

# Education, internationalisation and the New Zealand-German relationship

## Bridging the distance – New Zealand and Germany in dialogue

The role of science and humanities in our knowledge economy

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### Abstract

The last decade has seen a heightened policy and strategic focus on the international dimension of New Zealand education. This reflects a view that in the 21st century, the health of our education system (and its consequent contribution to our economy) will be increasingly affected by how well it is "wired in" to networks, knowledge and people flows internationally. While this may be an unexceptional view, it is particularly important for New Zealand, given our size and distance from the rest of the world. This presentation outlines features of our international education strategy, its relevance to and occasional tensions with wider tertiary education objectives, the funding initiatives that support its implementation, and possible issues and opportunities for the future. The balance New Zealand strikes between multilateral and bilateral education engagement is then touched on, as this forms an important background to our relationship with Germany and the wider European region. Finally, some specific issues and opportunities in the New Zealand-German education relationship will be considered.

### What New Zealand wants to achieve in education at the macro level

- We aim to have a world-leading education system that equips all New Zealanders with the knowledge, skills and values to be successful citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup>-century.
- Part of what we need to do in order to achieve this goal – and particularly as we're a small country – is to focus on international education and engage with the international community.

### How our international education strategy was developed

- We recognise that the benefits from internationalisation of education arise in a number of ways: from ensuring New Zealanders have the skills and knowledge to thrive in an inter-connected world, to ensuring that international students living and studying here get the highest quality education and pastoral care, through to supporting our education providers to make the international connections that they, and New Zealand, need to receive the wider economic and social benefits that international education brings.

- New Zealand's international education strategy has been progressively developed over the last decade or so from one that was more or less solely focused on the recruitment of international students, through to one that integrates international education into our wider goals for education such as our national curriculum and tertiary strategies.
- For example, language learning is firmly part of our national curriculum where we see it feature as one of our eight learning areas. More recently we have been working with the Asia:New Zealand Foundation to develop curriculum programmes to strengthen New Zealand student's knowledge and understanding of Asia.
- And international education is integrated into our recently released *Tertiary Education Strategy 2010-2015*. This takes a long-term view of our investment in tertiary education and focuses on really fusing those links between the needs of the student, the needs of the labour market and the needs of the economy.
- We also see international education draw from wider New Zealand Government strategies such as economic development; trade; aid; and immigration objectives, where it plays a wider role with such things as the sale of our education services, supporting international education links and connecting us with the world through bilateral and multilateral education relationships.
- This helps improve the quality of teaching and research in New Zealand institutions, and increase connections and collaboration with New Zealand institutions and institutions overseas.
- Over the years, we have seen the number of formal education links between New Zealand and overseas institutions jump from 156 in 1998 to 547 in 2005 and the number of international links by New Zealand research centres go from 46 to 261 in the same period.
- New Zealand education knowledge, experience and skills are also in much demand throughout the world. The rapid growth of consultancies shows that there is a growing market for the sale of our education intellectual property, with current estimates of the value of this sector at around \$100 million a year.
- Although our international education activities have become more diverse, New Zealand still has a strong emphasis on international student recruitment.
- There is increasing demand world-wide for both English-language training and higher and vocational education services. International enrolments in higher education in English-speaking nations are projected to rise from 1.1 million in 2005 to 2.6 million in 2020.

- New Zealand has been successful in attracting a small but significant slice of this market – about 5%.
- At present, fees from over 93,000 international students provided more than \$600 million to education providers last year, and there are 32,000 jobs associated with the export education industry.
- And our market is now diversifying. Although we still have a high number of students from China, we have increasing numbers from Europe – Germany in particular (1,721 in 2005 to 3,049 in 2009). And other regions such as India (1831 in 2005 to 4600 in 2009) and Saudi Arabia (750 in 2005 and 4429 in 2009).
- Ensuring a sustainable approach to international education is vital, we therefore must ensure a balance with potential tensions and synergies between domestic and export education objectives, maintain the quality of our education system and pastoral care of international students, keep broadening our range of international education activities and watch any potential impact on visa policies.

#### **The funding initiatives that support international education**

- New Zealand has a number of programmes to support international education.
- New Zealand students can undertake limited study abroad as part of their formal programmes of tertiary study and continue to receive funding and student support. Increasingly students are taking up this option, although numbers on the whole remain small.
- Our PhD domestic fees policy is a key investment by the Government and has been particularly successful in raising enrolments of these international students, including those from Germany. Numbers of students studying for PhDs have increased significantly in New Zealand in recent years. This policy has been a hugely important contributing factor in this and is a huge boost for New Zealand's research effort.
- We support scholarship schemes including New Zealand's Doctoral research scholarships and Export Education Innovation Programme.
- And we also invest in support for the education sector to promote international education and in the care of international students with administration of the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students.

## **Our links with Germany and wider Europe**

- Being a small country, our external focus on international education has to be sharp on where and how we engage at both the multilateral and bilateral levels.
- New Zealand's relationship with Germany operates at two levels – in the context of European institutions and multilateral forums such as OECD and UNESCO and through bilateral engagement, in such areas as joint working groups and work on qualifications recognition.
- We have an offshore education counsellor network with a dedicated person based in Brussels, along with other regions including Beijing, Kuala Lumpur, New Delhi, Riyadh, and Santiago/Chile, and have a locally engaged officer in Seoul.
- They support the New Zealand education sector to gain more international links and collaborative programmes, and support the growth of our trade in education services and intellectual property.
- Although New Zealand is firmly part of the Asia-Pacific region, our shared values and common heritage make us a natural partner to Europe, where we are focused on developing and strengthening our relationship.
- It is significant that the 27 countries of the European Union combined make up the second largest market for New Zealand exports and act as an important source of new technologies and innovation for New Zealand's economy.
- Improving our understanding of one of our key trading partners will also be important for the successful continuation of this trade.
- For example, our Education Counsellor in Europe headed the New Zealand delegation to the Bologna Policy Forum held recently in Austria. New Zealand has done a lot of work to understand how we can make the best use of our compatibility with the Bologna structures.
- New Zealand also acceded to the Lisbon Convention on Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications. And work is being undertaken with Ireland on Qualifications Framework benchmarking.

## **Specific opportunities and issues with Germany**

- Germany's Excellence Initiative has been a particularly interesting initiative for us to watch in its concept, implementation and outcomes. New Zealand has sought to achieve similar outcomes through its PBRF and CoRE programmes.

- Bremen University is one of the European partners in the jointly funded NZ-EU mobility project, which focuses on novel sensing technologies and instrumentation for environmental climate change monitoring.
- In 2008 there were 9,902 international fee paying students from Europe studying in New Zealand, representing 11.2% of the total international student population.
- Of the international students from Europe, 3098 (or 31.3%) were from Germany, representing 3.5% of the total international student population.
- 51.4% of these were in secondary education, 40.9% at university level, with the remaining 8% spread between primary, private and polytechs.
- In addition, there were 213 and 229 German PhD students studying under the 'domestic fees for PhDs' programme in 2007 and 2008 respectively.
- A recent alumni survey undertaken by the Ministry of Education shows German graduates' positive experience of New Zealand.

#### **Further information**

- Ministry of Education website: [www.minedu.govt.nz](http://www.minedu.govt.nz)
- Ministry of Education's education and research website: [www.educationcounts.govt.nz](http://www.educationcounts.govt.nz)

