done to the people involved. Nevertheless, as has also been said by van den Hoonaard (2003, p. 141), complete anonymity is impossible to achieve in qualitative research. Someone who knows the participants, or the institution could still identify them. Yet, I have tried to comply to the *Ethical principles of research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences*, which states: "The goal is to find a balance between confidentiality and the openness of science and research" (Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity, 2009, p. 10).

After evaluation, this thesis will be sent to every participant who indicated their volition to receive it on the consent form.

4 FINDINGS

Four main themes were identified during data analysis, which will be presented in the following sub-chapters. Subchapter 4.1 *Past organizational structure* explains how the current organizational structure came into existence and what the background of the roles are. Subchapter 4.2 *Current organizational structure* addresses what the roles and relationships looked like at the point of data collection and how the participants viewed that structure. Subchapter 4.3 *Changes happening in the institution* describes on the one hand the peripheral changes that were taking place at the time of data collection, which only have a minimal impact on the work of the international affairs staff. On the other hand, it discusses the structural changes that directly affect the work in international affairs in the institution. Lastly, the participants anticipated what might happen in the future, which is presented in subchapter 4.4 *Outlook to the future*. The implications of these findings are explored in more detail in following chapter, chapter 5.1 *Examination of the findings*.

4.1 Past organizational structure

4.1.1 Development of the positions

To understand the current organizational structure, one must know some of its history. The first step toward an IO at this university was taken in the late 1980s, when the first post was set up. "It was […][2] like study affair secretary focusing on international affairs. That was set up in [the late 1980s] and I know, because I was the first one selected to this post" (HoIO). The university in the capital city of the same country started setting up a similar post earlier, but "we were there among the first universities, I can say, to set up a post for international coordinator" (HoIO). This post was "part of then the central administration

[2] Square brackets indicate what has been left out or added to the quote for better understanding or to conceal the university's and participants' identity as well as to signal important nonverbal communication.

student affairs office" (HoIO). The main tasks of this coordinator are described as: "Alongside with coordinating the admission process for international students, the coordinator was launching the very first university-level student exchange scheme" (HoIO). Simultaneously, some departments started implementing exchange agreements with universities abroad (HoIO).

One year after the establishment of this post, an assistant, namely IOS4, was hired to deal "with the admission process of international degree seeking students" (HoIO). And after that, "gradually we got more people working in the international affairs, but still there wasn't an office. So, we were all part of the student affairs office" (HoIO).

The leading post of the international affairs unit was established sometime later. It was "a sort of specialist in international affairs and that was sort of a supervising post, a team leading post of the group of people working in the international affairs" (HoIO). The HoIO explains: "I applied to this post, because it was a sort of career step for me. And I got selected and then from that on this post of mine had sort of supervising duties. I had people to whom I was the boss."

From that moment on, more staff members joined the group, who were given responsibilities for different exchange programs that the university was running. The positions of IOS2 and IOS3 were set up in the 90s (IOS1, IOS3), before they started working in these positions. IOS1's position "was established in [the early 2000s] when I joined the team. So, […] I was the first person in the position" (IOS1).

Some years later, "the student affairs office got split to smaller units and International Office and study aid unit were one of these offices […]. So, International Office was an independent little unit within central administration for many years" (HoIO). Some years later, this changed again and "the smaller units were brought together to build what was then called educational and academic services […]. So, we ceased to be an independent office. We became one unit within this bigger entity" (HoIO).

Around the same time as the establishment of the HoIO's first post, "gradually one by one, the faculties set up their first posts for international coordinators […]. It was not a very sort of coherent process. It happened differently in different faculties" (HoIO). This process lasted until the late 2000s, when the last faculty-level IC posts were set up (HoIO). For example, the posts that IC2 and IC4 are nowadays working in were set up around the same time as the IO was established (IC2, IC4), or IC5's position was created when they were hired some years ago to collaborate with the other IC whose position had been existing almost as long as the IO (IC5, HoIO).

In addition to the faculty-level ICs, some of the departments had or still have contact persons for international affairs, who "did a percentage of international affairs depending on the department" (HoIO) compared to the faculty-level coordinators, of which most "did 100% in international affairs" (HoIO). IC2 confirms that "our faculty have had like department coordinator before me who said that 3% of her work was international student affairs." In addition,

> there used to be a lot more, for example, lecturers or professors who were these international coordinators in the faculties and deparments and since they were not administrators that was bit of a struggle, [because] they didn't like the administrative duties […] and [it] was something extra for them (IOS3).

The ICs with other duties apart from international affairs still exist today, which will be discussed later on in subchapter 4.3.2 *New network and its relationships*.

Some of the ICs have not been in their current positions as long, but they have experience in other similar positions, such as IC5 who worked at the IO twice as a replacement or IC3 who "also worked in the same position at the University of Applied Sciences for a year and a half."

The ICs who have worked in their positions for quite some time have experienced some changes over time. IC1 explains that before their faculty was merged only "a part of my duties had to do with international affairs." IC4, a lecturer and a departmental IC, describes that when they started, "I was not aware that there was a certain position, so I did it as a part of my work duties."

The post of the HoI was established around 20 years after the first post in international affairs was established at the university (HoI). The ICs had different reactions to the establishment of this post. On the one hand, IC3 mentions that "it was not ever really described or explained why this kind of decision was put up and what's the whole point of it" and that "it was like when that position came it was like 'What? Another chief in international affairs?'" IC4 recalls that "I do remember it, there was a crisis and some stress." Nevertheless, IC3 reckons that the HoI has been doing their job well and that they have "taken a lot of responsibility in developing the master's degree programs."

4.1.2 Past changes

Another change took place in the institution about one year before data collection. The whole administration was reorganized, which "was ruled very badly", because "the planning was a little bit odd and the decisions how it will be organized, who […] will do what kind of things came too late" (IC4).

Over time, the work load in international affairs changed. IC6 describes: "I've been looking at the numbers and mobility back in the day kind of like early 90s was maybe two incoming and outgoing each year and now it's about 40 incoming, 50 outgoing." This led to more work, whereas

> luckily in the past few years the situation has been more stable, because at one point my desk was just full of all sorts of big extra stuff […]. So, when you get away from all that, then it gets nice and simple (IC6).

Extra tasks were, for example, to advise visiting staff from abroad on taxation (IC6). IC6 took care of those issues, because there was no staff in the central administration who was able to do it. In addition, ICs were translating new policies and documents on their own, because only

> a year later you might have some information in English and in the meanwhile seven faculties and how many departmental coordinators have been translating bits of that stuff and it's just multiplying the work, what? 20 times? […] Each of us doing the same stuff (IC6).

IC5 adds to that: "And then also you have many different kinds of translations. It should be that if it's, for example, a rector's decision, then it should be exactly the same and not have many different kinds of translations."

4.1.3 Past view on international affairs

In order to understand the implementation of certain organizational structures, one needs to comprehend the underlying beliefs and attitudes regarding international affairs. Hence, this subchapter explains how the international affairs were viewed in the past.

The HoI explains that in the past tasks were traditionally organized in the way that "international affairs were mainly dealt with by the people in the international offices". The IOS still joke about these times: "anytime there's a letter coming from abroad, there's a foreign stamp, [it's] brought to us or the faculty coordinators, so anything relates to international so it's always the international coordinators' duty" (IOS3). Moreover, back in the day, they needed to rememeber to compose newsletters and signs in English (IOS3).

From the late 1980s onward, the current organizational structure was built up slowly step by step. The IO was established starting from one position, evolving to an independent office and being integrated into a bigger unit dealing with student services. At the same time, the international coordinator posts in the faculties and departments were created gradually depending on the faculties' and departments' strategies. In the past, the view on internationalization separated everything that had to do with international affairs from the native administration. Hence, having a separate IO and international coordinators was the logical organizational structure at that time of developing student and staff mobility.

4.2 Current organizational structure

A lot has changed since the beginnings of the international affairs in this university. "I think also the entire sort of university and the students and the way people study and so on and so on and everything has changed, you know, in 30 years" (IC1), as will be demonstrated based on the current organizational structure. Before the relationships between the different stakeholders are described, the current view on international affairs, as well as the roles of the different stakeholders need to be explained. Afterwards, the participants' evaluation of the current structure is presented.

4.2.1 Current view on international affairs

Meanwhile, many more people in the university deal with international affairs and not anymore just those with the word 'international' in their title. For example, "we have the doctoral school coordinator, who's sitting right there [*pointing next door*], my colleague, and [they're] someone who's dealing with international affairs all the time, every day, but, you know, [they don't] have that title that says international something" (HoI). Internationalization has become more mainstream, "in a way the whole internationalization things [are] kind of natural these days. So, on the campus every day you meet international people and also when you go downtown" (IOS4). IOS3 and IOS4 explain how internationalization has affected the institution:

> IOS4: So, in a way the internationalization has gone through all the organization […]
>
> IOS3: Yeah. Now they are taking more into care that when they are employing people that they, for example, speak English.

This is the case partly due to changed requirements for hiring.

> There's been an active will to recruit new members of staff with the kind of international mindset that when we are employing a new departmental secretary we actually ask about the international experience and stuff like that, so that it's starting to be embedded in each role in administration (IC6).

This means that every staff member, no matter which position they work in, needs to have international experience, because internationalization nowadays does not only concern the international affairs staff.

Nevertheless, the way of thinking that international affairs does not only concern those with the word 'international' in their title has not arrived everywhere yet, because "we also then try to remind sort of the regular staff or the other staff: 'These international students are your students as well.' […] That sometimes still exists nowadays that somebody thinks […] 'What to do now?'" (IOS3). Moreover, the ICs tell that they are not seen as the regular staff: "you have to […] kind of make yourself part of a team where the study affairs happen, because very often it's sort of 'Well, it's the international staff' [*showing a separation with hands*], it's sort of separate" (IC6). Furthermore, there is a lack of awareness about the international affairs staff among other staff.

> And in a lot of cases, the expectation of other staff around you is that everything you do in the international brackets is exactly the same as what you do with [domestic] students except in English and that's not the case. So, it's a pretty simplistic view (IC6).

Later, IC6 adds that

> a lot of people really think that it just is enough if you translate this sentence in English, but when the sentence in any language doesn't mean anything to the person coming from a different cultural background, a different country, they need to understand what in that sentence is very [typical of the domestic culture]. […] And I think one of the main things […] is that first of all everybody understanding that it's not just the language, international doesn't mean English.

Another comment shows the lack of understanding and separation from other staff: "it's sometimes a bit lonely struggle when people are 'Why do you do it so difficult?' 'Well, it's the nature of this [= international affairs], you know. It's just different.'" (IC6). It has to be acknowledged that this is not always the case, because "of course, there are staff members who understand this, too, but not everyone [*IC6 nodding head*]" (IC5). One of the reasons mentioned for the reluctance of staff that does not have the word 'international' in their title is the inability or disbelief of speaking English well enough (IC5, IC6).

4.2.2 Current roles

The mainstreaming of international affairs can also be seen in the duties of the central administration of the university. Nowadays, there is "a separate international human resources unit within the human resources unit in the university services or in the central administration of the university" (HoI). This means that there is staff that, for example, supports visiting staff with settling in.

The HoI is part of the university's strategic planning unit under the supervision of the respective head. Apart from working mainly with the university leadership, the HoI sometimes works with the faculties and administrative people and many different people throughout the university (HoI). Hence, they are "in a way the policy advisor for the leadership and management, but also some sort of liaison person connecting the different parties within the university in a way" (HoI). Their main task is

> to advance the internationalization of this university whatever that means in any particular sort of area that we work in, whether it's teaching or research or administration or the connections to the wider society or anything really. So, it's a fairly broad range of things that I am involved in, but in a way that's also something that I think the current leadership

> of the university and I think the leader and the university community at large feel that is necessary for us to have somebody sort of oversee of different things that go on at the university (HoI).

The HoI's tasks change over time and they depend on what is on the agenda. An example is the revision of the IDPs, for which they worked with the IO and the person responsible for student recruitment marketing. In addition, the HoI sits in many working groups such as for student and staff mobility together with people from the faculties, colleagues from the unit, and the HoIO. In such a working group, they discuss issues and draft documents for them, which later are presented to, for example, the rector or the head of administration (HoI). According to IC6, it is good that the role of the HoI exists, because "there was nobody really to kind of like high enough to take those things [= the IDP issues] on board."

As has been stated before, the IO oversees student and staff mobility issues together with the ICs in the faculties and departments, sometimes more, sometimes less depending on the situation (HoIO). The division of responsibilities between the IO and the ICs is clear (IOS1, IC5, IC6). Nevertheless, official process flow charts have been drawn that indicate who is responsible for which part of the process

> to see in which phase of the process is the activity implemented in our office, when does it go to the faculty-level, when does it go to the departmental level, what does the student do, what does the partner university do (HoIO).

Since the responsibilities and the source of funding change for each exchange program, there will be different process flow charts (for an example description of a process flow chart, see Appendix 6. Quotes #1). The division of tasks means, for instance, that "in Erasmus our role can be really small. If you have a student who doesn't take part in the orientations available and just signs everything electronically, which is possible, […] then we might not see the student at all" (HoIO). In summary, the ICs "only choose the students and then […] we take care of their instructions and also their recognitions, but the rest or all the bureaucracy then […], so all those papers and paying the scholarships and the general information they [= the IOS] take care of this" (IC4). Moreover, the IO takes care of all the financial issues in Erasmus (IC3, IC4).

This variety of different charts means that "it's rather difficult to say: 'These are the duties of the faculty-level coordinator, these are our duties', because we would need to make it an activity-to-activity process" (HoIO). Nevertheless, some responsibilities can clearly be ascribed to the people involved. The IOS provides general exchange information, as well as more specific information on all exchange programs. Each IOS is responsible for different bilateral and university-level exchange programs. This means that they guide the outgoing exchange students throughout the application process, select the students for nomination to the other university, and act as a contact person during the students' time abroad. Regarding incoming exchange students, the IOS also support them during the application process, provide information before their arrival, and receive the students upon arrival (IOS1, IOS2, IOS3). In addition, IOS3 is the responsible person for the international mobility software and the IO website with IOS3's colleagues' contribution. In contrast, IOS4 is the only staff member who does not work with exchange students, because they are in charge of the international degree students and their applications. Yet, they do not decide who gets admitted. Instead, the faculties select their international degree seeking students. Although every IOS has their own responsibilities, some of them know what the jobs of the others look like, because "I have been doing different positions in the same office in a way" (IOS2) and "I have also done my job and also I've covered for [IOS3]." (IOS1).

As the title already indicates, the HoIO's main task is to lead the team working in the IO, i.e.

> being a team leader in the International Office, of course, I need to sort of oversee in some ways that we do consult the faculties and departments whenever necessary, but this is something that all my colleagues really do even without me sort of asking them to (HoIO).

The HoIO's other tasks change, just as those of the other IOS. However, they have some tasks that remain the same. These are setting up the joint meetings between IO and ICs, preparing the agenda with input from the ICs, sending out invitations, and chairing the meetings (HoIO). Apart from the regular meetings, other ways of staying in contact with the ICs is the internal website for international affairs staff at the university, as well as an email list (HoIO).

Another task of the HoIO is to consult the ICs when they get inquiries concerning exchange agreements.

> I always send [the agreement proposals] via the email list to these coordinators for comments and I say: 'Hey, there is this university, university x in the country x, they want to have an agreement with us. These are the basic facts.' I always check the basic facts for these for the people, provide the websites, and then say: 'How does it look to you? Are you in favor of this agreement?' If I don't get any support, I don't put it forward, because our faculties need to have a say here, because it's for them (HoIO).

Nevertheless, the ICs are not consulted for everything, because "we have to be careful not to bother these people unnecessarily with few tiny things that we can just as well settle here" (HoIO). In addition, the IO and the ICs collaborate when proposals must be made, for example when a decision regarding Erasmus teaching visit grants needs to be made (HoIO). Furthermore, the IOS and the ICs decide together who takes which role in the orientation program for new international students (HoIO, IOS1). In addition, the IO plays a role in the training of new ICs, meaning that they explain their tasks and responsibilities to the new ICs (HoIO).

While some ICs also manage other tasks, such as teaching, most focus on international affairs. "I would say 99% of our international coordinators they are administrative staff" (IOS3). There are some tasks that all ICs have in common, such as selection and guidance of outgoing exchange students, and setting up new Erasmus agreements and renewing old ones (HoIO). Especially guiding the students is a big task.

> The big crucial role for faculty-level and departmental coordinators is to guide the students, to help the students choose the timing for the study abroad, choose the destination for their study abroad. […] And then the final point when the student has gotten back, gets the transcript, goes to the faculty-level coordinator and says: 'These are the courses I completed. Please help me with the credit transfer' (HoIO).

Part of this guidance is searching for information. "That is what we do a lot, you know, searching online" (IC1). In addition, knowledge of the major and minor study programs and what skills the students need for their anticipated profession is important to be able to guide students properly (IC1, IC4).

Just like the IOS, the ICs are responsible for incoming and outgoing exchange students and for Erasmus and faculty-level agreements. Yet again, there are differences between the faculties. "Every faculty has Erasmus agreements, the numbers differ between faculties, but every faculty has many. But some faculties, on top of these, want to have faculty-level partnership agreements typically with universities outside Europe" (HoIO).

Although much of the ICs' work is similar, there are some duties that differ. This has to do with the differences in the faculties, like different financial situations, different amounts of resources assigned to international affairs, and the faculties' histories. "We have faculties who are very clearly research focused and then we have faculties who would more focus on educational activities. So, of course their international coordinators have a bit different job descriptions" (HoIO). Hence, looking at the ICs' work, "there are certain guidelines and processes and ways of doing things that are of course joint and are universal throughout the university, but it really depends on the faculty and I suppose it also depends on the field of science"(HoI). For example, some of the ICs are involved in the IDPs and the selection of students for those and some are not at all (HoIO), such as IC1 and IC6 who also work with the IDPs. Also, IC1 works with some international projects and in staff mobility. In addition, they also take care of some financial matters, because they have been doing that since they began working in the position (IC1). Another example is IC4 who also is in charge of teacher mobility. Moreover, some ICs are involved in a program supporting students in difficulties, such as studies and personal issues (IC1, IC2). Then again, some ICs are advisors in working groups, e.g. IC4 who participated in laying down rules for teacher exchange. Furthermore, some ICs are involved in international research cooperations (HoIO). Hence, the ICs' responsibilities cover a variety of fields.

The work of the ICs also differs depending on the international population at the faculty. For example, while at IC2's faculty there are a lot of international PhD students, researchers, and staff members, at IC1's faculty there are more exchange and IDP students (IC1). Also,

> the mentality of the students and the staff are different in different disciplines. So, for example, in humanities or social sciences, you don't have to do a lot of sort of marketing of exchanges, because students are more inclined to do that in any way, whereas in [a] technical field it's a bit different and actually a lot of the effort goes into kind of marketing the opportunities (IC6).

Furthermore, the needs of the students differ, which means that they need different kinds of support (IC1). Not only the personalities of the students vary, but also the time for the exchange, and therefore the students' age, varies. For example,

> my students […] don't go abroad after the first year. We recommend that they go at the end of their bachelor's, third year that they have a clue what they've been studying here and then they would know what to choose at the host university (IC3).

In comparison, IC4's students go abroad during their first year of studies, because it is a motivation for their field of studies.

In addition, the numbers of exchange students vary a lot between the faculties. While IC3 sends about 80 students abroad per year, IC4 only enables 15 exchanges. Another factor that changes the nature of the ICs' work is the number of partner institutions. IC3 explains that they could not recommend universities for the needs of the students, because the faculty has so many partners, whereas IC4 is able to give recommendations like that.

One more task that the ICs have to deal with is convincing teachers to give their courses in English and to accept exchange students to their courses, or to accept courses from abroad for domestic students who went on exchange (IC3, IC4).

Most ICs state that they also do other tasks that are not related to international affairs, because other staff asks them to or sends international students over to them (IC1, IC2, IC5, IC6, IOS3). This still resembles the examples given in subchapter 4.1.3 *Past view on international affairs*.

Deriving from the roles of the people involved, the organizational structure, on the one hand, can be described as horizontal regarding the international affairs staff, because the IO and the ICs are coequal and they work for and throughout the whole institution. On the other hand, the here presented organizational structure is vertical looking at the relationships between the international affairs staff and other parties, such as the government, university leadership and management, HoI, and others, because these relationships include a hierarchy. According to Keeling, Underhile, and Wall (2007), higher education institutions typically display horizontal and vertical structures combined. However, they are often not intertwined well enough to sufficiently support student learning, because the individual vertical structures, e.g. faculties and the various services, pursue their own goals instead of thinking of the wider organization. Nevertheless, both dimensions are needed.

> The inherent and necessary tensions between these horizontal and vertical elements generate and sustain complexity in institutions of higher education. Because each institution is of particular type and exists in its own context (i.e. public, private, rural, urban, etc.), the vertical and horizontal structures vary in number and dimensions from institution to institution; but because they are fundamental parts of postsecondary infrastructure, they each exist in some form at every institution (Keeling, Underhile, & Wall, 2007, p. 24).

Hence, the studied institution has a typical organizational structure for HEIs that, like many others, can be improved, as will be discussed later in subchapter 4.2.5 *Evaluation of the current organizational structure*.

4.2.3 Competences needed in international affairs

To work well in an organizational structure with horizontal and vertical dimensions, the people employed in international affairs need certain competences. Based on the answers of the ICs and the IOS, these can be divided into knowledge, skills, personality traits, and social skills, as can be seen in Figure 1.

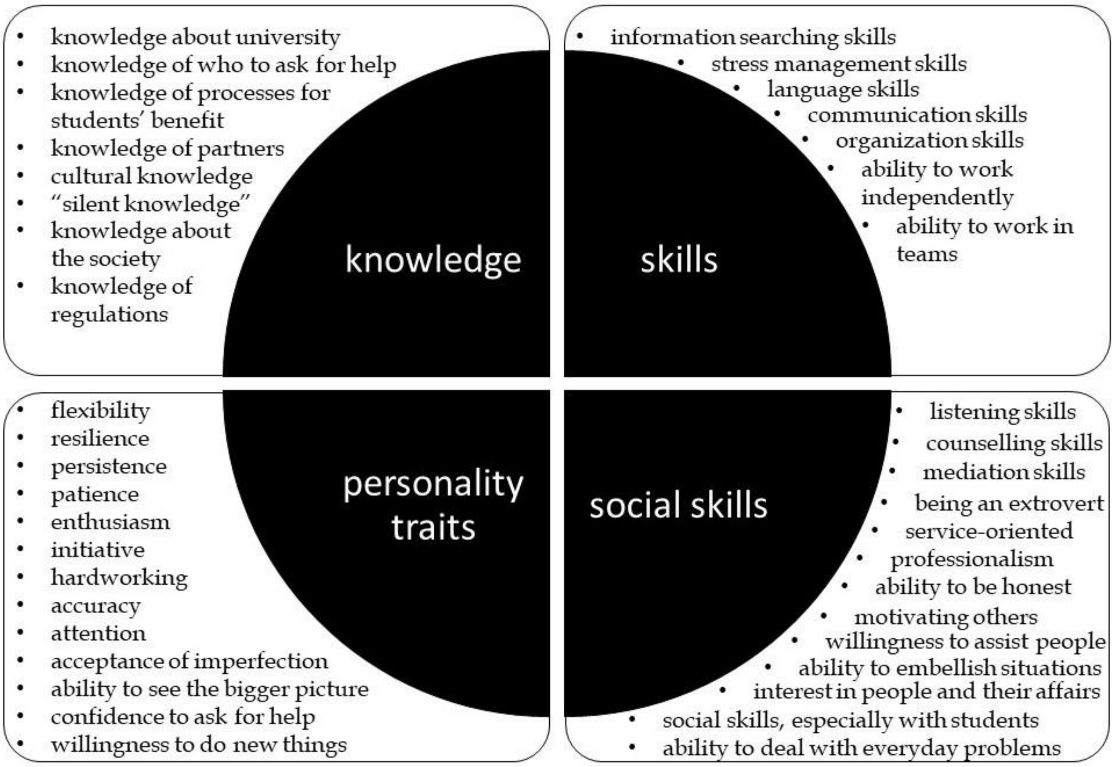

FIGURE 1. Competences needed in international affairs

Different kinds of knowledge are needed to do one's job well in international affairs. Firstly, one needs to have knowledge about the university and its programs (IC1, IC2, IOS1) and about the partner institutions to make the cooperation more efficient and faster, e.g. with credit transfers (IC5, IC6). Secondly, people working in international affairs need to know the society in a wider context to provide accurate information to incoming exchange students (IOS1). Thirdly, knowledge of regulations is important to abide by the law and all the rules (IOS3, IOS4). Fourthly, one must know who to ask for help to get the right kind of support (IC1, IC2). Fifthly, knowledge of the entire process is beneficial for the students, because knowing how things work means that "students get the optimum benefit both academically as well as personally" (IC6). This is related to the so called "silent knowledge" (IC1), which grows over time and is knowledge that is not written anywhere, but one knows it. For example, if a student would like to participate in two overlapping courses, the IC might know with which professor it works out and with whom it does not (IC1, IC2). Lastly, cultural knowledge is crucial when working with people from different cultural backgrounds, in which one must consider the diverse cultural perspectives (IC5, IC6, IOS3, IOS4). Regarding that, IOS4 explains:

> of course, it's good to have some knowledge about cultural things so that you understand the differences and behavior, which might cause clashes, […] and how people from different countries act. Of course, you learn a lot through experience and make mistakes. I didn't know some things about how people from different cultures might act and of course a person can get irritated.

The ability to deal with people from other cultures requires knowledge, as well as skills.

Specific skills are useful when working in the field of international affairs. The most obvious are language skills, especially in English with skills in other languages being of advantage (IC1, IC2, IC5, IC6, IOS1, IOS2, IOS3, IOS4).

> Language skills are at least one thing and English language skills mainly is what we need. Occasionally, we need other languages as well, but that's more rare, but it kind of helps that somebody knows Spanish and somebody knows French and somebody knows German. So, if we get documents, we can always ask a colleague who [speaks one of] these languages. (IOS1)

One does not have to be a native speaker, but sufficient skills are necessary, at least in English. Moreover, more language skills are acquired over time, e.g. through other institutions' websites or students' usage of these languages. In relation, good communication skills are needed, too. Firstly, international affairs staff needs to switch between their native language and English instantaneously. Secondly, not only good verbal communication skills are needed, but also written communication skills are required (IOS1, IOS2, IOS3, IOS4).

Other desirable skills are online information searching skills and for that knowledge of the structure of websites to be able to find the requested information as quickly as possible (IC1, IC2). In addition, organization skills and the ability to prioritize are preferable because processes can be in progress for up to two years (IC4, IOS1, IOS2, IOS3, IOS4). Moreover, stress management skills are advantageous, since many processes are taking place at the same time and working in international affairs can be quite stressful (IOS1, IOS2). Lastly, one needs to be able to work independently and in teams (IOS3, IOS4).

Apart from knowledge and skills, having a few of the following personality traits is beneficial for those working in international affairs. First, one needs to take initiative and to be "willing to do something that nobody else has done before" (IC2), because ICs usually are the only ones at the faculty working in international affairs and, hence, there is nobody else who might have done that before.

> It's a job that in each faculty or department only one person does and you have to take initiative in many things and kind of make yourself part of a team where the study affairs happen, because very often it's sort of 'Well, it's the international staff' [*showing a separation with hands*], it's sort of separate, so to actually take the initiative to bring it forward everywhere, to make it integrated in the rest of the study affairs (IC6).

Also, enthusiasm is a good trait for the job to "get things out there" (IC6).

Concerning working with other staff at the faculty, persistence and patience are beneficial personality traits (IC1, IC2). An example is the following situation. "If I contact [a professor completely strange to me] and I don't get answer, then I contact again and again and again […]. One of our professors told me [on] the phone that she won't answer my emails because she [doesn't] know me" (IC2). Furthermore, resilience is important in such a job because one encounters many people with difficulties (IC1, IC2). IC1 describes it like this:

> I think that is basically the hardest part of the job that you are so dependent on others in the way that you are the one who confronts the problems and the actual individual students who have difficulties because of this and that, but you are very rarely responsible for their problems. I mean they are not caused by you but you know by somebody else, but yet you are the one who sort of "gets the blame" [*doing quotation marks with fingers*] so to say (IC1).

In case an IC or IOS does not know what to do, they need confidence to ask for help (IC3).

The people working in international affairs need to be hardworking (IOS1, IOS2), "because there's quite a lot to do" (IOS2). At the same time, they need to be accurate in their work and pay attention to details, because they deal with finances, regulations, and the students' personal information (IOS1, IOS2, IOS3, IOS4). As there is always a lot to do, they also need to be able to see the bigger picture and keep track of what is going on (IOS3, IOS4). Nevertheless, they likewise need to accept imperfections and the possibility of something going wrong, for example due to misunderstandings (IOS3, IOS4).

In all of this, flexibility comes in handy (IOS3, IOS4). The following extract illustrates how flexibility manifests itself in the work of ICs:

> IC2: You have to solve problems and you have to try to find some holes from regulation […], so that's maybe the craziness. You have to try to do things that nobody else has done and you have to do things [in a] different way and you have to think [in a] different way.
>
> IC1: Yeah, exactly. […] Say, if you are very sort of rigid with the things that 'Ok, things are black and white', you know in the regulations, in the guidelines, in the instructions, it says like this and you have to follow the instructions to the letter. It's not what we do. It's impossible in our line of work.

Therefore, the ICs need to flexibly find loop holes in the rules and regulations to be able to do their job well.

As has been said, people working in international affairs encounter many people. Hence, some social skills are fortunate. Particularly, the willingness to assist people and service-orientation are needed in this kind of job (IC1, IC2, IOS3, IOS4). Moreover, an interest in people and their affairs is required (IC1, IC2). Therefore,

> you have to be basically interested in young people and sort of helping them creating their own identity both ways, the ones that are leaving and the ones that are coming in. It does have an impact on them, the exchange (IC4).

Beyond that, ICs "have to be motivating, exciting people to do something that [the students] haven't done before" (IC4). At the same time, listening skills are required to adequately guide the students (IC2). On top of that, counselling skills for the different situations that exchange students encounter, as well as the ability to deal with everyday problems that others offload onto international affairs staff are beneficial (IOS1, IOS2, IOS3, IOS4). In addition, knowing how to communicate and deal with students is required (IC5, IC6, IOS1, IOS2). This also includes the ability to be honest, for example when students must be disappointed by the IC, because the necessary information regarding courses from teachers comes late (IC1, IC2). Nonetheless, the people working in international affairs need to show professionalism in every situation while keeping students happy, because this staff is the university's representation toward the students (IC1, IC2, IOS3, IOS4). The ICs sometimes need to embellish situations and pretend "that everything looks really fine and everything is like in order even though it's not" (IC2). Apart from passing on information between teachers and students, ICs also need to be mediators between teachers and students by listening and trying to solve issues (IC1, IC2), as well as translating for the different stakeholders how things are done (IC5, IC6). Since ICs encounter many different people, being an extrovert helps in the job (IC3).

On the one hand, the competences are required by the personnel to work well in the instituted organizational structure. On the other hand, the competences are of no use if the given structural prerequisites hinder the personnel's work. Some necessary structural prerequisites were mentioned by the interviewees. One crucial requirement is the possibility to discuss issues and experiences with colleagues (IC4, IC5). The other mentioned precondition is enough time to do the job. Although this was said jokingly by IC5 and IC6, it can be taken seriously, because it was stated by others as well that they have a lot to do. In addition, sufficient financial and staff resources are needed for the international affairs staff to be able to do their job well (IOS3, IOS4, IC5, IC6).

4.2.4 The network and its relationships

The different stakeholders that were presented earlier function on their own only to a certain extent. Therefore, they are embedded into a network within the institution. This network and the relationships between the different stakeholders are depicted in Figure 2, which will be explained in the following. For better visibility, all faculties of the institution are depicted as one circle in the figure.

Figure 2 depicts an organization that has horizontal and vertical dimensions, which include hierarchies, because the units within the institution report to a higher authority. The two dimensions make the organizational structure complex, because the units work independently to some extent and are interconnected to each other.

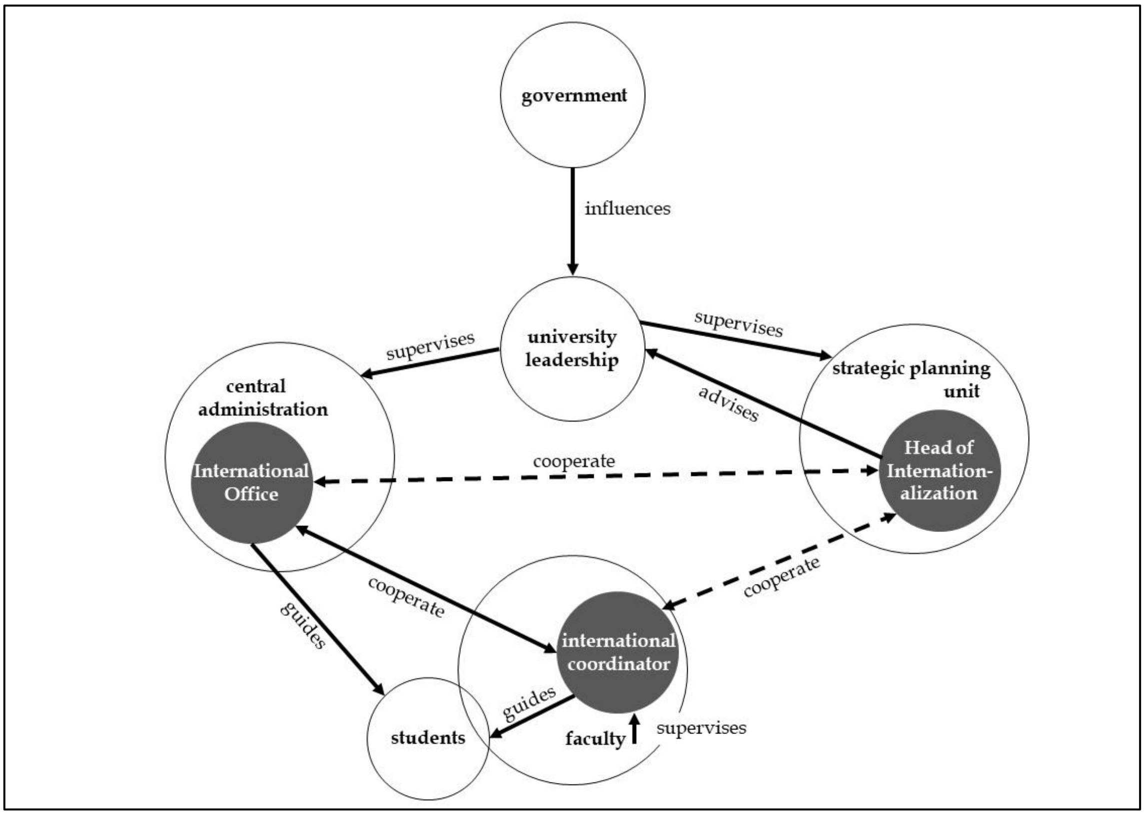

FIGURE 2. Current network and relationships in the studied institution

The relationship between the **government** and the international affairs staff is indirect. The government's decisions influence not only the university leadership, but the whole organization. Therefore, the activities and changes taking place in the university happen according to the government's decisions. For example,

> it depends also on the funding instrument as developed by the Ministry of Education and Culture. Right now […] as I said earlier, the internationalization of higher education is one of the key priorities in the strategy and so on. And hence, the universities are funded based on the international activities, but who knows in five years, ten years will it cease to be a priority? Will the funding instrument be based on something else? (IC1).

In addition, missing direction leads to the ICs' uncertainty of what to do:

> IC6: Also, getting kind of clear direction, [because] sometimes in order to do your job, you need clear direction of where you should be going and if you don't get that from […] the rector or strategic planning, faculty management, even the government, you know funding models, sometimes you just don't know what is the right thing to do. Do I put all my effort into this or should I not bother? […]
>
> IC5: And sometimes that information comes really late.
>
> IC6: After everything's happened.

These excerpts indicate that there is a fear that funding for internationalization in HE will decrease in the future and that currently the ICs' attitude toward the government is rather negative, meaning that they expect more guidance and direction and that they feel that without it their work is undermined.

Regarding the relationship between the **university leadership and management** and the international affairs staff, it is a hierarchical relationship as the university leadership supervises the strategic planning unit and the central administration, of which the IO is part. The HoI, who is part of the strategic planning unit, advises the university leadership on policies and other issues related to internationalization in the university (HoI). Concerning the IO's relationship with the university management, it is a bit distant, because

> when it comes to rector, our relationship is a little distant with that part. We get some signatures from the rector and also from the head of administration […]. So, for us they are mainly those who approve of certain things, but don't really know about the matters (IOS1).

Some IOS "actually haven't personally been in contact with the rector or the director of administration" (IOS2) in their tasks. While some of the IOS only get signatures for different documents, such as funding applications, the HoIO "deals more with that level than us" (IOS1).

These rather loose connections between the IO and the university leadership are not what the IOS prefers, as their voice is not considered by the university leadership regarding, for example, strategic planning (IOS4). Related to this, IOS3 explains: "it's sort of understandable, it's a huge organization. [But] preparing some kind of document, you should always try to remember to whom you should send it to see before it's sent."

In contrast, the university leadership supports the work of the IO with their views.

> The rector and administration, I think, they are pro internationalization. So, in that sense we have no problem. Of course, there might be like difference in prioritizing things. I think the current rector, for example, well he comes from [a] research background and [a] heavily research-oriented faculty. So, they might see that the internationalization of research and post-docs is very important compared, for example, to exchange students. But I don't see that he has been restricting our operations anyhow (IOS3).

Thus, the relationship between the IO and the university leadership and management is two-sided.

The relationship between the IO and the other units within the **central administration** has two sides, as well. On the one hand, the cooperation is described as smooth (IOS3, IOS4). For example, the support that the IOS have asked for was provided (IOS3, IOS4). On the other hand, the IOS hoped for more support from the remaining central administration in form of resources (IOS4). However, no competition for resources is created between the different units within the central administration, which is seen as a positive aspect by the IOS (IOS3, IOS4). In addition, the ICs say that "the role of the International Office within the central administration is not always estimated enough and that's what has been their problem" (IC1).

Looking at the relationship between the staff members within the IO, many positive comments were made. IOS3 summarizes the relationship as: "I'd say we are very good." Two other IOS describe it as:

> IOS1: Wonderful.
>
> IOS2: Yeah. We love each other [*all giggling*].
>
> IOS1: Yeah. It's very very friendly.
>
> IOS2: Very cooperative. We don't have any problems to help each other and to cooperate. You always know that if you have a problem that you can go to any of your colleagues and get help.

Their colleagues confirm the good cooperation and the support they give each other (IOS3, IOS4). The colleagues' support is also helpful in stressful situations, because they understand how a staff member of the IO feels (IOS1, IOS2).

Apart from this, the IOS work quite independently without anyone controlling them (HoIO, IOS1, IOS2, IOS3, IOS4). Moreover, they can rely on the others' doing their job (IOS3, IOS4). The atmosphere in the IO is described with a good spirit among the colleagues and therefore, their experiencing of good cooperation (IOS1, IOS2, IOS3, IOS4). An example of this colleagueship is that "everyone is ready to work overtime when necessary. Of course, some people have small children and so on, but […] then the others usually take over. So, everyone works for the common targets" (IOS4).

As the people working in international affairs at this university have a lot to do and have a high work pressure, the IOS do not have time to check what their colleagues are doing. However, it might be beneficial to do that every once in a while. "Maybe here also we would serve us to kind of take a look at the good practices and maybe kind of make our processes a little bit more similar and more efficient" (IOS2). IOS1 and IOS2 speak from experience:

> IOS2: I have been doing different positions in the same office in a way, so I have seen different ways of doing the same thing. So, that's also quite interesting.
>
> IOS1: Well, same thing for me as well, since I have also done my job and also, I've covered for [IOS3] for how many times? Four, five?
>
> IOS2: Has it been that many times? [*all laughing*]
>
> IOS1: Yeah, so that's actually very beneficial to see how someone else does things. So, you kind of see more clearly then both your colleagues' work and your work when you return, but if you just do your own job for years, you kind of get blind and don't necessarily see what could be developed. So, I think it has really helped me and I think you as well [*addressing IOS2*].
>
> IOS2: Definitely.
>
> IOS1: But we have been able to take on different responsibilities once in a while and see how [a] colleague does things and learn from it and perhaps develop the colleague's work a little bit as well.

Since not everyone gets the opportunity to do their colleagues' job, regular meetings help the IOS to stay updated about each other's work (IOS3, IOS4).

The staff at the IO is relatively stable, which is seen as a strength and a weakness in the relationships (IOS3, IOS4). On the one hand, deep relationships can be built with more time passing. On the other hand,

> people who have been doing this for [a] long time and they have their own way of doing things, [it] is sometimes difficult to change […]. They are not going to change unless there is a change in the personnel (IOS3).

The stable staff is also a weakness in the sense that once there is a change in the staff, the new staff member cannot immediately "take on that kind of expert role as the [previous] person" (IC6), which affects the work within the IO and with the ICs.

Although the relationship among the IOS is good, it does not mean that they do not have to deal with issues, because "whenever there are any problems […] in the relationships, […] we try to kind of discuss things and try to solve this problem […]. So, in a way we aren't ignoring those problems" (IOS4). However, the IO does not experience many issues (IOS3, IOS4).

Regarding the relationship between the HoIO and the rest of the IOS, it is described as similar to the relationship among the colleagues (IOS1, IOS2): "it's a very positive relationship" (IOS1). The HoIO is described as very democratic, meaning that they let the staff members make their own decisions and involve them in decisions the HoIO has to make (IOS1, IOS2). Furthermore, the HoIO is "very open to discussions and criticism" (IOS1). During the regular staff meetings, the IOS use the opportunity to voice their opinions (IOS1, IOS2). Moreover, if the staff needs support in making decisions, their leader is there to support them (IOS1, IOS2, IOS3, IOS4). Their door is always open, figuratively and literally (IOS1, IOS2). Overall, the IOS report that having a good relationship to one's superior supports the work and helps coping with everything (IOS1, IOS2, IOS3, IOS4).

The most important aspect of the relationship between the IO and the HoI is that it is a cooperation and not a relationship of supervision. "Even though I'm the Head of Internationalization of the university, I'm not the supervisor for example of […] the International Office" (HoI). The reason for this is that internationalization does not only mean student and staff mobility, as well as "internationalization isn't something that's only on my table or on the tables of people working in the international office or the international coordinators at the faculties" (HoI). Hence, the HoI and the IO cooperate in working groups dealing with student and staff mobility (HoI). However, the IO does not participate in the steering of the university.

> The International Office is not sort of in the inner circle of when the strategic planning, of where this university is going, how is being developed. I think they always [think] 'Oh yeah, and them the English speaking, oh the international students' that it's not in the inner circle for some reason, which is a shame, [because] in the big speeches that they give at the beginning of each academic year 'This is an international university.' Okay, in big speeches yes, but in reality, there's so many things that need to be developed (IC3).

In addition, the HoI supports the IO in their work in the way that they can report issues they face to the HoI (IOS4).

Depending on the **faculty**, the staff within the faculty has a closer or more distant relationship. For example, while in IC1's faculty, "the dean and the vice deans and the departments' heads have a very close collaboration and very good relations" (IC1), in IC3's faculty, "the researchers, they don't know each other. […] they all [say] 'I don't know. Does someone work on the same? I didn't know we have so much in common.'"

Apart from the ICs, there is other staff in the faculty, like teachers, faculty leadership, and other administrative staff. The relationships between an IC and the other staff differ from faculty to faculty. They all have in common that the faculty supervises and pays their IC. However, the salaries vary between the faculties (IOS3). Looking at the relationships, some ICs feel as part of the faculty, whereas some others feel separated. While IC2 and IC6 do not feel part of their faculty, IC1 and IC5 consider themselves a member of the faculty (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #2&3). IC3 explains these differences like this: "In a big faculty, the international coordinator can be a bit […] isolated from the rest of the department or faculty, unless the courses that are provided in English are also offered for [domestic] students."

Concerning the relationship between the ICs and the faculty leadership, there are also differences between the faculties. IC1 and IC5 report that the leadership in their faculties knows what they do and understands the importance of international affairs. IC2, however, states that their supervisor admitted not knowing what is being done in the different faculties regarding international affairs (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #4&5). However, some leaders in the faculties and departments see the value of the ICs' work. The vice head of one of the departments in IC2's faculty knows how important they are to the faculty. IC1 reports similarly (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #6&7). In addition, IC2 barely works with the faculty leadership, except for signatures. In contrast, IC6 works more closely with the vice deans in their faculty, who have and have had different viewpoints on international affairs and IC6's abilities.

> In my case, I had two, three, four different vice deans who are responsible for international affairs and who are essentially the big boss for me and four in about six years or so, so it just felt like it was constant change and all of them had very different views on what I should be doing and all of them had very different ideas, different knowledge based on how things are done […] and also couple of them were very into all sorts of international collaboration at a deeper level.

This also means that different leaders' personalities and interests affect the role of ICs (IC6).

The relationship between the ICs and the teachers is most of the times difficult. One example is information that is missing concerning English taught courses. IC1 describes that often the information from the teachers comes late and the prospective exchange students send them many emails asking for the courses. Thus, communication and information flow influence the work of the ICs (IC1, IC2, IC5, IC6). Without it they cannot do their job well. Consequently, IC2 thinks that "it's easier to talk with professors if you somehow can show you know the department, you know their habits, and you can tell them that you are helping them at the department."

The university leadership has an influence on the ICs' work as well, because "their decisions and […] whatever kind of vision they claim to have regarding the direction of the university and what should be done here, it affects us directly, because they are the ones who decide on the resources" (IC1). Apart from this, there is not much more connection between the university leadership and the ICs (IC1, IC3, IC5). Although there is little connection to the leadership, the ICs are dependent to some extent (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #8-11).

As has been said earlier, the HoI, despite their title, is not supervising the ICs. Instead, the HoI collaborates with the ICs loosely in working groups and with the IDPs, if the ICs have responsibilities concerning those as well (IC5). However, it is unclear to the ICs who has the last say regarding the IDPs, namely the director of student and academic services or the HoI (IC5, IC6). Beyond that, the ICs would like to be communicated to directly from the HoI and would like the HoI to ask for opinions (IC3, IC5) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #12&13).

Looking at the units within the central administration, the ICs in the faculties cooperate mostly with the IO. There are not many connections to the other units (IC1, IC2, IC5) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #14&15). Nevertheless, some ICs get in contact with the central administration concerning the IDPs, for example, when questions among the teachers arise (IC3).

Concerning the central administration's view on the ICs, the ICs believe that the central administration does not have sufficient knowledge about the jobs of the ICs (IC1, IC2, IC6) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #16-18). Additionally, the ICs do not feel recognized by the central administration: "but it's the sort of faceless central administration that does not recognize our skills, our knowledge, our expertise" (IC1). Moreover, reasoning for the organizational change made IC2 feel hurt.

> I felt so that when I heard last spring when they started this organization thing [= structural change] and they said that the one call on this is that they are getting rid of our really expensive coordinators, I felt that I get salary that I have earned, because I have knowledge and I do certain things and then they said that they are paying me too much. So, what should I do?

This reasoning could be explained by the lack of understanding about the nature of international affairs. IC6 explains that in the central administration there is no understanding about the need to explain issues to foreigners that might be obvious to natives and about the need to translate information.

Looking at the communication between the central administration and the ICs, the ICs do not receive information that is necessary for their work.

> I noticed that […] they sometimes are doing things and deciding things there and they somehow assume that people in the faculties know about what they are doing even though they are not communicating it or they kind of fail to understand that 'Okay, I need to communicate this to the people whose work this affects' (IC5).

The above-stated excerpts indicate that the relationship between the central administration, except for the IO, and the ICs is overshadowed by negative experiences. The following section discusses the relationship between the ICs and the IO, because they all work in international affairs. This relationship is closer and evaluated more positively.

The relationship among the **international affairs staff** is generally described with positive narratives from both sides (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #19-22). Both the IOS and the ICs describe their relationship with positive attributes: very good, close relationship, closest colleagues, very informal, common goal. This relates to the present as well as the past.

Although the ICs and the IO are not physically located in the same place on campus, the relationship does not suffer.

> And of course, I mean there is the potential challenge, since we don't work in the same office that we wouldn't have a close contact with each other and discuss about things, but we have this. So, and at least that's how I feel that there isn't really, in our case, a danger of losing this close connection with the faculty-level coordinators. We work in such close cooperation with each other in the process of sort of streamlining the processes (IOS1).

In addition, when speaking about the relationship, the ICs also speak highly of the people working in the IO: "I just love them [*all laughing*]. […] I have utmost admiration for the patience that, for example, [IOS3] and [IOS2] exhibit each year, every year" (IC6). The consequence of a good relationship is a good cooperation, which is discussed by the international affairs staff (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #23-25). A good cooperation also leads to a supportive connection, that in this case especially the ICs can count on and appreciate (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #26-29). One of the reasons mentioned for the good relationship is the HoIO's influence: "I suppose also the head of our unit has done very good work, so I mean in creating the relationship" (IOS4). Another important factor in keeping up a good relationship and thus cooperation is maintaining reliable communication. The international affairs staff states that the communication among themselves is good (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #30&31).

The favorable relationship, according to the ICs and the IOS, is special among working groups within the same institution, because "I think compared to some of the other sort of areas we already have a very close relationship" (IOS1). IC6 reckons that the relationship among the ICs is exemplary: "I think we have a good network and I think a lot of other areas of work in the university could learn from how we do things in the international area." Moreover, the close relationship neither seems to be existent in other universities.

> I know that we are lucky in our university that it's functioning so well, because this is not always the case. I think it's also something to do with, you know, the actual people who work in the central International Office that it's really easy to get along (IC1).

Part of the beneficial communication are the regular meetings between the IO and the ICs: "And it's been very close already for years, because we also have regular meetings. Up until now, we've met a few times per semester every second month usually or more" (IOS1). Not only are the meetings meant for updates and discussions, they are also beneficial to express oneself:

> IOS2: We also, you know, talk quite freely in those meetings and …
>
> IOS1: Very [*laughing*].
>
> IOS2: Yeah. Very very freely. People can express their feelings and their thoughts and so we share.

IC4 also explains that they feel well informed because of the meetings, for example concerning constraints from higher authorities, such as the government.

The ICs are not only well informed, but also they play a role in decision-making processes (IOS1). Hence, the ICs are coequal with the IOS, which also manifests itself in the sense of working toward a shared goal (IOS1, IOS2, IOS3). This also means that the IO does not rule and tell the ICs what to do (IOS1). Nevertheless, the IO has to make some decisions on their own, which they base on the ICs' advice, as has been discussed by many interviewees (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #32-35).

Despite the positive relationship between the IOS and the ICs, they are not spared from relationship issues, as some of the IOS explain. Still, it seems that they are not facing many issues, and if they do, they are being solved. Solving issues is perceived as easy because of the good relationship that the international affairs staff has (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #36-38).

Another crucial factor in the relationship between the international affairs staff and the HoIO is that the HoIO protects and defends them in front of university management, the head of administration, and others who affect their work.

> I will try my best to sort of speak on behalf of all the international coordinators in this university to the university management or to my own boss or to the director of administration or whoever, the strategic unit about the need, about the very high work pressure that all the people, all my colleagues are working with. So, I know all the faculty-level coordinators, many of them from many years back, and I know that they are all working really hard and I worry for them and for my colleagues here in the International Office. The mobility volumes have […] increased heavily and the staff resources have decreased. So, I think it's an impossible thing in the long run. It cannot go on like this for a long time. Otherwise somebody is [going to] suffer or the mobility volumes are [going to] drop, because students need guidance. I think it's very stupid to think that: 'Yeah, if you just put enough information on your website and if you have these smooth processes, students just can figure things out themselves.' I think students crave and need guidance, personal face-to-face guidance also with regard to internationalization. So, I'm trying to speak up for all of us whenever I can and whenever I have the opportunity (HoIO).

The ICs also talked about the HoIO's actions regarding their protection (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #39). From what has been said also before, it seems that it is important for the ICs to have someone's speaking up for them, because they are not being listened to by other influential people or these people do not know enough about them and their jobs.

Not only is the relationship among the international affairs staff perceived positively from the inside, but also outsiders gave positive feedback about the relationship. On the one hand, the faculties where the ICs are located have given positive feedback to the IO:

> of course, it sort of enlightens the day if you hear good feedback from the faculties. So, that's definitely a strength that you are knowing that you are doing good work and we are trying to give back to them as well, to give positive feedback anytime possible (IOS3).

On the other hand, outsiders, who are not part of this institution, have also given positive feedback, such as the exchange students (IC1, IC2) and the national agency for education (IC3, IC5) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #40&41).

Beside all the strengths that have been mentioned about the relationship, there are also some weaknesses. One weakness is that the processes are not mainstreamed among the ICs, which makes the cooperation between IO and ICs difficult (IOS1, IOS2) (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #42). The mainstreaming process is being addressed in subchapter 4.3.2 *New network and its relationships*. Another weakness is the small number of people working in the IO (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #43). Regarding this weakness, IC1 explains why it should not constitute an issue in future years: "Fortunately, the people working there [in the IO], I mean except for the retiring person, most of them are youngish [*giggling*]. So, no retirements in the future, but we'll see." Nevertheless, these weaknesses are rather minor weaknesses that the involved people are managing to work with.

It has been discussed that the relationship between the ICs and the IOS is very good and that there are few weaknesses and issues in this relationship. However, the stakeholders are not sure about how the other side thinks of them, as the following quote depicts: "It will be interesting to know how the international relations coordinator or the faculty-level coordinators feel about it" (IOS1). Since this thesis will be given to the interviewees after assessment, they will be able to know more.

The relationship among ICs was not discussed much. Nevertheless, the relationship is described similarly to the relationship between the IO and the ICs (IC4, IC6) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #44&45). IC1 sees the importance in discussing this relationship (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #46&47). In addition, the network among the ICs is "a really big support" (IC6). For example, they support each other with their daily tasks, e.g.

> when […] I get an Erasmus student from some university and he wants to be in courses in another faculty and I contact my colleagues elsewhere so they react very fast, they're very

> smooth, we have our goals, we also have our restrictions, we are open to each other, and I've got lot of help in several faculties (IC4).

Apart from the individual support, the ICs value their regular meetings occurring approximately once a month (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #48&49). Furthermore, due to the mutual understanding among the ICs, they also laugh about their jobs together (IC4). The ICs also mentioned that they have funny stories to tell about what they experienced with students (IC3, IC4), which shows that the ICs also enjoy their work (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #50).

Despite the positive comments on the relationship among ICs, one negative aspect was mentioned. Earlier IC6 discussed the issue of all ICs translating the same documents on their own. This exemplary situation shows that the ICs do not always communicate well enough with each other to avoid everyone's managing the same task. Thorough communication could at times, like in the abovementioned situation, save time and efforts.

Students, being partially seen as part of the faculties, are the ones that ICs work with the most (IC1). Generally speaking, the IOS and the ICs guide and counsel incoming and outgoing exchange students on study periods and internships abroad. While it was described that ICs search for a lot of information online for the students, IC3 handles it differently by giving the students responsibility for finding needed information on their own. Apart from searching for information online, the ICs use their network, especially with the IO, to answer the students' questions (IC3, IC4).

Looking at the relationship from the students' perspective, the ICs report that the students are grateful for them (IC3, IC4). In addition, the IOS tell that they sometimes exercise leniency (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #51). Hence, the international affairs staff in this university goes out of their way to support the students and facilitate exchanges.

In summary, some relationships work well, such as the relationships among international affairs staff and with the students, as well as, depending on the faculty, with other staff in the faculties. Some other relationhips do not work so well and thus might need improvement, for example, the relationships with the government, the university management and leadership, the HoI, and in some cases the remaining staff in the faculties. It is possible that the organizational structure influences the relationships. The following subchapter examines how the interviewees evaluate the current organizational structure.

4.2.5 Evaluation of the current organizational structure

Throughout all interviews, the participants evaluated the current structure with their comments and explanations, which will be presented in this subchapter. Firstly, the general structure with the centralized IO and the ICs in the faculties and departments is evaluated positively (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #52-54). Moreover, the prevalent structure eases the process for students because the ICs being located at the faculty are closer to the students. Nevertheless, it would not make sense to close the IO and only have the ICs take care of the tasks concerning student and staff mobility, because "there has to be someone who provides certain services for everyone. There's no sense for all of the faculty-level coordinators doing the same things [several] times where someone here can provide the service for everyone" (IOS1).

The practice of a few ICs' taking care of the IDPs is seen as a weakness and should be changed, because it demands time and efforts that are needed for student and staff mobility (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #55). Another area that should be changed according to the interviewees is the traditional way of organizing international affairs and the view on internationalization, as the HoI reports:

> we need training, and we need to learn ourselves, and we need more international people or foreign people on our campus. Students and staff have more international partners and have a systematic way of sort of moving into that direction. But our organization is still very much in the sort of traditional model of the way things are organized and, in some areas, we're moving [faster] towards the sort of modern way of organizing things. And that's, I think, reflecting quite nicely the sort of status we're in that we're not ready yet to say that we're completely mainstreaming internationalization that we wouldn't need international office. I think we do. We're still the kind of university that does.

The mainstreaming process means that processes which traditionally were taken care of by the international affairs staff are more and more implemented in everyday activities by all the university's staff. The process is long-standing and currently "I think the basic idea is that we need to have an international office" (HoI). Furthermore, "I think that we will have an international office for quite some time. I think we'll need it, and their expertise is something that we don't have elsewhere at this university and it's very valuable for us" (HoI). Hence, the studied institution might at some point not have an assigned IO anymore. However, this process is lengthy and will take longer than a few years. In addition, it is being criticized that now, "the clients, the students, they are not represented, there's nobody shouting for them" (IC4). Without the IO or the ICs, the exchange students would not be represented well enough regarding international affairs.

A point that has been discussed earlier, i.e. the differences between the faculties and thus the ICs' working style, could be seen in a negative as well as a positive light, as IOS1 explains:

> Of course, I mean what I already mentioned is that because there are many coordinators things can also be done differently at different faculties to certain extent. […] but then again, it's not necessarily a bad thing that students are treated equally or well that they have had different processes. Faculties are different and the students are different and may have different needs, also when it comes to international mobility.

Differences in working styles should be evaluated as a possibility to learn from others and to improve one's own way of working (IOS1, IOS2) (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #56). Nevertheless, finding the time to do that can be difficult, especially when additional tasks are being managed. Working more than expected, on the one hand, means a good service for exchange students. On the other hand, it means that authorities who allocate resources do not see the need to provide more staff (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #57). Therefore, it can be said that the people working in international affairs at the studied institution are dedicated to their work and to doing their job well, even to the expense of not receiving more personnel resources. Nevertheless, the ICs recognize the need for more personnel although the current staff is doing their job well (IC5, IC6) (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #58).

As has been discussed in previous subchapters, the IOS and the ICs have clearly defined responsibilities. Although this makes everyone's jobs easier, it could also be problematic if someone is absent due to sickness, since everyone is specialized in their tasks (IC4, IC5) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #59&60). Since the IOS have been in their positions for many years and some of them have substituted for others, it might not be a big problem in case someone is absent. However, staff changes are not hoped for, because it would disrupt the cooperation between the IO and the ICs, as IC6 explains:

> And it works across and, for example, I could say that if there were significant staff changes in the International Office that would affect the whole again, because they work so well together and with us, because of who they are, not what the roles are.

The cooperation among the international affairs staff is good, because information is being shared. Contrarily, information flow could work better with other stakeholders. IC6 suggests that instead of trying to pass on information to the ICs through the faculties' leadership, the strategic planning unit should directly talk to them (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #61).

In the previous excerpts and quotes, it might have come across that the international affairs staff is perfect and others are not. This is why it has to be kept in mind that even the IOS think that "Of course, we are not perfect." (IOS2).

The current organizational structure concerning international affairs is generally evaluated positively, because it is seen as advantageous that there is international affairs staff located closely to the students and specialized in the study fields. However, there are some aspects that could be improved in order for work being easier for all stakeholders, such as ways of communication between different parties and taking into consideration the views of the international affairs staff in decision-making processes.

4.3 Changes happening in the institution

At the time of data collection, the institution was implementing not only a structural change affecting the jobs of the international affairs staff, but also some smaller, peripheral changes that do not directly affect the major structural change but were mentioned in the interviews because they concern the international affairs staff to some extent.

4.3.1 Peripheral changes

Concerning personnel, positions were going to be filled with new people a few months after data collection, such as significant changes in the university's leadership during the same semester and the faculty deans during the remaining year (IC1, IC2). In addition, the financial situation of the whole university changed because grants were decreasing (IC1, IC2, IC6) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #62&63). Another smaller change taking place at the time of data collection was the introduction of new software (IC1).

Some rather big peripheral changes were changes being made in the curricula of the IDPs, which were being renewed (IC1). This process started a while ago with the first conclusions having already been drawn. As some IDPs only received a few applicants, the "process of reestablishing the programs […] maybe didn't work so well" (IC5). IC3 sees the process of changing the curricula as a possibility to react and ensure a better connection between domestic and international students:

> there has been a complaint, I think as long as I have been present at this university, that they are their own world and they don't connect with the rest of the faculty. So, I think this is the same that this is the momentum to have an impact and say something about this that 'Let's not separate the international students and the [domestic] students. Let's just speak about students.' And only the language changes in between. But it's of course a long process, it doesn't happen [*snapping their finger*] like next Monday everyone agrees (IC3).

As IC3 explains, changing the thinking is a longer process and cannot happen quickly. Nevertheless, the curricula changes could be the initiation of a discussion.

Not only were peripheral changes taking place on an institutional level, nationwide changes were being implemented as well. These changes influence the institution in the way that the national changes determine the final changes at the university, because

> It's sort of like […] a domino effect, you know, if something happens on the national level, whether it's finances or the way things are just organized, it affects us on the sort of university-level how things are organized and how many resources we have to carry out certain tasks and then that affects on the sort of administrative unit levels and then in the faculties as well (HoI).

Hence, adjustments might have to be made according to what was happening on the national level.

The here presented changes might be major changes for the institution, but concerning the work of the international affairs staff, they are rather minor changes. The following subchapter will discuss the major changes affecting the work of the IOS and especially of the ICs, as well as present how the organizational structure will change.

4.3.2 New network and its relationships

As has been mentioned earlier, at the time of data collection the university was preparing for or had just implemented a structural change. The interviews took place during both phases. These changes affected or would affect the ICs' work to a great degree.

Some of the ICs' roles were impacted by changes in the structure of the university, as some faculties were merged (HoI, HoIO) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #64&65). This means that some positions ceased to exist, as well as the number of agreements were diminishing (IC3). Moreover, a faculty from another university in the same country was moving to the studied institution, changing the nature of the faculty's international cooperation, because

> we will get new colleagues and new Erasmus practices from [another] university, because […] the whole language department of [another] university will come here next year and we have met them and we have decided which of the Erasmus contracts will continue within [this] university. And they have good practices just in teacher exchange and we will want to continue this (IC4).

In addition, a new role for a faculty coordinator was being established in the same faculty. The new person was going to take over some of IC4's tasks.

Not only the roles of the ICs changed, but also the role of the person responsible for the IDP applications was moved within the university – at the time of data collection IOS4 was the former and IC5 the new person in the position (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #66&67). Furthermore, the marketing responsible for recruitment also moved from student services to university communications (HoI). This person is not part of the interviewed international affairs staff but works closely with the IO and with those ICs who also work for the IDPs.

Another change that occurred during the structural change is the renaming of the unit that the IO is part of: “The name of this bigger entity has changed and is about to change again, which is I think funny” (HoIO). However, this change does not influence the work of the IO or the ICs.

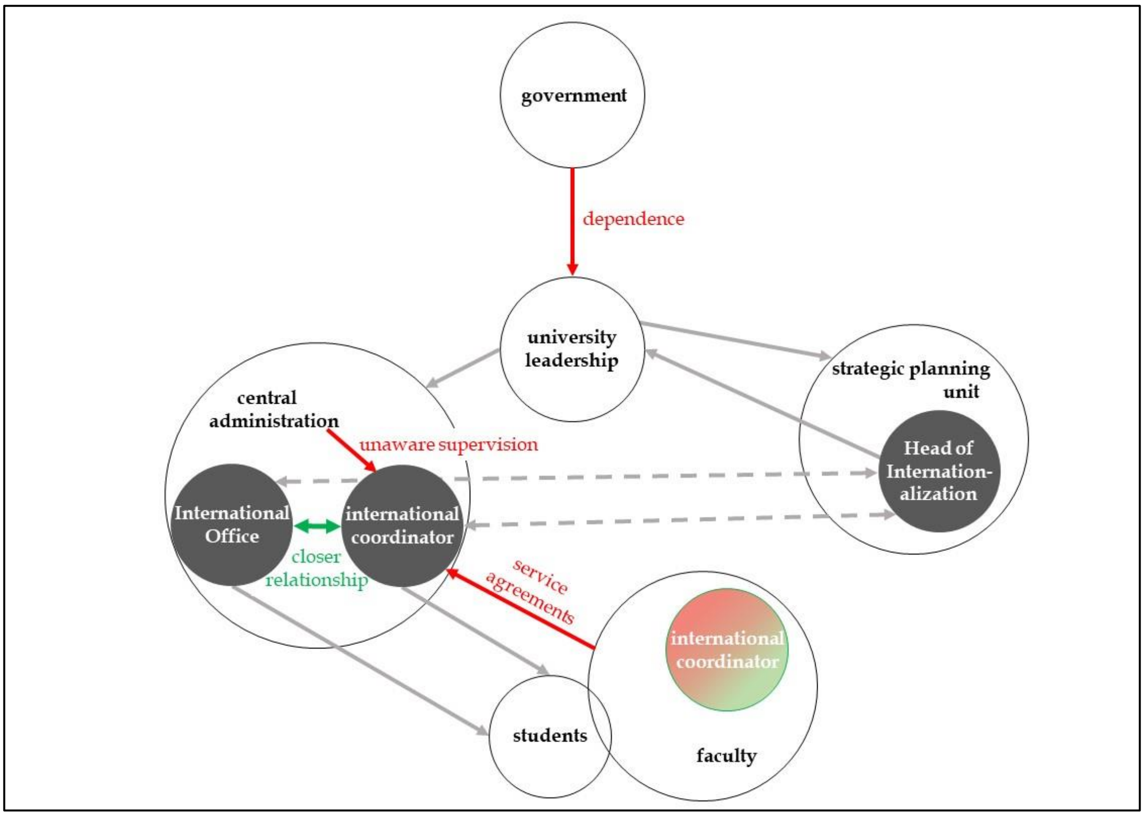

FIGURE 3. New network and relationships in the studied institution

As can be seen in Figure 3, parts of the network and its relationships transformed during the change. Probably the biggest difference in the new network compared to the former one is that ICs are now part of the central administration, which means that they are more clearly the IOS’ colleagues (HoIO). Although the ICs were only administratively moved to the central services, they had to reapply to their positions (IC1, IC2) (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #68). Nevertheless, the ICs are still located in their respective faculties (IC1, IC2).

This structure poses a problem on the ICs and the deans in the faculties, because

> if we think about the faculty thing and our relations with the members of the faculty, I think nowadays the weakness is that somehow we are still kind of working for the faculty in the student affairs, but the dean of the faculty is basically the boss, you know, in the faculty, [they are] not our boss. So, [they don’t] have that decision-making power regarding

> us and even though if [they see] that something is wrong with, let's say, the situation I find myself in, […] [they] can't do a thing about that, if my, you know, big boss [*pointing upwards*] doesn't want to make changes here (IC1).

Additionally, the faculty decides which tasks the ICs should work on in the sense that the faculty is now paying for the ICs' services, which again seems problematic because, for example, the faculty could decide not to pay for services for incoming exchange students anymore (IC1, IC2) (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #69).

In the previous organizational changes, which affected the international affairs staff, as well as in the current change process, the distribution of tasks was discussed (HoI). The IO and the ICs came up with process maps that describe the distribution of tasks in the different processes (for more information see subchapter 4.2.2 *Current roles*).

According to the ICs, their new boss does not know what they are supposed to do. Therefore, it is good that the ICs were discussing their tasks with their supervisors at the time of data collection (HoI, HoIO). The process of determining the tasks was done with the new supervisors by discussing the current tasks and determining which ones would be continued (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #70&71). Moreover, the tasks of the ICs are being mainstreamed, i.e. they are made more similar so that all students would get the same services no matter which faculty they study at (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #72-74). Furthermore, not even the HoIO knew what the new tasks would be. Additionally, it seems that the central administration does not know what international affairs are about, because the new job description only included the preparation of documents (IC1).

Apart from mainstreaming the tasks, the focus is shifting toward faculty-level ICs away from departmental ICs, as the departmental ICs also deal with other tasks apart from student and staff mobility issues. This shift will affect the regular meetings between the IO and the ICs. On the one hand, the meetings might take place more often (IOS1). On the other hand, the departmental ICs might not participate in all meetings (HoIO) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #75&76). This new view on departmental ICs might negatively impact the relationship between the IOS and the ICs. However, the new structural organization can also positively affect this relationship, because “I think now with the organizational change some of the different offices are just now beginning to build a closer relationship with the faculties and the staff there” (IOS1).

One major outcome of the change process is the unclarity of the international affairs personnel’s roles and tasks. The HoI describes the unclear situation a few weeks before the official implementation of the changes and states that they should be ready at the turn of the year. However, when the IOS were interviewed in the new year, not everything was clear yet. This also includes the exact tasks of the ICs (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #77-79). Similarly, the new organizational structure seems to be unclear to different players in the institution, as was demonstrated at a meeting where the international affairs staff was introduced (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #80-82).

The IOS saw the need of changing operational methods, but still is not sure how to do this. Nevertheless, there is a willingness to decide collectively how the IOS and the ICs would proceed in the upcoming meetings (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #83). Some interviewees also commented on the ongoing unclarity and how long the unclarity would potentially prevail, such as what they might answer if they were interviewed again a few months later (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #84&85). Further reactions to the changes are presented in the subsequent subchapter.

4.3.3 Reactions to changes

All interviewees commented on the changes that had an impact on the international affairs staff. Probably the most noticeable factor in the change was the mainstreaming of the tasks. While it is acknowledged that offering the same services everywhere is reasonable, people also discuss that students and faculties are different and therefore, a complete mainstreaming cannot be achieved (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #86-88).

Concerning the new tasks of the ICs, two of them discuss the absurdity of one of their new tasks. They are supposed to click on an accept button in the online mobility system whenever a teacher and a student have agreed on the study plan for the student's exchange period. For the ICs it does not make sense that their only task in this process is to push the button and that the teacher cannot undertake this task (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #89). At the same time, guiding the students, which is a task the ICs like doing, is delegated to the teachers (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #90). Furthermore, it is likely that other services are cut in the future, such as the wellbeing advising (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #91&92).

Although tasks are being taken from the ICs' responsibilities, their workloads are not decreasing, which is seen as problematic (HoIO, IC1) (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #93&94). A problem concerning the high workloads is that some ICs feel that the new boss is not aware of their reality. In addition, the ICs disapprove of their boss' leadership competences, concerning the planning and implementation of the change process (IC1, IC2) (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #95). Generally speaking, the relationship between the ICs and the central administration is rather bad, since "at the moment this is a little bit sour subject" (IC1). Despite the negative relationship with their boss, the relationship between the IOS and the ICs is expected to become closer with the changes, as

> I believe that, and I hope that we are entering a phase of even a closer cooperation with the faculty-level colleagues and us here in the International Office and they are good people and we have good connections already. So, I look forward to working in even a closer cooperation with them (HoIO).

This quote depicts a positive side of the structural change.

Some other statements, which concerned the structural change in general, were rather negative. IC1 perceives a confusion among people: "So, perhaps a little bit too much going on at the same time and everybody is a little bit confused at the moment I think". There is hope that the students do not recognize this confusion or are even repelled from the university (IC1, IC2). In the eyes of the ICs, the process of change was unorganized, time was insufficient, and they did not feel part of the process (for excerpts see Appendix 6. Quotes #96&97).

The wish for less change, or at least well-planned change cannot come true in the current change process, but it could be taken into consideration for future change processes. This and other topics were mentioned that are an outlook to the future, which will be discussed further in the following chapter.

4.4 Outlook to the future

Some interviewees commented on the future by stating what they expected to happen. For example, IO3 brings up salaries, which is a delicate topic that might become important once all tasks are mainstreamed.

> The salaries they have been different from faculty to faculty as well. So, I could assume that questions will arise at some point if the duties will be exactly the same that the salaries should be the same exactly. So, that needs to be seen.

Moreover, layoffs could also become a topic in the future, where the ICs hope that they are not the first ones to leave (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #98). One reason for potential layoffs are the tight financial resources: "And no new resources are in sight for the central international office either" (IC1).

Regarding the development of international affairs, the studied university will continue to move into a mainstreamed direction.

> But sort of what you see in [this country] and in other universities in Europe as well and I think elsewhere in the world is that international affairs are more mainstreamed in the organization and that's sort of the direction that we're going to as well. […] So, we're sort of slowly but surely moving into a direction where international affairs are more mainstreamed and they're sort of things that are more on everyone's table and not just on the tables of those who have that magical prefix in their title. But at the same time, we have to keep in mind that we're not there yet. We can't expect this to happen sort of magically. […] I think the next step will be that we will still have international coordinators in the same fashion, that we will still have international office, but other administrative staff will have to take international affairs on their table as well and work towards the same sort of internationalization goals that we have (HoI).

Therefore, this is a slow changing process that will last for a while, because it does not simply mean that tasks or roles are changed. A change that can be implemented more quickly is IC5's hope to bring closer the ICs and the HoI, which IC5 and the HoI have already discussed (for an excerpt see Appendix 6. Quotes #99).

The newly implemented organizational structure brings the IO and the ICs closer on an administrative level. This might intensify the already good relationship between them. At the time of data collection, many issues were still unclear, especially for the ICs. This shows that the relationship between the ICs and authoritative parties needs a better relationship, which might be improved once the new organizational structure is completely implemented and the stakeholders get used to working together. In the end, what the new organizational structure and the respective relationships will look like in the future can only be assumed, which some interviewees did.

With the progressing mainstreaming process of international affairs, the organizational structure will have to keep developing to adapt to the new circumstances. What kind of organizational structure will be implemented in the future, cannot be forecasted. It has to be seen which organizational structure will be the best fit.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter connects the findings presented in the previous chapter with the research questions and the theoretical framework. Moreover, the limitations of the conducted study are being discussed, as well as potential future research that could build on this research or go into similar directions.

5.1 Examination of the findings

The previous chapter, chapter 4 *Findings*, already indirectly answered the research questions. Nevertheless, this subchapter aims at directly answering all three research questions and connecting them to chapter 2 *Theoretical Framework* where applicable.

The first research question serves to understand different viewpoints on the organizational structure. The structure of the complex network with its horizontal and vertical dimensions before the changes is depicted in Figure 2. Answering the first research question *How do the different stakeholders view the current structure?*, the perspectives on this structure were unanimously answered in a positive way. Having a central IO and allotted ICs in the faculties was described as necessary. Moreover, it was seen as a good structure and the right way of structuring in this case.

As can be seen from the answers to the first research question, the answer to the second question *What are similarities and differences between the perspectives?* is that the perspectives of the interviewees in general are similar, which does not mean that all works well and that changes are redundant. Moreover, some smaller differences are that the ICs see aspects that could be improved, such as the communication with the HoI, which currently is indirect through the faculty leadership. Although the HoI did not talk about this aspect, for example, it does not mean that they see it differently. The HoI was not directly asked about this aspect. Another aspect that is viewed differently is the amount of personnel resources in the international affairs. Both the IOS and the ICs discuss that there should be more staff working in international affairs. Again, the HoI did not discuss this topic, and they also were not directly asked about it. Moreover, the HoI stated that, despite the currently fitting structure, they see the need to move more into the direction of mainstreaming. None of the international affairs staff displayed this view in their interviews.

The last research question, namely *How did the stakeholders experience the structural change at the point of data collection?*, can be answered with the interviewees' different experiences. The HoI only states that the change is necessary and that the ICs' new tasks were being discussed. The HoIO, on the one hand, sees the upcoming changes in a positive light, because for them it means a closer relationship between the IO and the ICs. On the other hand, the HoIO is worried about the ICs' increasing workload, which according to them was already high before the organizational change and was anticipated to become more after the implementation of the changes. The IOS did not say much about the structural changes. Nevertheless, the statements that were given were positive, e.g. that the change is an opportunity to align the ICs' tasks. Most remarks concerning the changes were made by the ICs. They described the change as poorly led and that too little time was scheduled for the implementation of the changes. Furthermore, the ICs felt uninformed and overlooked throughout the process.

In terms of the discussion in chapter 2.2 *Organizational change and change management* and chapter 2.3 *Organizational change in higher education*, the change in the studied institution can be described in more detail. The organizational change was a planned change, in which the objects of change were processes and the administrative location of personnel. Furthermore, it was a material change, since changes were made in processes, relationships, and decision-making. The discussed change is placed somewhere between a first-order and a second-order change, because it was bigger and more radical than a first-order change in the sense that it introduced new ways of working. However, changes did not take place in all four dimensions as was suggested by Levy (1986). There were no changes in the organizational paradigm, organizational missions and purpose, and organizational culture. However, core processes such as the organizational structure, decision-making, and communication, were changed. This places the change closer somewhere between a first-order and a second-order change. Moreover, the change was multi-faceted, specifically a multi-dimensional change, i.e. one or more changes with subordinate components. For example, the organizational structure concerning the ICs changed followed by changes in the payment of ICs and the cooperation with the faculties.

The triggers of the described change process lay in the government as well as within the organization itself. Nevertheless, the changes were triggered in a top-down process, which according to Harris and Ogbonna (2002) more likely leads to a failure. In addition, not acknowledging the human side of change (Mohrman et al., 2003) and a lack of understanding (Tenkasi et al., 1998) encourage a failure. Both factors, according to the interview data, were not given in the presented change process.

The ICs criticized the poor planning of the change, which according to Kondakci and van den Broeck (2009) is a factor of failure in change. Additionally, the leadership did not seem to be effective, which would be a factor of success according to Gill (2002). In Gill's model for successful change

> the leadership of successful change requires vision, strategy, the development of a culture of sustainable shared values that support the vision and strategy for change, and empowering, motivating and inspiring those who are involved or affected (Gill, 2002, pp. 307–308).

From what can be told with the information given in the interviews, all of these were not existent in the change process. A factor of successful change that is mentioned by several authors is a shared vision (Gudz, 2004, Kotter, 1997). Since the involved people did not exhibit a shared vision in the interviews, it can be assumed that there is no shared vision in place. Lewis (2011) claims that communication, which is insufficient in the presented change, is a key component in change.

Reasons for the ICs' negative reactions toward the change might be found within the following explanation of the source of reactions: "reactions to changes will be rooted in complex social systems, organizational structures, power relations, and other ongoing organizational dynamics" (Lewis, 2011, p. 48).

However, it is impossible to pinpoint the origin of the ICs' reactions with the little information given in the interviews. It can be said that the resistance is cognitive and behavioral, due to the lack of knowledge of how to work in the change, and emotional (Gill, 2002), because the ICs displayed a lack of confidence in others, especially the leader in the change process.

During the change process at the studied institution, sequential interdependence (Thompson, 2003) arose. The ICs were, for example, dependent on their new supervisors' guidance concerning their new job descriptions. This is also one example of the change's tardiness. According to Kezar (2001), change in HEIs tends to be slow, political, and challenging, which seem to describe the presented change process as well.

According to what the ICs discussed, good leadership competencies were not given in this change process, although studies show that they are needed for successful change. In addition, studies revealed that visible behavior by senior staff can affect the dynamics of change and facilitate a change process (Hoover & Harder, 2014), which in this case influenced the change process negatively at least from the ICs' point of view. Hoover and Harder (2014) also learned in their study that collaboration is a factor of success in change, and dialogue, relationships, and networks facilitate the process. From what was explained by the ICs, none of these were given.

From the abovementioned, it can be reasoned that many factors that are important for successful change were missing in the presented change process. Therefore, it is recommended to involve all stakeholders in the change process so that they know what the reason of and the plan for the change are and what their roles are in the change process. Moreover, an involvement should also include a platform for the involved people to express their worries and viewpoints, which can then be considered for improvements. If the involved parties understand what is happening and for which reason and they are being listened to, they more likely have a positive attitude toward the change. Additionally, it is advantageous to make use of close relationships and build upon them to maximize the positive aspects of the change process.

Nevertheless, this thesis is no definite report, because the study did not examine the change process deeply. Among others, this is a limitation of the study, which will be discussed in the following subchapter.

5.2 Limitations of the study

The existent literature on internationalization in HE neither discusses the involved staff and their collaboration, nor does it present much research on change processes in HEIs. This fact, on the one hand, limits this research. On the other hand, it gave me the opportunity to find one aspect to study, which marks the beginning of literature on the topic.

The nature of the presented case study already is a limitation. This study can only provide an insight into the topic and therefore, cannot give generalized answers. Nevertheless, the findings of this study are relevant because they are intended to generate awareness of the topic and start a discussion. If more generalizable data were to be generated, a longitudinal study could be conducted. However, this would pose the difficulty of combining unique cases and ensuring that they remain unique and do not become one among many. Not enough resources were available for this study to be a longitudinal study. In addition, using methods to obtain generalizable data would have prevented me as the only researcher from getting a detailed understanding of how one part of an institution functions.

Looking at the data emerging from this study, more varied information could have been gathered by also interviewing other stakeholders who were part of the organizational change, e.g. university leadership and the ICs' new supervisor. In addition, the interview questions did not aim at the ongoing change process. The topic merely came up during the interviews because it was highly topical especially for the ICs. Moreover, it is questionable to what extent those participants who were interviewed in pairs answered differently from what they would have said if they were interviewed alone. Furthermore, it must be acknowledged that the interviewees' answers might be affected by their knowledge that all participants have the possibility to read this thesis after assessment.

The analysis of the data is limited as well because I was the only researcher and even though I tried to analyze the data objectively, my underlying beliefs, attitudes, thinking, and viewpoints influenced the data analysis. In addition, the interviews produced more data than expected, which limited the depth of data analysis.

Conducting this study included learnings about what could be done better in the future. As I have obtained more data than expected, I could have focused on fewer participants and instead interview these in more depth or even another time to ask more detailed questions. For example, I could have interviewed the Head of Internationalization again after interviewing the international affairs staff to pose more detailed questions which I had not anticipated in the first place. Like this, a dialogue between the interviews could have been generated. In addition, I could have confronted the participants with excerpts from other interviews to obtain reactions, agreements, and disagreements, which would also have created more of a dialogue between the interviews.

5.3 Ideas for further research

Using this research as background, further research could be conducted to understand the topic even better. Quantitative and longitudinal studies are a possibility to obtain generalizable results on the topic. Moreover, further research could develop into two directions: focusing on the collaboration of international affairs staff within one institution or focusing on organizational change processes in HEIs.

Concentrating on the collaboration between international affairs staff within a HEI would mean the opportunity to study the structure more closely. The scope of this study did not allow for a deeper examination of this topic through more detailed questions. For further research on this topic, it might be beneficial to use focus groups for deeper discussions, since pair interviews can only bear discussions to a certain extent without the interviewer leading too much. Additionally, single interviews could bring forward more detailed answers if the interviewees felt more comfortable speaking alone than in pairs.

Regarding the latter direction, more diverse viewpoints could be gathered, if all stakeholders in such a change are interviewed. This includes change agents and leaders in the change as well as of the institution. Moreover, other unconcerned parties, such as students and other staff could give insights into how the change is perceived by outsiders. This would mean that the researchers directly ask about and thus study the change process more closely, which was not done in this study. Furthermore, participants dialoguing together about the topic could bring forward interesting data as they exchange viewpoints.

In terms of data analysis, more than one researcher analyzing the data could lead to diversified and more objective results. Lastly, this thesis aimed at providing an understanding and an awareness of what it is like to work in international affairs at a Scandinavian HEI, how the involved people perceive it, and what experiences they gained during a change process. The findings from the gathered data was provided and discussed in the last two chapters. Therefore, this study could be used as a basis for further, expanded, and detailed research on the topic, giving the involved people and the topic even more awareness.

The overall aim of this study was to understand perceptions of organizational structure and experiences with change in international affairs in higher education. The findings answer these questions to a significant degree. As a new area of study, it seems apt to conclude by saying that international affairs staff needs to be recognized and acknowledged more by both their institution's leadership and research literature. The international affairs staff has expertise in their field and can, therefore, provide insight knowledge of how international affairs function, which is valuable for preparing and implementing change processes. Organizational structures cannot be generalized and need to be tailored to the institution's unique needs. Hence, cooperation between leadership and international affairs staff can produce well suited organizational structures that advance the institution's internationalization.

REFERENCES

Altbach, P. G. (2005). Globalization and the University: Myths and Realities in an Unequal World. In National Education Association (Ed.) (pp. 63–74). *The NEA 2005 Almanac of Higher Education*. Washington, DC.

Bardati, D. R. (2006). The integrative role of the campus environmental audit: Experiences at Bishop's University, Canada. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Ed (International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education)*, *7*(1), 57–68. doi: 10.1108/14676370610639245

Bartunek, J. M., & Moch, M. K. (1987). First-Order, Second-Order, and Third-Order Change and Organization Development Interventions: A Cognitive Approach. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *23*(4), 483–500. doi: 10.1177/002188638702300404

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*, 77–101. doi: 10.1191/1478088706qp063oa

Chan, W. W. Y. (2004). International Cooperation in Higher Education: Theory and Practice. *Journal of Studies of International Education*, *8*(1), 32–55. doi: 10.1177/1028315303254429

Cohen, D., & Crabtree, B. (2006). Qualitative Research Guidelines Project. Retrieved from http://www.qualres.org/HomeLinc-3684.html

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2013). *Research Methods in Education*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Covey, S. R. (2003). *Principle-centered leadership*. New York, NY: Free Press.

Crawford, B., & Bethell, L. (2012). Internationalized campuses just don't happen: Intercultural learning requires facilitation and institutional support. In S. Ahola & D. M. Hoffman (Eds.) (pp. 189–213). *Higher education research in Finland: Emerging structures and contemporary issues*. Jyväskylä: Finnish Institute for Eductional Research.

Creswell, J. W. (2014). *Research Design: Quantitative, Qualitative, and Mixed Method Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

DAAD, & DZHW. (2016). Wissenschaft weltoffen kompakt 2016: Daten und Fakten zur Internationalität von Studium und Forschung in Deutschland [Academics open-minded compact 2016: Data and facts on internationality of studies and research in Germany]. Retrieved from http://www.wissenschaftweltoffen.de/kompakt/wwo2016_kompakt_de.pdf de Vita, G., & Case, P. (2003). Rethinking the internationalisation agenda in UK higher education. *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, *27*(4), 383–398. doi: 10.1080/0309877032000128082

de Wit, H., Hunter, F., Howard, L., & Egron-Polak, E. (2015). *Internationalisation of Higher Education: Study.* doi: 10.2861/444393

Elo, S., Kääriäinen, M., Kanste, O., Pölkki, T., Utriainen, K., & Kyngäs, H. (2014). Qualitative Content Analysis: A Focus on Trustworthiness. *SAGE Open*, *4*(1), 1-10. doi: 10.1177/2158244014522633

Finnish Advisory Board on Research Integrity. (2009). Ethical principles of research in the humanities and social and behavioural sciences and proposals for ethical review. Retrieved from http://www.tenk.fi/sites/tenk.fi/files/ethicalprinciples.pdf

Finnish Ministry of Education. (2009). *Strategy for the Internationalisation of Higher Education Institutions in Finland 2009-2015.* Retrieved from http://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/planipolis/files/ressources/finland_higher_education_strategy.pdf

Gill, R. (2002). Change management--or change leadership? *Journal of Change Management*, *3*(4), 307–318. doi: 10.1080/714023845

Gudz, N. A. (2004). Implementing the sustainable development policy at the University of British Columbia: An analysis of the implications for organisational learning. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, *5*(2), 156–168. doi: 10.1108/14676370410526242

Hammer, M. R. (1992). Research, Mission Statements, and International Student Advising Offices. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *16*, 217–236. doi: 10.1016/0147-1767(92)90019-Q

Harris, L. C., & Ogbonna, E. (2002). The Unintended Consequences of Culture Interventions: A Study of Unexpected Outcomes. *British Journal of Management, 13*(1), 31-49. doi: 10.1111/1467-8551.00221

Higgs, M., & Rowland, D. (2005). All changes great and small: Exploring approaches to change and its leadership. *Journal of Change Management*, *5*(2), 121–151. doi: 10.1080/14697010500082902

Hitchcock, G., & Hughes, D. (1995). *Research and the teacher: A Qualitative Introduction to School-Based Research*. London: Routledge.

Hoffman, D. M., Raunio, M., & Korhonen, M. (2010). Academic Mobility Patterns and the Competitiveness of Basic Units: The World Class, National Champions and Local Heroes of Finnish Universities: *Kever-Osaaja, 3*.

Retrieved from http://www.kever-osaaja.fi/index.php/K-O/article/viewFile/1265/1176

Hooper, A., & Potter, J. (2001). *Intelligent Leadership: Creating a passion for change*. London: Random House Business Books.

Hoover, E., & Harder, M. K. (2014). What lies beneath the surface? The hidden complexities of organizational change for sustainability in higher education. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, *106*, 175-188. doi: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2014.01.081

Jaworski, J., & Scharmer, C. O. (2000). Leadership in the New Economy: Sensing and Actualizing Emerging Futures. Retrieved from http://www.ottoscharmer.com/sites/default/files/2000_LeadingDigitalEconomy.pdf

Keeling, R. P., Underhile, R., & Wall, A. F. (2007). Horizontal and Vertical Structures: The Dynamics of Organization in Higher Education. *Liberal Education*, *93*(4), 22–31. Retrieved from https://www.aacu.org/publications-research/periodicals/horizontal-and-vertical-structures-dynamics-organization-higher

Kezar, A. J. (2001). *Understanding and Facilitating Organizational Change in the 21st Century: Recent Research and Conceptualizations*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Killick, D. (2006). Cross-Cultural Capability & Global Perspectives: Guidelines for Curriculum Review. Retrieved from http://eprints.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/2808/1/Cross_Cultural_Capability_Guidelines.pdf

Knight, J. (1996). Internationalisation of higher education: A conceptual framework. In J. Knight & H. de Wit (Eds.) (pp. 5–19). *Internationalisation of Higher Education in Asia Pacific Countries*. Amsterdam: European Association of International Education.

Knight, J. (2003). Updating the Definition of Internationalization. *International Higher Education*. (33), 2–3. https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research_sites/cihe/pdf/IHEpdfs/ihe33.pdf

Knight, J. (2004). Internationalization Remodeled: Definition, Approaches, and Rationales. *Journal of Studies in International Education*, *8*(1), 5–31. doi: 10.1177/1028315303260832

Knight, J. (2013). The changing landscape of higher education internationalisation – for better or worse? *Perspectives: Policy and Practice in Higher*, *17*(3), 84–90. doi: 10.1080/13603108.2012.753957

Knight, J., & de Wit, H. (1995). Strategies for internationalisation of higher education: Historical and conceptual perspectives. In H. de Wit (Ed.) (pp. 5–32), *Strategies for internationalisation of higher education*. Amsterdam: European Association of International Education Publications.

Kondakci, Y., & van den Broeck, H. (2009). Institutional imperatives versus emergent dynamics: a case study on continuous change in higher education. *Higher Education*. (58), 439–464. doi: 10.1007/s10734-009-9204-2

Kotter, J. P. (1997). Leading by vision and strategy. *Executive Excellence*, *14*(10), 15–16. Retrieved from https://search-proquest-com.ezproxy.jyu.fi/docview/204493275?accountid=11774

Kurland, N. B. (2011). Evolution of a campus sustainability network: a case study in organizational change. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, *12*(4), 395–429. doi: 10.1108/14676371111168304

Laster, N. M. (2008). Communicating Multiple Change: Understanding the Impact of Change Messages on Stakeholder Perceptions (Dissertation). The University of Texas at Austin, Austin. Retrieved from https://repositories.lib.utexas.edu/bitstream/handle/2152/18134/lastern74939.pdf?sequence=2

Levy, A. (1986). Second-Order Planned Change: Definition and conceptualization. *Organizational Dynamics*, *15*(1), 5–23. doi: 10.1016/0090-2616(86)90022-7

Lewis, L. K. (2011). Defining Organizational Change. In L. K. Lewis (Ed.) (pp. 21–51). *Organizational Change: Creating Change Through Strategic Communication*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Lincoln, Y. S., & Guba, E. G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Maringe, F. (2009). Strategies and challenges of internationalisation in HE: An exploratory study of UK universities. *International Journal of Educational Management*, *23*(7), 553–563. doi: 10.1108/09513540910990799

Mohrman, S. A., Tenkasi, R. V., & Mohrman, A. M. (2003). The Role of Networks in Fundamental Organizational Change: A Grounded Analysis. *The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, *39*(3), 301–323. doi: 10.1177/0021886303258072

Moore, J., Pagani, F., Quayle, M., Robinson, J., Sawada, B., Spiegelman, G., & van Wynsberghe, R. (2005). Recreating the university from within: Collaborative reflections on the University of British Columbia's engagement with sustainability. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, *6*(1), 65–80. doi: 10.1108/14676370510573140

Newby, P. (2014). *Research Methods for Education*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Norwegian Ministry of Education and Research. (2009). *Internationalisation of Education in Norway: Summary in English: Report No. 14 (2008-2009) to the Storting*. Retrieved from https://www.regjeringen.no/contentassets/a0f91ffae0d74d76bdf3a9567b61ad3f/en-gb/pdfs/stm200820090014000en_pdfs.pdf

Pyett, P. M. (2003). Validation of Qualitative Research in the "Real World". *Qualitative Health Research*, *13*(8), 1170–1179. doi: 10.1177/1049732303255686

Senge, P. M. (2006). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art & Practice of The Learning Organisation*. London: Random House Business Books.

STINT. (2012). *Strategic Internationalisation in Sweden 2012*. Retrieved from https://www.siu.no/content/download/761/3296/file/STINT_R1201_StrategicInternationalisation2012.pdf

Sullivan, W., Sullivan, R., & Buffton, B. (2001). Aligning individual and organisational values to support change. *Journal of Change Management*, *2*(3), 247–254. doi: 10.1080/738552750

Teichler, U. (2004). The changing debate on internationalisation of higher education. *Higher Education*. (48), 5–26. doi: 10.1023/B:HIGH.0000033771.69078.41

Tenkasi, R. V., Mohrman, S. A., & Mohrman, A. M. (1998). Accelerating Organizational Learning During Transition. In S. A. Mohrman, J. R. Galbraith, E. E. Lawler III, & Associates (Eds.) (pp. 330–361), *Tomorrow's Organization: Crafting Winning Capabilities in a Dynamic World*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Thompson, J. D. (2003). *Organizations in Action: Social Science Bases of Administrative Theory*. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Publishers.

Välimaa, J., Fonteyn, K., Garam, I., van den Heuvel, E., Linza, C., Söderqvist, M.,. . . Kolhinen, J. (2013). *An Evaluation of International Degree Programmes in Finland*. Retrieved from https://karvi.fi/app/uploads/2014/09/KKA_0213.pdf

Van Damme, D. (2001). Quality issues in the internationalisation of higher education. *Higher Education*, *41*, 415–441. Retrieved from http://web.a.ebscohost.com.ezproxy.jyu.fi/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=1&sid=d623ed0e-2072-4da9-b92d-d88a9239ae71%40sessionmgr4010

van den Hoonaard, W. C. (2003). Is Anonymity an Artifact in Ethnographic Research? *Journal of Academic Ethics*, *1*(2), 141–151. doi: 10.1023/B:JAET.0000006919.58804.4c

What is MAXQDA? Retrieved from https://www.maxqda.com/what-is-maxqda

Yin, R. K. (2012). *Applications of case study research*. Washington, DC: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Zhang, Y., & Wildemuth, B. M. (2005). Qualitative Analysis of Content. *Analysis*, *1*(2), 1–12. doi: 10.1002/hbm.20661

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Consent form

Consent

This is to confirm that I agree to participate in a study carried out by Lisa-Sophie Tornier, student in the Master's Degree Programme of Educational Leadership at the Institute for Educational Leadership, University of Jyväskylä. The study is supervised by Josephine Moate. Ms. Tornier has provided me with all the information that I have requested to make the voluntary decision to join her study. The purpose of the study is to map out the collaboration between the international office and the international coordinators in the departments and faculties, to describe the type of leadership displayed in the collaboration, and to suggest potential improvements.

I have also been informed that I may withdraw from the study at any point.

I give permission for the interview data to be used in academic research and any other publications, and for the interview data to be archived for possible further research. The information may be presented as anonymously as possible without any identifying information. Confidentiality with regards to the received information binds the researcher in charge.

I would like to receive a copy of the work when it is finished. ☐ yes ☐ no

Date ____________________________

____ Signature of the interviewee

____ Printed name of the interviewee

Date ____________________________

____ Signature of the researcher

____ Printed name of the researcher

Appendix 2. Interview questions – Head of Internationalization

1. How long have you been in this position for?
2. What are your tasks and responsibilities?
3. Can you elaborate on your duties and responsibilities regarding the international office and the international coordinators in the departments and faculties?
4. What is the relationship between your office and the international office and international coordinators?
5. Can you explain, maybe with an example, how decisions are made/negotiated/communicated?
6. When has this structure (international office & international coordinators) been established?
7. What is the reason for having this structure?
8. Which of the involved parties has which responsibilities?
9. How are they supposed to collaborate, if at all?

Appendix 3. Interview questions – Head of International Office

1. When has the structure with the international office and the international coordinators in the departments been established?
2. What is the relationship between your office and the international coordinators?
3. Who from the international office works with the international coordinators? And how?
4. Can you elaborate on your duties and responsibilities regarding the international coordinators in the departments and faculties?
5. Can you explain, maybe with an example, how decisions are made/negotiated/communicated?
6. Which of the involved parties have which responsibilities?
7. With regard to student mobility, what are the tasks of the international coordinators and what are the tasks of the international office?
8. What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current structure?
9. What kind of changes do you anticipate?

Appendix 4. Interview questions – International Office staff

1. Please introduce yourself by explaining your current position.
2. When was this position established?
3. How long have you been working in this position?
4. What does an international office staff member need to be able to do his/her job well?
5. How would you describe the relationship between the international office staff members?
6. How would you describe the relationship between an international coordinator and the international office?
7. How would you describe the relationship between the international office and the central administration?
8. What are the most important considerations in these relationships?
9. What strengthens/weakens these relationships?
10. *How do you work with the international coordinators at the faculties and departments?*[3]
11. *Can you elaborate on your duties and responsibilities regarding the international coordinators?*
12. *Can you explain, maybe with an example, how decisions are made/negotiated/communicated?*
13. *Which of the involved parties have which responsibilities?*
14. *Regarding student mobility, what are your tasks and what are the tasks of the international coordinators?*
15. *What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current structure?*
16. *On 1.1.17 a new structure was introduced. What has changed since then?*
17. *What changes do you think will take place?*
18. Was there anything in our discussions that seemed particularly important to you? Would you like to add anything?

---

[3] Italicized questions are questions that are interesting for this research, but which were only asked if the participants had not addressed these in their previous answers.

Appendix 5. Interview questions – International coordinators

1. Please introduce yourself by explaining your current position.
2. When was this position established?
3. How long have you been working in this position?
4. What does an international coordinator need to be able to do his/her job well?
5. How would you describe the relationship between an international coordinator and his/her faculty?
6. How would you describe the relationship between an international coordinator and the international office?
7. How would you describe the relationship between an international coordinator and the central administration?
8. What are the most important considerations in these relationships?
9. What strengthens/weakens these relationships?
10. *Who from the international office do you work with the most? And how?*
11. *Can you elaborate on your duties and responsibilities regarding the international office?*
12. *Can you explain, maybe with an example, how decisions are made/negotiated/communicated?*
13. *Which of the involved parties have which responsibilities?*
14. *Regarding student mobility, what are your tasks and what are the tasks of the international office?*
15. *What are the strengths and weaknesses of the current structure?*
16. *On 1.1.17 a new structure was introduced. What has changed since then?*
17. *What changes do you think will take place?*
18. Was there anything in our discussions that seemed particularly important to you? Would you like to add anything?

Appendix 6. Quotes

Subchapter 4.2.2 Current roles

1. In the Erasmus, for example, the faculty-level coordinators have a very big role. They select their students to their Erasmus agreements. We are just there providing, then, the tools and the documentation and the funding and the electronic mobility online environment, so that the student can submit an application. But we don't make the decisions. The faculty coordinator informs us that 'These are the students that we have selected to take part in Erasmus exchange' and then we take it from there. We start correspondence with the student to make sure that the student gets the Erasmus grant. Then we organize pre-departure orientation for everybody. But then again, it's the faculty-level people or the departmental people who talk with the student about the course choices […]. This type of academic counselling and any negotiations regarding credit transfer are handled either in the faculty or in the department. […] So, it goes like this: we do something, then we throw it to the faculty and then they do something, then somebody contacts the …, so, it's a process like this. (HoIO)

Subchapter 4.2.4 The network and its relationships

2. IC1: Until now I've always experienced that I've been a part of the faculty […], and sort of my professional identity has been, you know, an employee of the faculty

   IC2: I'm like located in [the] faculty, we call it like a faculty building, but I don't identify myself as a part of faculty somehow.

3. IC5: I think the situation at [my faculty] is a bit better from the point of view from the international coordinator, maybe because that position has been there for a long time.

   IC6: I felt that it's quite an isolated role and, in my role, I actually had to work hard to even get to the study affairs' team meetings, even though I have to know a lot about the normal systems and structures and codes and courses and how things are delivered […]. And it took a few years to get sort of integrated into the faculty structures. […] So, it can be a bit lonely place in the faculty.

4. IC1: In our faculty both the head of administration and the head of academic affairs do know [what I do], but that's because, you know, it's easier for us perhaps, because we have, you know, closer collaboration with them.

   IC2: Like when I discuss about my work for this year, head of our local services said to me that [they] don't have any idea how the international affairs are done in different faculties. So, they are not even like, I think they are not even interested about it. They think that if you do it, it's fine. They only look the numbers how many students go abroad, how many come in and if they don't hear any complaints it's ok, if the numbers are high.

5. And also, the […] people in leading roles there, they understand that the importance of international affairs […]. And also, I think both the international coordinator and me when I worked there, we had close connections with the dean and the head of academic affairs. It was easy to take care of things with them and they knew and understood about the international affairs, so you don't need to explain everything (IC5).

6. [The] vice head always said 'You are the one who [is] going to stay here.' Because heads change, I think every four years. So, [international] coordinator is the one who is staying. So, I know the history and I can say that 'Okay, if you miss this, it affects that' and I [am] the one who knew what [are] the tracks we are following (IC2).
7. I'd say at least in our faculty, the deans, both the previous one and the current one, and the heads of the departments and it and you know head of administration, head of academic affairs, everybody knows what we do, and they appreciate the work we do (IC1).
8. I think I don't really have a connection to the others, strategic planning or director's office or the central administration, I don't have really. They represent to the [domestic] side of the university, which doesn't concern me very much (IC3).
9. Other than [the HoI's], when I was working in the faculty, I didn't have any connections to anyone in the like higher positions (IC5).
10. The entire head of administration of the entire university and like our new supervisor, I mean the big boss, head of the educational services, or rector or head of strategic planning or what not, we don't have very sort of necessarily very direct relations to them (IC1).
11. I am acquainted, and we have been part of several working groups and committees in this university related to various kind of things but mostly international affairs. So, I know these people, at least some of them, but they don't really get involved in the international affairs at the faculty or departmental level. But obviously, their decisions and the sort of well whatever kind of vision they claim to have regarding the direction of the university and what should be done here it affects us directly, because they are the ones who decide on the resources, they are the ones who eventually decide on our salaries (IC1).
12. But I haven't had, in this position, any need to meet with the strategic planning or they have never cared what I think, it goes always through International Office, if my opinions matter (IC3).
13. [They're] organizing this kind of workshops and so on, but there's always some topic and then you can just discuss that and maybe in those workshops too they could ask a bit more about not just presenting their ideas, but also asking from the coordinators what they suggest or think (IC5).
14. I think there is not so much other than the International Office, there are not so many connections to other central administration (IC5).
15. IC2: Do I have a relationship?

    IC1: Yeah. I think we don't really have a relationship […]. We don't have very sort of necessarily very direct relations to them.

    IC2: I think we work quite …

    IC1: … independently?

    IC2: Yeah and only like working with the international office.
16. And I really don't think they have a clue about what is actually being done especially regarding this sort of student services here in the departments and the faculties (IC1).
17. IC2: But it's hard to tell to administrative staff members that they should come to see what we are doing at the departments and faculties.

IC1: Yeah. And they think they know. But they don't. […] most of our time is spent in interaction with different people, you know, be they students, be they staff members, be they colleagues or what not. It's a lot of communication, interaction with people and somehow when you see what the central administration's [*pointing behind their back with both thumbs]* idea of our job is, it smells of paper, you know. Basically, they just see us […] like we are sort of totally this sort of "administration" [*doing quotation marks with fingers],* you know, taking one piece of paper and moving it [*pretending to move pieces of paper around*] from one desk to another. So, pushing papers around [has] nothing to do with what we actually do. […] they assumed once again in the central administration [*pointing with both fingers behind their back*] that we have absolutely no understanding what so ever of the curricula in our faculty, that we don't know anything about the contents of the studies that our students are doing. Whereas apart from our head of academic affairs, I'm the most knowledgeable about our curricula in the faculty, because I deal with all students from all of our units.

18. And I would say with the other central [administration] like HR and to some extent the kind of wider student and academic services there's a little bit of the not understanding of the special nature of the international affairs (IC6).

19. Nowadays and for several years now, it has been [a] really good and close cooperation, at least we see it that way and we do get good feedback also from the faculties and departments. […] They are good people and we have good connections already (HoIO).

20. It has been good as well for many years (IOS4).

21. I: How would you describe the relationship between the International Office and the coordinators in the departments and faculties?

    IOS1: Very good as well.

    IOS2: I would think so yeah. […] I would say that it's a good relationship.

    IOS1: […] we've had kind of this closer call already for years all the time that I've been here.

22. IC3: I think our relationship is very close and very good. They are like the closest colleagues we have, but they just sit in a different building at least to me. Call anytime, send email anytime, it's a very unformal [relationship] in a way also that we are really working for the same target. I see them as my closest friends in the university or closest colleagues.

    IC4: Yeah. They are working very well. I've collaborated with them since 25 years very good and also not so many changes in the staff.

23. IOS1: Well, I think the strength in the cooperation between the International Office staff members and the faculty level coordinators is just a good cooperation that we have and sort of the good relationship.

    IOS2: The good spirit kind of cooperating. […]

    IOS1: I think the cooperation for me, within the International Office and the faculty-level coordinators is the key sort of to everything

    IOS2: Yeah. I do just have this feeling that we are doing well both here and with the coordinators in the faculties. That's just kind of my main feeling about this topic in general.

IOS1: And sort of have a good vibe on doing things and also developing the processes.

24. I think the most important thing is that the cooperation with the International Office works so well and that really helps in doing your job (IC5).
25. I'd like to emphasize the good collaboration between, you know, the colleagues in different faculties and the good collaboration between the central International Office and the faculty international coordinators (IC1).
26. IC4: They react very quickly when I have a question. So, they answer at the moment, and they know what they are saying. […]

    IC3: I think the strength is that we have a good international office. We really have a colleague to rely on. […]

    IC4: Strength is so in my case that I'm autonomous in my decisions as an international coordinator […]. [All] in all, this is good, so I respect it and they trust in me.

    IC3: I understand this is one. Yeah. The same for me. […]

    IC3: I think it's great that we decide and we are given the responsibility of running the Erasmus circus. You choose the ones that go, you accept the ones coming, and you give them an instruction on the courses, and I think it's good. So, that also gives a lot of joy that you have your own sort of field.

    IC4: Yeah. That's right.

    IC3: Someone trusts you that much that 'Okay, you take care of that.' It's good.
27. IC5: And I think in international affairs it works differently than in many other issues at the university. I think that people who are working in faculties, they always say that 'the central administration they don't understand anything about our work and they just sit there and make some decisions that have to do with our work, but they don't actually understand what we are doing and they don't ask us.' And so, that's very different in international affairs that first of all, they [= the IO] understand a lot about the work in the faculties and they also ask our opinion or the people who work in the faculties.

    IC6: They really are the central support for us, rather than central hindrance.
28. I think it's very easy for them to contact us and ask things. […] we sometimes ask like: 'Could you do this? I know it's not like your job' or we need to stretch the rules sometimes and they do it, because they understand and are motivated and trust us and vice versa (IOS3).
29. IC2: I get help from them [= IO staff], because I haven't done this [job] maybe not one year. So, every week now I know I find something that I don't know, and I call them. They help really easily, and they are really helpful and it's so easy to ask, because they help, and they know and if they don't know, they find the answer. They like listen to me and if I have problems, they are listening and trying to help […].

    IC1: Mhh [*agreeing*]. Yeah, I agree. Whenever I have a difficulty or a problem or something, I don't know, I can contact them, and somebody there knows or if they don't, then they will find out.

    IC2: […] it's so easy and you can like count on the help you will get.
30. Communication is very good (IOS4).

31. IC5: Also, they inform us about all kinds of things by email, so I think it works well. […]

    IC6: If there were significant staff changes in the International Office that would affect the whole again, because they work so well together and with us, because of who they are, not what the roles are.

    IC5: Yeah. I agree.

    IC6: And information flow, but that's again related with people. How much the information gets shared between different units and people. […]

    IC5: I think cooperation strengthens the relationships, like for example, the way that the International Office communicates with us […] and the kind of way they communicate and ask that strengthens the relationship.

32. And in very many concrete things we consult them. And we listen (HoIO).

33. IOS4: We are listening to their opinions and so on.

    IOS3: Yeah. We are trying always [to] ask and not say: 'This is the way things should be.' And always ask like 'How would you rather [like] things be done?'

    IOS4: Yeah. Because we don't have practical experience on the departmental level or faculty-level, so they might see things.

    IOS3: And I think it hugely helps.

34. IC3: And they also ask for our opinion …

    IC4: Yeah, that's right.

    IC3: … and they listen what we say. Yeah. They are not just above us in a way, they are working together. […] But I have a very strong trust in International Office that if a strategic planning, some sort of group needs a viewpoint or point of view from departmental level or faculty-level, the International Office will contact us to have our opinion that then they don't go and represent the international issues, coz they always want to ask the faculties, …

    IC4: Mh [*agreeing*]. That's right.

    IC3: … they sort of want us to have the same, how would I say, consent or that they don't speak with their own words, so own mouth that they have sort of support from the faculties as well. That they want to represent not only the International Office, they want to represent the faculties, coz they realize that the International Office, the faculties are very different, humanities is very different from natural sciences or mathematics. So, that's why they always want to ask: 'How do you see this? Do you have any ideas/recommendations?'

35. IC5: They ask how they [could] develop something then we give them ideas and then they do it very efficiently and take into account what we said.

    IC6: Yeah. They do take on board and they've got a very [Nordic] negotiation model that they don't want to do something without first negotiating it with us international coordinators. […] International Office always takes our views into account.

36. Of course, there are different personalities among our group, but that, I guess, should be seen as like a good thing as well that we have also voices that can be critical sometimes and that sort of make us to improve our work as well and push forward.

But I would say mainly it's very easy to speak and always discuss some issues and try to solve them together (IOS3).

37. IOS2: When you have that connection, when you know that you can negotiate with these people and you have a history of doing a good cooperation […] of course there are challenges and they do come up, but they don't seem like such a big thing in that sense.

    IOS1: We're kind of in that same boat.

    IOS2: That's a very good way of putting it, I would say.

38. I suppose whenever there are any problems […] in the relationships, I suppose we try to kind of discuss things and try to solve this problem, but it's quite seldom anything like that, but anyway so in a way we aren't ignoring those problems (IOS4).

39. IC2: So, I think, in here, the strength is the people working there [= in the IO].

    IC1: Yeah. Very much so. And because of the personalities, because of the people who work there, they are easily approachable, they are knowledgeable, they are willing to help and support us. And I have to say for […] the Head of the International Office, that [they're] also the one who has stepped in for us as well.

    IC2: [The HoIO] has listened to us.

    IC1: [They have] listened to us and [they have] tried to defend us and our position. [They have] been so, you know, making us, not making us, that's somehow negative expression, but, you know, making certain that our position and our concerns and our work load is at least mentioned and showed it to people even though they don't necessarily listen, but at least [they've] been trying to keep it sort of on the agenda.

    IC2: Yeah. And [they are] worried about how we are doing and [they're] the one who is like listen[ing] to us, if we have too much to work or we don't know what to do or the regulations are stupid or whatever.

    IC1: Yeah, [they are] really sort of championing for us as well with no regard to [their] own, you know, sort of reputation so to say.

40. IC2: And I think we get a good feedback from the exchange students about that [= cooperation between IO and international coordinators].

    IC1: Yeah, we do. I think they find, you know, all the procedures and all the services pretty clear and, you know, well organized. And I know that, for example, in [another city's] university, it's not so clearly defined and also not so easy for the students, I mean the incoming students. I don't know about the outgoing students. But a friend of mine from Belgium sent her daughter over there and she was pretty disappointed actually. I told my friend that you should have sent her here [*both giggling*].

41. IC4: [The national agency for education] was here last year to investigate how it's going on and then we read the report about it and then they remarked that apparently in [this city] the relation between the coordinators and the International Office is exceptionally good.

    IC3: Yeah. I guess that I read it like this: may be the best among any [national] university, our relationship with the Head of International Office and the whole office is very informal and very good, very direct.

42. IOS1: I would say that at the moment some things are not done the same way. So, we already mentioned how the applications of the university-level application processes [are done] or how the faculties review the applications, we have the same sort of criteria for selecting students to student exchange, but it's just the practical way of …

    IOS2: … your realizing.

    IOS1: Yeah. Exactly.

    IOS2: It varies quite a lot, so that makes it difficult for us to work with [the international coordinators].

43. IC1: Then if we go to the weaknesses, then of course, I'd say the small number of people working in our central International Office. This is one of the [weaknesses].

    IC2: Yeah. And now if somebody leaves.

    IC1: Yeah. It's possible that they won't have, you know, the permit to replace, I mean to hire a new person.

    IC2: And of course, if [a] new person comes will he or she know the things

44. And then also the good relation not also only with the International Office, but also with the colleagues in the other departments (IC4).
45. There's a good atmosphere between the international coordinators. We're kinda like a good group, even though there's been a lot of change (IC6).
46. I think that is definitely something that is very important. We all know that we can consult each other. You get a lot of collegial support from each other as well. (IC1)
47. I have worked with [IC1] [*pointing at IC1*] here before, also I know that I can always call [IC1] here and ask [for] help (IC2).
48. IC1: And also we have regular meetings with the, you know, international coordinators on the faculties, departments, and units […], we meet approximately well once a month or a little bit fewer, more seldom than that. But anyway, and we usually have an agenda, we have some typical things to discuss there […]. But we also have the chance, you know, to talk to each other there and ask what is going on […]. So, they are really I think important sessions for all of us.

    IC2: Yeah. Because you are working at the faculty or department …

    IC1: You are alone.

    IC2: … alone. Yeah. So, that's the place where you can see others and you can hear how they work and what problems they have and it's really important.

49. IC6: It's been good to get together. We have regular meetings and it's good to see others and how they're doing and it's also good to hear how other things, other people are doing the same things and learn from each other.

    IC5: And you get very good ideas from someone […] telling 'Okay, we are doing like this' and then you get 'Okay, ya, we could do that, too.'

50. IC4: Once I had a boy who came to see me. He got a place in Erasmus exchange and he has a problem or a question, 'Okay, ask me.' 'Can I take my bird with me?' 'Yeah, you can. That's not me who decides. You have to ask to your landlord, if you can take the bird.' So, I said: 'How do you transport the bird?' 'What do you mean?' 'So,

you have to have it somewhere. Where is your bird when you are moving from one place to another?' 'My bird is sitting on my shoulder' [*laughing*].

IC3: [On] the airplane? [*all laughing*]

IC4: I said: 'You have to be also in contact with the flight corporation. So, maybe then you can.'

51. I know from our students' experiences that you can definitely make people smile [hardly] if you really want to be bureaucratic and 'Okay, application deadline was gone and you can forget about it.' But if you know people and if you have, for example, [a] student in trouble and you need to find out anything to help this person then you sometimes need to be very flexible and do things like I know there are people they shouldn't but they are like answering their emails [at] 10 o'clock in the evening or doing something additional they shouldn't do (IOS4).

Subchapter 4.2.5 Evaluation of the current organizational structure

52. At the moment, I think, the situation is quite good that we do have international coordinators in every faculty (HoI).
53. It has come across many times that the situation at our university and I think it's very good, so we're lucky in that sense at least from our perspective (IOS3).
54. I think it's just the ideal structure for what we do. The International Office takes care of all the other stuff I don't need to take care of [*both giggling*] (IC6).
55. IC3: Well, I would [say] that's a clear weakness, but it's not related to international coordinators, which is the master's degree programs, how are they run and which, so how are their resources resourced. Strategic planning should see there has been evaluation, there has been and so many seminars on after there was an outsider to have evaluate the programs and how they are run and the findings were very clear that too few personnel. There should be one administrative coordinator in each program or at least one per faculty that takes care. And then the central administration or whoever gives the resources does not listen and still they want to advertise big that the master's degree programs are the ground jewels and the quality is so and so high.

    IC4: They want to have payings in the future or something more.

    IC3: Yeah. And it's run now with the left time and forgot students. Yeah. It's not fair I guess [to] the students. They have high hopes and then I don't think we meet all the expectations that the students might have.

56. IOS2: And I guess the same could apply to us as well here at the International Office. Like you said that we are very independent in our work, that's very true and we're also very busy in our work, so we don't really have time to look at what the colleague is doing in a very deep manner. So, maybe here also we would serve us to kind of take a look at the good practices and maybe kind of make our processes a little bit more similar and more efficient. And that could be one thing to do.

    IOS1: Yeah. But that's definitely one very important thing that we should develop. The challenge is for us at the International Office and for the faculty-level coordinators that all of us have just so much work and everyone is so busy that it's difficult to find the time to …

IOS2: to develop the things.

IOS1: … the processes. So, we have noticed many things here that we could do so much better and not waste our time for sort of old fashioned processes.

IOS2: Yeah. Or ways of doing things in a novel fashion way

IOS1: Some things have just been stuck, because there's just never time to develop a better process.

IOS2: So, then you always end up doing the same thing, the same way as been done before just because you don't have the time.

57. IC5: Or maybe sometimes they [= IO] do something that - because I know they are very very busy, everyone knows [that] - so maybe there are some things […] that no one would do them, but they want to for the best of service, which is of course good for, for example, the incoming students, which is quite a lot of work. And then it [= the additional task] has been going from one person to the other, because everyone has too much work. And then of course, it's very good if someone is doing it, but if no one has time to do it, maybe you have to think of not doing it or some other things like that.

    IC6: Yeah. I think they are doing too good a job in the sense that you can see that they are very stretched. And sometimes you have to know when to drop sticks, drop something and, you know, just stop doing it. But I think they could maintain that standard, which I think it's probably the best in Europe when they offer with that kind of resource that they got and staffing that if they want to retain that standard, they would need new staff, coz it's always a struggle.

    IC5: Yeah, but then when they keep doing it with the current staff then people think 'Okay, they can do it with that staff. They don't need more.' Even though they really would need more.

58. IC5: Just reminds me that the International Office is great [*IC6 putting both thumbs up*] [*all giggling*] and the staff there.

    IC6: Yes. I concur. I think that was my main idea as well that they do such a great work and I hope they can continue doing that how they do that, maybe with a little bit more resources [*giggling*]. But I hope that is the one place where change will just not go anywhere near, because it works.

    IC5: Or if there's any change then they should have more staff.

59. But on the other hand, if you look at it from their point of view, like when I worked there, it's good that everyone has exactly, you know, 'I know that this is my job and I have to do this and no one else does this.' But the problem is that if, for example, you're sick for a long time or something that you can't do your work and then you're the only one who knows about - well not maybe the only one but anyway - they are so specialized that someone else might not know so much about what you are doing. But still, I think it's better that way that it's clear who does what. And they do know quite a lot still about each other's work (IC5).

60. The permanent staff know each other's job areas very well, but there's always somebody absent, babies being born, and that kind of stuff. So there's always somebody new taking on some role and obviously can't then expect them to take on that kind of expert role as the person previous (IC4).

61. What I do think is that the relationship between the international coordinators and the strategic planning should be more direct. They seem to have the illusion that they can talk to the management of the faculty and then the information kind of gets spread and trickled down, it doesn't. So, what they do is very high-level negotiations with the faculty where there's probably only one person, [HoI], who knows what they're talking about, because nobody else has any experience in the grassroot-level work and how would this affect this and how would this affect that. So, I think they should sort of step a bit lower and, you know, not deal just with deans and vice deans and heads, but actually with the people who work in the area, such as international coordinators. And maybe like International Office always takes our views into account, I think they, strategic planning, should listen to us as well in a similar way to have more direct input each way (IC6).

Subchapter 4.3.1 Peripheral changes

62. IC2: And like funding of our university is like changing.

    IC1: Yeah, decreasing.

63. Especially now when […] the funding is changing, and the government funding is changing, and everything is changing [*smiling*] (IC6).

Subchapter 4.3.2 New network and its relationships

64. Because now, for example, we have [a few] faculties, and in the future, we will have [one less] (HoI).
65. The Faculty of […], which is going to cease to exist in a few weeks (HoIO).
66. I've been working in the International Office and still am [*giggling*]. But the new person is in the administration admission services unit and their tasks concentrate maybe a bit more on this admission side (IOS4).
67. I just now transferred to the Admission Services of the university […]. Because now starting from the beginning of this year, I'm now working in the admission services of the university, and my responsibility is the application process to the international master's programs […]. So, now also, I'm just starting, but I'm also kind of now the other end, so I'm in the central administration and then I'm contacting the international coordinators in the faculties […]. So, now I try to, well I'm very busy at the moment in my new job, but I try to always think about that 'Okay, I have to tell this and this to people who need this information' (IC5).
68. IC1: Basically, we applied for our own jobs back

    IC2: Yeah. But they haven't checked the applications. They don't know what I have [written] there and like the first time they asked me was [on the] last day of November: 'Are you interested to do this international student affairs?'

    IC1: Okay [*surprised*].

    IC2: And I was like 'Okay, and I should start after one month.' And that's only thing when we talk about it and I said 'Okay, if this and that and then I could think about it.' And then they were like 'Okay, we thought that everything is fine and you want to continue with this.' And I was like 'No, I'm not interested to this same thing I have done part-time last year.' And then they said that 'Okay, we have to discuss about it.' And I'm waiting to have the this …

IC1: … discussion?

IC2: Yeah.

69. IC2: Actually, faculty is paying [for] the services we are offering.

IC1: Yeah that's true.

IC2: And that's the thing that [it's a] completely new idea. They haven't done it before and they are like now looking maybe what services we offer, do they want that kind of services, what they would like to have, how much they have money …

IC1: … to pay for the services …

IC2: … for future, yeah. And that's like new situation.

IC1: That's true. That's actually a really good point, because until now they have, I mean, the faculty has paid my salary directly and obviously, you know, the dean and the heads of academic affairs and the head of administration and so on and so on have been like my bosses. So, they have been able to tell to me my input is needed in this and this and this and this. Okay, but now […] perhaps the faculty will sometime in future say that 'Okay, we are only going to pay this and this much for [IC1's] services regarding that.' So, in principle it's totally possible that in future there is nobody to take [care] of like let's say the incoming exchange students if the faculty doesn't want to pay for that.

IC2: Yeah. They don't want to have those students, they don't offer any services for that. And look at it …

IC1: I don't think that is a very plausible situation.

IC2: But it depends on funding.

IC1: It depends on funding. It depends also on the funding instrument as developed by the ministry of education and culture. Right now the sort of, as I said earlier, the internationalization of higher education is one of the key priorities in the strategy and so on. And hence, the universities are funded based on the international activities, but who knows in five years, ten years will it cease to be a priority? Will the funding instrument be based on something else?

IC2: Yeah, maybe like research. Like if it changes in our faculty I think they are more interested to get more international researchers, more international staff members, because students are quite stressful and it's work.

IC1: You actually have to teach them. It's boring, it's tedious […].

IC2: Yeah. I'm quite worried about this like faculties and departments are paying services, because they actually don't understand it and it's so hard because like head of departments haven't realized that we are not part of the departments or faculties and they don't have power for us and they can't just pop in your office and say: 'Do this'. They have to pop into somebody's else office to ask 'can I?'

IC1: And this is exactly to what I was referring to when I told you that when I was going down for lunch to the restaurant and running into our dean and they were sort of asking me questions about and whether I could do this and that for the application and really, in principle, I should have said that 'Sorry, can't do this, not part of duties, you should ask my supervisor what I'm authorized to do, this or that.' But it's still a new situation.

The lunch situation that IC1 is referring to above is the following:

Prior to going to lunch I was stopped on my way by the dean of our faculty, the vice dean of our faculty, and two of the professors who consulted me on an international project, you know, a call for projects. And I was answering their questions and they were lectured we do this and that and bla bla bla. Anyway, ten minutes there. And later I was laughing that basically I should have told them that this is not my business, you know, anymore. But I won't do it and I can't do it, but eventually I will have to do it, because I just can't be dragged by work. But, you know, it's been kind of easy, because whatever I do, I've been doing for the faculty, but now it's sort of my boss is elsewhere (IC1).

70. And that's something that's sort of been covered now that the people who are doing the planning for the future sort of organization, […] the supervisors are actually going through the tasks like task by task and seeing how the different job profiles will then form and that's something that's being discussed so the way things have been up until now maybe in more sort of unorganized and in the future it will be probably more organized so that people in different faculties will have the exact same tasks and only a couple of maybe fine tuning things there, but in a way the way things have been up until now at the turn of this year might be completely different but of course the tasks are still there and the people are still there but it's the way they're organized is different (HoI).

71. I know that they are right now negotiating those [= tasks] in the faculties. They are negotiating them with the heads of academic affairs, who are going to be their supervisors (HoIO).

72. But now that there are fewer coordinators, we probably have a very good chance of sort of making the processes more similar and serving the students […]. I think this is one of the goals that we have in this organizational change and restructuring, so that students would have sort of streamline services so that everyone would be treated equally (IOS1).

73. Now it'll be interesting because we have this, you know, we have been confining to this huge giant unit and there are these like faculty coordinators who have very different workloads and we are now trying to make them like they have equal workloads. So, that will be interesting to see that the equality will take place in that progress as well (IOS3).

74. And that's something that's being discussed. So, the way things have been up until now maybe in more sort of unorganized and in the future it will be probably more organized so that people in different faculties will have the exact same tasks and only a couple of maybe fine tuning things there, but in a way the way things have been up until now at the turn of this year might be completely different. But of course, the tasks are still there, and the people are still there but it's the way they're organized is different (HoI).

75. Now we'll probably meet more regularly with the faculty-level coordinators. So, with a smaller group than before (IOS1).

76. I think we need to differentiate from 2017 onwards that we will have the meetings where these people who work with international affairs solely and have no other duties and then the people, academics or amanuenses or whoever they are in the

departments, who do something in international coordination and then some other tasks. So, that's how I see it (HoIO).

77. We don't really have all the answers yet. So, what the future is going to look like and how our cooperation will be shaped by this change that remains to be seen still. We have some final touches that need to be made and certain decisions on who's going to be focusing on what tasks. And, you know, of course, since we're in a very sort of tight financial situation at the moment that some of the functions that we currently have may be cut. And this process [is] unresolved at this point, so it's an interesting time. And we're supposed to be sort of ready with this organizational change by the end of this year, so that starting next year we would be operating as a new organization, but there are quite many things still unresolved. So, I don't know, we'll be working through Christmas I'm afraid (HoI).
78. Everything's kind of well not everything, but in some faculties and departments things are still kind of open and undecided (IOS1).
79. So, it's kind of interesting at the moment and I really don't know what I'm going to be doing in near future. [*IC2 nodding*] I mean I assume that I will be concentrating more on the student mobilities, student exchanges and internships abroad, but yeah [*IC2 shrugging shoulders*] (IC1).
80. Student affairs seems to be a total mystery to them based on the sort of the job descriptions we got from the central administration when they started to renew this […]. Yeah, well it was basically the same paper I was just referring to like in my previous comment. It's like they somehow, you know, describe the duties of the staff members of the administrative services and like I said it was just, you know, the job descriptions were very brief. It was mostly for somehow everybody's role, you know, was just preparing something, you know, always preparing documents for somebody else and heck that's pretty not something I do (IC1).
81. IOS1: We had a sort of a training session on Wednesday for all the staff members of the new organization, the educational services […]. All the teams were introduced there and we introduced ourselves as an international office, but while we were standing there, [the HoIO] was kind of asking the question that 'Do you only mean us? Or also the faculty-level coordinators?' because I kind of felt that we are in the same team even if the head of or even if their head is the head of academic affairs of the faculty in question, so they kind of are double agents in that sense that they belong both to our team and to the faculty team. I don't know how challenging it is for the faculty-level coordinators, for us it's actually a good thing that they have this double agent role.

    IOS2: Yeah. Because we do deal with the same things, we're just in in different places.
82. IC1: And like I was thinking yesterday, for example, as was demonstrated at the end of this "training session" [*doing quotation marks with fingers & smiling*] we attended yesterday or whatever it was supposed to be. At the end of that there was this sort of introduction of the team, of the various teams in the new services and there was the international services and [the HoIO]: 'Ah is everybody supposed to come you know from the faculties as well?' and we were like: 'Should we come?' and then they were like: 'No no, just the central International Office' and then I went there with [my faculty] people and you went there with [your faculty]. But there you can see we sort of we are sitting in two seats so to say, on two chairs, because we are both the International Office people in a sense even though we are located here in the

faculties and then we belong with the faculty administration personal as well. So, it's …

IC2: We have somehow like two bosses, [the HoIO] and the other one.

IC1: Yeah. Exactly.

83. IOS1: We'll see how it goes now.

    IOS2: We haven't decided exactly how we'll go from now on with the new organization. […]

    IOS1: There is something that we will need to discuss on how this is done, so that all the faculties would do it the same way.

    IOS2: Yeah. Because up til now there have been little bit different methods of doing this, so it would be good to agree on a common way of doing. So, this is something that we will probably discuss going forward.

84. But it's probably interesting to interview some of them also later in the spring once things have kind of settled and if they have had all the discussions in the faculties to determine who does what and how things are done. In some faculties, it's of course quite clear already, but in some it's not (IOS1).

85. IC1: Wait and see.

    IC2: Somebody maybe decide.

    IC1: Yeah. Perhaps.

    IC2: Hopefully.

    IC1: Eventually [*laughing*]. So, if you interview us again after one year, …

    IC2: One year, two years.

    IC1: … we might be in a similar position [*giggling*]. We don't know what we're supposed to be doing […]. Well, you know eventually we will find out. Perhaps 10 years from now or so.

Subchapter 4.3.3 Reactions to changes

86. And it's going to be interesting to see, now we're sort of centralizing everything and still the faculties will be their individual selves in the future as well, so what's [going to] happen there. I think it's a positive direction that we're going to that at least all that sort of main processes are uniform and universal and sort of we have that quality assurance guarantee that things are done in a timely fashion and following the same guidelines, so that we can guarantee equal treatment for everyone and things like that. But then at the same time, we have to keep in mind that the fields of science are different, and the people are different. Even within the fields of science people are different, so to keep that flexibility in the new design of how we're organizing things that's something that needs to be kept in mind (HoI).

87. So, this was one of the things that I know that the university management was hoping to get harmonized during these structural changes. I don't know whether it's going to happen. If I would guess, that it is not [going to] happen at least to the extent that some people hope it will, because our faculties are so different, different in size, different in the research/educational focus […]. So, probably we are moving to the

direction of a more similar job description, but I don't believe that they're [going to] be fully harmonized. I don't believe it (HoIO).

88. And another example, in their opinion we should offer the same kind of similar services everywhere, but our students are and their needs are totally different. I mean even if we are now talking about, you know, ordinary [domestic] students with no special needs or nothing, [*IC2 smiling & looking down*] [their] students [*pointing at IC2*] are totally different from my students and we definitely know it. And they need different kind of support, they need different kind of services and also the study programs are totally different. So, even the purely administrational work is totally different. […] and unfortunately, I don't think they, in the central administration [*pointing behind their back with both thumbs*] realize this, how big these differences really are, you know, between the students and between the study programs of our university (IC1).

89. IC1: The job descriptions were very brief. […] everybody's role, you know, was just preparing something, you know, always preparing documents for somebody else and heck that's pretty not something I do.

    IC2: Yeah. And I think best example is that from study plans. When students are making study plans, they make the study plan to the system and somebody from the teacher or researcher talk about the study plan and they plan it together and then administrative push the button, accept it. And that's like …

    IC1: And that is actually a very good example, a very good bad example of what it was like, I was like 'What the hell?'

    IC2: Why we have to push the button, accept it? If they talk about it and they plan it and why the teacher can't push the button, accept it?

    IC1: Mh [*agreeing*]. And why need the sort of member of administration to just push that accept button without even actually checking what is in [it].

    IC2: Yeah. And we have to know, somebody should tell us 'Okay, now you can accept it.'

    IC1: Yeah. It is ridiculous [*shaking head*].

90. IC1: Yeah. And somehow you know once again referring back to the papers, you know. Now all this kind of this guidance and counselling and instructing part of the job we've been doing, on that paper, on those plans that we were presented, was transferred from us, you know, administrative personnel to teachers and researchers and it won't function like that.

    IC2: And they are not willing to do it.

    IC1: No, they are not willing to do this, [it] takes up too much of their time.

    IC2: In our faculty, they are willing to do research, because that's the thing that they get maybe funding and more salary and better positions. They won't get anything to help the students.

    IC1: Yeah. And the other thing is that, at least based on what I've been talking about with our staff members, is that they don't want to spend the time, you know, to learn, to know everything that we already know. I mean like what's the point and exactly what's the point? Because we already do it, we know it, why shouldn't we do it in the future as well? But somehow the original idea was that, you know, like I said we would just be paper pushers, you know, and nothing to do with actual human interaction and counselling.

91. And I'm also kind of worried of whether we will have to cut some of the sort of innovative approaches that we've been able to develop, for example, the wellbeing advisors that we have at the moment, whether that will be something that, you know, may experience some cuts, because of this organizational change that we just don't have resources and that means people to do things (HoI).

92. IC1: In general, as a goodie, I'm a little bit worried about this direction, because it also means that, and I've been actually told that directly to my face that why should we support the sort of weak students, you know, […] because we shouldn't waste our time and our sort of diminishing resources on students who are taking too long to graduate or who need a lot of support.

    IC2: Yeah. And we get funding also from the students who get 55 ECTS credits per year. And those students won't get as much help.

    IC1: The ones that need the support, because of learning difficulties or difficult life situations or, you know, this and that. The reasons vary.

    IC2: Yeah. And that's why they need more help, they won't earn enough credits that we could get more funding, so they are actually really expensive students.

    IC1: And five years ago, you know, nobody thought of this. I mean not many people were thinking about this, you know. Every student sort of counted, but now money talks […]. I don't know what is going to happen. I'm not too happy about the current situation.

93. The mobility volumes have been increased heavily and the staff resources have decreased. So, I think it's an impossible thing in the long run. It cannot go on like this for a long time. Otherwise somebody is gonna suffer or the mobility volumes are gonna drop, because students need guidance. […] I haven't heard how it's going. I worry about it. I particularly worry about the idea of putting the faculty-level international coordinators even more in charge of the international master's degree programs. I think it's particularly in the faculties of big student mobilities not gonna happen. It's simply too much work and we should really focus on the international master's degree programs, their development, the student recruitment, providing good services, good support for our international degree-seeking students. This cannot be one person in the faculty. Of course, the academics are there, I know, and the departmental people are there, important people, but even the idea that the faculty-level coordinators should have some crucial role in the development and promotion of the international master's degree programs, I think it's an impossibility. And I have said this out loud many times to many people, but I don't know with what effect [*giggling*], because if there are a limited number of personnel resources then that's the fact. But I worry about that perhaps most in the structural change process […]. I worry about the workloads. Really. I know that some universities have invested heavily, they have hired many people for the sort of marketing and student recruitment tasks taking into consideration the big leap that we are now taking introducing tuition fees. And not this university. This I think it's a mistake. But perhaps, let's not be too pessimistic. The future will show. We will see very quickly in early 2017 what it will look like (HoIO).

94. For the time being, they've been saying that it's efficient that people who retire 'We just don't hire new people in their stead', but I don't think this is going to suffice for

much longer. […] And I know that now, for example, in this sort of structural change regarding the administrational services, the original idea was that there would be one international coordinator per faculty taking care of basically everything and anything [*IC2 nodding & grinning*] in relation to international affairs, like both the master's degree program students and the exchanges, incoming, outgoing, and everything. And it's totally impossible. […] it's way too much work for one person. I don't know what the head, what our central management [*pointing in the same direction as before when talking about rector*] is thinking. But it's too much. I have too much work for god's sake, but they are going to drown in that. Yeah. Who cares anyway? Not our central management [*shrugging shoulders; IC2 grinning*] (IC1).

95. IC1: It's the entire pre-structuring and this procedure, process of changing, it's very very poorly led. So, that causes a lot of frustration among us.

    IC2: Yeah. And we haven't got any information.

    IC1: No. I was actually expecting yesterday that we would be given some kind of, you know, I was expecting from the big boss kind of a presentation about the status quo, where we are now, what is the sort of the target, the objective, where we are going to, what is the time table. Nothing, nothing happened.

    IC2: [They were] like a part of us.

    IC1: Yeah, exactly. And totally clueless.

    IC2: Yeah, yeah [*sighing*].

    IC1: And the funny thing is that I know [they're] a competent person and as a person I've always liked [them] a lot, but I don't know why [they are] so so so clueless about these changes. Perhaps, you know, [they] didn't want the position, I don't know or perhaps people who are sort of on top position [*moving hands up at level over their head*] from [them] are just, you know, pushing [their] strings and [they don't] even want to step in, you know, and to do anything, because [they] can't and [they don't] want perhaps to face us, because [they feel] powerless and perhaps [they know] that we are not very happy about the situation to put it mildly. So, perhaps [they're] a little bit afraid as well or intimidated or something. I don't know. That is horrible.

96. IC1: How to put is nicely, this is a total mess basically, you know, this restructuring and of the administrational services at least.

    IC2: … at this Student Affairs.

    IC1: Yeah. I don't, I can't say much regarding the financial services and personnel services.

    IC2: But they started it earlier. They have done it like whole autumn term.

    IC1: And perhaps they are a little bit simpler to organize.

    IC2: And how they did it was different, because nobody asks me anything.

    IC1: Ah, me neither.

97. IC6: And what would be nice is if there was less change. I know change is the new black [*all laughing*], but, you know, you can't get anything established and see if it works, if you change all the time. So, I think that's been other issues with the recent years that change has been just the norm.

    IC5: Yeah. And I think that often the changes are not planned well enough. So, if you want to change …

IC6: … or planned at all [*giggling*].

IC5: Yeah. And that schedule is too tight. So, you should plan if you want to change. Something you should first find what is good and what is not good in the current model and then plan what you want to do and what you want to achieve by those changes.

IC6: Mh [*agreeing*]. Especially, when a lot of the changes at the university-level are the kind that even at the start it's acknowledged that 'This is probably a bit tight schedule, probably can't make it.' Well, why do it then? Especially, with the international master's degree programs, I think the timing was very poor to change everything at the same time when there's a national change in legislation to introduce tuition fee. 'We don't have a clue what we're doing, but let's change everything internally as well.' So, not a good idea!

IC5: And also, in the tuition fees [change], all the national decisions and things are very not clear and they should be clear at this point. So, yeah. That's another example of where things were not planned well enough or in good time.

Subchapter 4.4 Outlook to the future

98. IC1: I'm afraid eventually in our university they will have to lay off some people. I mean most likely they are going to target administration, central services. So, we'll see. For the time being, they've been saying that it's efficient that people who retire 'We just don't hire new people in their stead', but I don't think this is going to suffice for much longer. And when we have the new rector, depending on who he or she is. Yeah, well, we'll see [*swaying head back and forth, raising eyebrows & smiling*]. But probably we are not going to be the first ones to go, because after all this internationalization of higher education is one of the, you know, priorities of and the strategy of ministry of culture and education, for example. So, probably we are sort of "relatively safe" [*doing quotation marks with fingers*] […].

    IC2: Yeah, and maybe we as people have been here so many years. So, we are not the first ones to [be] kicked off.

    IC1: Yeah. And we are not yet very old [*smiling*].

99. I've met the international coordinators once and we are going to have a few meetings about the application process. And then [the HoI] said that [they] would like to come with us to the meetings. So, maybe we can kind of like change this a bit so that [they] would also meet the coordinators more because [the HoI] organizing this kind of workshops and so on, but there's always some topic and then you can just discuss that and maybe in those workshops too they could ask a bit more, not just presenting their ideas, but also asking from the coordinators what they suggest or think (IC5).