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INTERNATIONAL INTER-ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS
IN HIGHER EDUCATION: *TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY*

ABSTRACT. This article attempts to provide clarity in the maze of international inter-organisational arrangements in higher education. Developments that fuel the establishment of such linkages are identified. First, the changes in the production of knowledge, changes in resource dependencies and increased opportunities for interaction through new technologies, demand interaction with other universities and organisations, in activities that previously took place within the organisational boundaries of the university. In addition, universities increasingly cross national borders. Students, scholars and employers demand and value the experience gained through international experiences. Liberalisation of trade markets and new modes of delivery expand opportunities for transnational education and the need for inter-organisational interaction. On the basis of several classifications of cooperation in higher education and using concepts from organisational and management studies, we develop a multidimensional typology of international inter-organisational cooperation. Critical dimensions identified in this typology are size, scope, nature of integration and intensity.

INTRODUCTION: COLLABORATION ON DIFFERENT LEVELS

Consortia, networks, alliances, joint ventures, associations: just some examples of inter-organisational arrangements that have recently emerged in higher education. In choosing terms like alliances, networks, joint ventures, consortia, associations, partnerships, etc, the creation of a well sounding and appealing acronym sometimes seems to be the decisive argument in naming the arrangements. We shall attempt to go beyond these nominal differences and focus on the essential features. In this paper, we shall provide a sketch of the changing environment of higher education in which such arrangements have emerged and we shall develop a typology of inter-organisational arrangements in higher education. Before we can begin this exploration, we should first further define the subjects under investigation.

We focus on international arrangements between organisations. We therefore exclude international cooperation at the national level and cooperation at the individual level. On the national level, a wide range of international cooperative relations has emerged over the past decades.



National policies for higher education often consist of programmes and funds enabling students and researchers to be internationally mobile. The relations can also be more direct, like agreements on mutual adaptation of educational systems. In Western Europe, these international linkages are often established within the framework of the European Union, although even this supra-national organisation increasingly uses a direct approach towards higher education institutions, thereby bypassing national governments. These bilateral linkages were in general very much based either on 'west-west' cooperation and exchange, or on north-south development aid relations, or twinning programmes. In recent decades however, south-south relations are becoming more frequent, for example in the ASEAN region (Association of South East Asian Nations) or the SADCC region (Southern African Development Co-ordination Conference).

Cooperation also takes place between individuals. Obviously, cooperation will always boil down to cooperation between individuals. It does however also occur that individuals cooperate internationally outside the domain of the organisation they are associated with. First, there are the informal links between academics. These links or academic communities are probably the oldest – and still most important – form of international cooperation and are apparent in all fields and disciplines, with international journals and conferences functioning as a vehicle for communication and information exchange. In many cases, these informal relations have been formalised by the emergence of a wide range of associations, networks etc. Examples of such associations in the field of higher education research are the Consortium for Higher Education Researchers (CHER) and the European Association for Institutional Research (EAIR). Associations have also been established among other groups in higher education, such as administrators or students. Examples of these are the European Association for International Education (EAIE; for international relations officers in higher education institutions) and the Association des Etats Généraux des Etudiants de l'Europe (AEGEE). Although the members of these associations are all affiliated to some organisation, their membership is (partly or exclusively) on an individual basis. This article however, concentrates on formal linkages between organisations in the field of higher education. The objective is to identify the basic drives for higher education institutions to engage in inter-organisational arrangements and to develop a typology of different types of arrangements.

THE EMERGENCE OF INTERNATIONAL INTER-ORGANISATIONAL
ARRANGEMENTS: MACRO-DEVELOPMENTS AND INSTITUTIONAL
RESPONSES

The terms international and inter-organisational indicate the crossing of national as well as organisational boundaries. These boundaries have long been relatively fixed for universities as predominantly national institutions with rather rigid structures. In order to provide explanations for the appearance of international inter-organisational arrangements, we need to look at why national and organisational boundaries are being crossed. Various developments, both inside and outside the field of higher education, have increased the permeability of organisational and national boundaries.

Crossing organisational boundaries

Inter-organisational arrangements can be seen as a means of expanding organisational boundaries. We assert that, in the contemporary context, long established organisational structures and boundaries of the university are subject to change because of macro developments in the academic domain, the policy domain and the technological domain. The changes in the academic sphere, are related to what Gibbons (1998: 4–10) calls the changes in the production of knowledge, leading to a transformation from knowledge produced in disciplinary structures to knowledge produced in the context of application. In the 20th century, research structures have been established that support practices guaranteeing the scientific results of research. These practices set the terms of what shall count as a contribution to knowledge, who is allowed to participate in the contribution to knowledge, what problems should be tackled and how accreditation is organised. “*The disciplinary structure defines both what shall count as ‘good science’ and prescribes, as well, what students need to know if they intend to become scientists*” (ibid.: 4). These specialist disciplinary structures have become institutionalised and still play an essential role in the organisation and management of both teaching and research in most of our universities. Gibbons observes the emergence of a new set of cognitive and social practices, characterised by the following attributes:

1. Knowledge produced in the context of application instead of a context governed by the interests of a specific community;
2. Transdisciplinarity instead of disciplinary;
3. Heterogeneity and organisational diversity as opposed to a relative homogeneity of skills;
4. Enhanced social accountability and reflexivity; *and*

5. More broadly based system of quality control where peer review still exists but now includes a wider, more temporary and heterogeneous set of practitioners, collaborating on a problem defined in a specific and localised context.

These changes in the production of knowledge demand an adaptation of the organisational structures of contemporary universities. Although the primary changes will have to take place within universities, the outer boundaries will not remain unaffected by these changes. The main implication is that specific competencies and capabilities cannot be found within the conventional structures and, therefore, have to be pursued in other disciplines and sectors, which are not represented within the traditional university structures. Research projects become moulded around themes, requiring knowledge and expertise spread throughout different universities and thus requiring inter-organisational coordination and cooperation. The new mode of knowledge production requires new skills, obtained through linkages with those who can provide these skills. Relevance and quality is no longer exclusively determined and judged by peers but require the involvement of representatives from other sectors, calling for linkages with associations, organisations and individuals from outside the university.

The developments in the policy domain that affect organisational boundaries and promote the establishment of inter-organisational linkages are related to the changes in resource dependencies that universities confront through a more diversified funding base and an increase in institutional autonomy. Although the pace and intensity of these developments differ from one country to another, they are apparent on a worldwide scale, in both developed and developing countries. While many universities, especially in continental Europe, have long dealt with national governments as their single source of funding, universities in many countries are now partly dependent on other parties for their financial resources. Besides, in addition, government funding has been increasingly distributed on a competitive basis and related to output indicators. The nature of resource dependencies has been changed by the emergence of non-traditional education providers, depriving universities of their monopoly in the production of scientific knowledge. As a response to the increasing competition for resources, universities have increasingly focused on their external environment to control the newly gained vulnerabilities. Through engaging in inter-organisational arrangements, universities can co-opt potential competitors to make them allies in the struggle for scarce resources or to gain access to and exploit the complementary assets that they bring into the arrangement. In addition, they can combine their

specific strengths and competencies in order to achieve added value through the synergy created by means of cooperation.

A final development that has had a considerable impact upon the organisational boundaries is the ongoing expansion in opportunities for information exchange and communication. To begin with, transportation and communication technologies and technologies for information exchange have fostered cooperation between academics for a long time. The impact of printing technologies, telephones, air transport, etc, have enabled academics and professionals to create platforms for the exchange of research results or best practices in governance and management. The developments over the last decade of the 20th century however, have vigorously expanded these opportunities. Inter-organisational relations – especially if close cooperation is envisaged – are very much dependent on information exchange and personal communication. In addition to facilitating interaction, new technologies have also increased the need for interaction between universities. The increased use of technology, in both the primary and supporting processes of the university, has produced a demand for financial means and specific skills and expertise. Furthermore, the new technologies have enabled a more flexible delivery of courses, opening up new markets for higher level education such as ‘second-chance students’, additional education for professionals not able to attend regular classes and students that are unable to physically attend classes due to distance. These new markets and new demands for resources have pushed universities into relationships with organisations that can provide access to these markets or to the resources that were not available within the universities.

Crossing national boundaries

In addition to organisational boundaries, national boundaries also become more porous for higher education institutions. There are different explanations for the outward expansion of university linkages and activities, each driven by different actors or developments. First, there is the demand for international linkages from the traditional groups within the university. Many contemporary students demand opportunities for international experiences within their regular curriculum because they acknowledge the merit of such an experience for their future careers and their personal development. This added value is also recognised by teachers and those that assess the quality of education. Due to a growing level of global interconnectedness of economies and other sectors and a growing multicultural society, future employers likewise acknowledge the advantage of employees with international and cross-cultural experiences. Similar

observations are also apparent for teaching and research staff. International lectures or the involvement in international research projects is highly appreciated in the academic communities. This demand for international activities forces universities to expand their linkages in order to attract and retain students and academics. In addition to the need for logistic coordination, this trend demands inter-organisational coordination in fields like credit transfer and recognition and in quality assessment. Another development promoting international interaction between universities is the increasing pressure of internationalisation and globalisation processes on the curriculum and the content of research. The globalisation of business and markets, the increasing impact and number of international treaties and regulations, the awareness of the global nature of ecological problems, increased international migration are all events that have to be covered and analysed in business studies, economics, law, environmental studies, sociology, anthropology, etc. and, therefore, demanding more international interaction.

Another – more recent – phenomenon is the increase in opportunities for transnational education. Transnational delivery of education can take on different forms. Transnational education through actual presence in other countries particularly, is a form where inter-organisational arrangements are a necessary condition. Due to governmental regulations, formal arrangements with local universities are frequently mandatory for providing education in another country. However, even where such arrangements are not mandatory or where cross-border distance education is supplied, inter-organisational linkages can be established in order to explore the distinctive features of foreign student markets. In addition, relations with local institutions can provide better access to target groups through the utilisation of the local partners reputation and infrastructure in the country. Current developments in the liberalisation of global markets and the expanding opportunities for on-line delivery might contribute to a substantial increase of these forms of international inter-organisational arrangements.

A final development that endorses the emergence of inter-organisational relations outside the national domain calls for a more utilitarian perspective of universities. Universities have long been used as a vehicle for nation building and national development. The role of the university in national development – economic as well as cultural and political – is acknowledged by several national governments. This role of universities is also recognised on the regional level. Because of the establishment of several regional alliances in the post-war period, often with political as well as economic rationales, universities have been used as a vehicle for creating

regional awareness and development. The encouragement of cooperation between the universities and of the mobility of students in the EU, provide a well-known example of 'region-building'. Such policies however can now also be observed in other regional entities and trade blocs.

As was observed in the case of organisational boundaries, the developments in technology have also played an essential role in the crossing of national boundaries. Through the emergence of the Internet, potential students throughout the world (albeit with great differences in density) have access to information about courses in other countries and about arrangements for financial support, researchers can communicate and exchange information with colleagues on a global level, degree programmes can be offered on-line to students in all parts of the world. This promotes the demand for international exchange, the need for access to foreign markets and other opportunities for creating international arrangements.

TYPOLOGY OF INTERNATIONAL COLLABORATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION: A REVIEW

Now that we have provided a background for the emergence of international organisational arrangements, we will focus on the different shapes these arrangements can adopt. In the past decades only a few studies have been published that attempt to classify various types of cooperation in higher education. In this section, we shall take a brief look at five studies that present a classification or typology of such arrangements. The first classification we shall discuss – Harman (1988) – is not developed explicitly for international cooperation but refers to cooperation within the national domain. The other three typologies – Neave (1992), Wächter (2000) and Van Ginkel (1996)/De Wit (2001) – explicitly refer to international cooperation.

Harman's organisation linkages continuum (based on Peterson 1974 and applied by Goedegebuure 1992) ranges from cooperative to unitary arrangements, with arrangements in between (consortia and federations) indicated as coordination. This classification was developed for relating mergers to different forms of inter-organisational cooperation. Harman's continuum focuses primarily on the structure of cooperation ranging from loose cooperation between institutions to full blown institutional mergers. This also involves a certain level of transfer of authority and autonomy ranging from only moderate transfer (in the case of cooperation) to full transfer of authority to a new organisation (in the case of amalgamation). It is particularly useful since it points to potential arrangements that are

between loose cooperation and amalgamation. As we shall see later, these intermediate forms are also apparent in international inter-organisational arrangements.

A first categorisation of international arrangements comes from Neave (1992) who presents the different forms of cooperation as five stages in network development: (i) monodisciplinary linkages, (ii) exchange partnerships, (iii) network partnerships, (iv) multidisciplinary networks and (v) consortia. This classification is mainly based upon the organisational complexity of inter-organisational cooperation. The importance of this classification is that it relates complexity to both the number of participants and to the number of disciplines involved. The transition from the first to the second stage of network development is mainly determined by the existence of a formal and permanent administrative structure, operating at the level of the institution. Their operating base however, remains rooted in the base units of the university. The next stage, the network partnerships, moves the pattern of international cooperation from the classical bilateral linkages to the multi-institutional partnership. These might be disciplinary, but can also become multi-disciplinary in nature. The final stage, the consortium, is characterised by the existence of a coordinating unit or division, common to all partner institutions with its own financial competencies. Furthermore, the coordination is no longer performed in the units that are located in each establishment, but it constitutes a further administrative layer above that of the institution.

On the basis of a description of 37 European and 14 international arrangements in the field of higher education, Wächter (2000: 170) presents a categorisation of associations in higher education consisting of five groups: associations of higher education institutions, associations of associations from higher education, associations composed of individual members, regional associations and associations with members from outside and inside higher education. This typology takes a broader perspective on the international linkages in higher education by including individual membership associations and even associations of associations. Furthermore, it does not only focus on close cooperation but also on other functions of arrangements such as advocacy and information exchange. It also points to the fact that arrangements can also include members from other sectors outside higher education. The main shortcoming however, which is inherent in the broad perspective taken by the author, is that categories are too broad and show too much overlap. In fact, the first category – associations of higher education institutions – covers all formal arrangements between higher education institutions. Wächter however, does indicate that this group “can be further differentiated into networks

TABLE I

Types of international multilateral organisations in higher education

Van Ginkel (1996)	De Wit (2001)
– Associations	– Academic associations
– Inter-university cooperation projects	– Academic consortia
– university-enterprise training partnerships	
– Institutional networks	– Institutional networks

which are discipline- or theme-unspecific (comprehensive) and those which focus on a particular academic field or theme” (p 171).

The final typology we will review was developed by De Wit (2001) and is based on Van Ginkel’s (1996) typology of inter-institutional cooperation in Europe (Table I). Within the first category – associations – De Wit makes a further distinction between three types of associations. The first are associations as organisations of academics or administrators and/or their academic units. These associations, which have a long history in higher education, are based on individual membership, they are single purpose, academic, discipline based, and they are faculty driven. A second type consists of the arrangements of an individual, administrative nature, such as the International Association for University Presidents. The final type distinguished by De Wit consists of associations that are institutional, multipurpose, management-based and leadership-driven, like the International Association of Universities. Academic consortia are described as a group of academic units who are united for the single purpose of fulfilling a contract. They are characterised by a limited life span, and are faculty or leadership driven. According to De Wit (p. 180) “suchlike consortia will continue to be the most common form of international organisation in higher education, and increasingly as part of academic associations or institutional networks”. The final type – the institutional networks – are groups of academic units who are united for multiple purposes, are leadership-driven and have an infinite life-span. The past decades, many institutional networks have emerged in the European domain (e.g. Network of Universities from the Capitals of Europe [UNICA], the European Consortium for Innovative Universities [ECIU] or the Coimbra Group) or even in sub-European regions (e.g. ALMA in the Meuse-Rhine region), but also other regions have witnessed the emergence of such networks (e.g. Asociación de Universidades Grupe Montevideo in Latin America or the ASEAN University Network in the ASEAN region). Recently, also several

supra-regional networks have emerged which cover multiple regions or are even global in scope (e.g. Universitas 21; Global University Alliance).

Although the initial classification presented by De Wit is rather broad, leading to a wide diversity of international arrangements within the categories, it does provide several helpful insights. First, the distinction between associations and other arrangements is important, with the first more related to development of the associated actors and the other arrangements related to actual co-operation between participants. Other useful additions to other typologies are based on the subdivisions applied to the three categories. De Wit does not only discriminate between institutional and sub-institutional arrangements but divides the latter into cooperation in thematic and disciplinary issues. Furthermore, he makes a distinction between cooperation for a limited and an infinite life span.

Although the analysis portrayed above provides useful new insights, either they lack a systematic derivation of their classifications or they focus on one specific aspect of inter-organisational arrangements. In the following section, we shall proceed from the findings above and complement these findings with perspectives from other fields, to arrive at both a systematic and multidimensional typology of international inter-organisational linkages in higher education.

INTER-ORGANISATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: TOWARDS A TYPOLOGY

In order to arrive at a systematic typology we shall take the following approach. We shall start by looking at some basic features of inter-organisational arrangements. If we take into account the previous typologies some basic features can be distinguished: *size* (Neave 1992) and *reach* or *scope* (Neave 1992; De Wit 2001). Other features that we shall distinguish need a more in-depth analysis of the arrangements: the *nature of integration* (Van Ginkel 1996; Wächter 2000) and the *intensity* of the linkages (Harman 1988).

Basic features of inter-organisational arrangements: size and scope

One of the most mentioned features in distinguishing inter-organisational relations is the amount of organisations represented in the arrangement. (Alter & Hage 1993, 1997; Child & Faulkner 1998; Faulkner 1995; Aldrich & Whetten 1981; Whetten 1981). This element is also mentioned above in Neave's classification. Although many authors agree on the importance of the number of participants, the reasons for the relevance of this dimen-

sion differ. Many distinguish between dyadic linkages on the one hand and multilateral linkages or networks on the other, based on complexity (e.g. Child & Faulkner 1998). The distinction between the number of participants is an obvious one. The demarcation between different sizes however, poses problems. We agree with the distinction between two and multiple participants, since bilateral linkages are (*ceterus paribus*) easier to maintain than linkages that are to be maintained among a large amount of members. Multilateral inter-organisational relations in higher education however can differ widely in their amount of participants, ranging from only a few to several hundreds. There thus needs to be a further distinction apart from the distinction between two vs more than two.

We suggest here that a distinction by the number of participants is not only based on complexity but also on the interests that are represented in the arrangement. Here we can distinguish two broad categories: those where *individual* institutional interests of the participants are represented and those where a *collective* interest is represented. Arrangements that fall within the first category will consist of two or more members that will invest a certain amount of financial or human resources or knowledge into the arrangement, and expect a rate of return on these investments. In this view, organisations establish linkages to strengthen their own position vis-à-vis the external environment. Reasons for entering into cooperative arrangements that can be mentioned here are: risk reduction, economies of scale and/or rationalisation, technology exchanges, co-optation, overcoming trade or investment barriers, facilitating international expansion, vertical integration advantages. In general, organisations try to actively control their external environment to cope with uncertainty; a perspective advocated by resource dependence theorists (e.g. Aldrich 1979; Pfeffer & Salancik 1978; Pfeffer & Nowak 1976). The networks among organisations thus emerge to serve the *individual organisational interests* of the participants. Obviously, no organisations will get involved in such cooperative arrangements if they do not expect to gain from the cooperation. They all expect to reap their benefits, but have to cooperate to do so. The relations in these arrangements are thus reciprocal, where each individual organisation has to do one's bit to make the arrangement work and thereby profit from the cooperation. This also explains why membership to such arrangements is not open, but the selection of appropriate partners forms an important part of the cooperative strategy.

Other arrangements however are established in order to pursue a particular collective interest (see also Galaskiewicz 1985). These arrangements are not so much based on resource exchanges but on advocacy. According to Olson (1965), organisations engage in collective action and contribute

time and resources to the collective effort without being overly concerned about the return they should expect in the short term. This is explained by the existence of shared values and a sense of 'we-ness' among the members of the coalition. Inter-organisational linkages that emerge in this arena can be referred to as coalitions or associations, which are established for the representation of *collective interests*. They are usually characterised by a large amount of member institutions and an open membership (for a particular type of institution). The participating institutions can gain from the activities within such associations without transferring a significant share of power to the collective. We thus arrive at three broad types of inter-organisational arrangements: *associations* with numerous members, bilateral *partnerships* with two members and multilateral *networks* with a limited amount of members. These three basic types can be further subdivided based on their scope.

With respect to our second feature – scope – we can refer to both the *scope in time* and *scope in activities*. De Wit already pointed to the distinction between arrangements with a limited or an infinite timespan. The first types are in general project-based cooperative arrangements aimed at a particular task, while the second type are of a more strategic nature, anticipating on future developments. We must add here that this distinction does not apply to associations since they are generally established for an indefinite timespan. Since they are formed around a particular issue (discipline, theme, etc) they will continue to represent these interests for as long as they exist or as long as they maintain the member support for this task (which are both indefinite). The temporal scope of partnerships and networks concerns the question whether the relation is established for *short-term operations* or for *long term adaptation*. In the first category, Lorange & Roos (1992) include *ad hoc* pools and project based joint ventures. In these forms, the various parties invest resources on a temporary basis to accomplish an operational goal, after which the relation will be revoked. These joint operational ventures are finite and will be dissolved when the mission is accomplished. Arrangements with an indefinite timespan can be seen as organisational forms, which will lead a strategic life of their own and are therefore, not established to be dissolved in a later stage. Consequently, the objectives of such arrangements are more abstract and do not envisage a direct tangible result. The objectives of such strategic inter-organisational arrangements should be broad and flexible enough to enable adaptation to future challenges.

Scope can also refer to the *scope of activities* that are being undertaken within the arrangements or the domain in which the arrangement operates. Here we can make a distinction between arrangements that focus

on a particular task performed within higher education institutions and those that are more comprehensive in scope. The former type of arrangements evolve around particular issues which can be either disciplinary or thematic in nature (De Wit 2001). They are not institution-wide but emerge in a particular part of the organisation. Disciplinary arrangements among higher education institutions or with other organisations emerge within particular locations of the institutions, usually faculties, schools or departments and can involve cooperation in research, in student exchange, in professional development, etc. Thematic arrangements evolve around issues that exceed disciplinary boundaries, such as quality assurance, use of new technologies, library cooperation et cetera. Such *partial arrangements* thus are limited to particular themes or disciplines and to a particular part of the organisation. Many arrangements however consist of cooperation on multiple themes and disciplines and have an institution-wide impact. Next to multiple discipline and thematic areas of cooperation, such *institutional arrangements* frequently involve institutional cooperation on a central level. What must be added here is that these institutional arrangements are very unlikely to be formed around operational goals. As we saw before, operational partnerships or networks will be abolished as soon as the goal has been achieved. When they are not formed around one but around several goals, the network or partnership gains a more strategic character. Operational and institutional thus should exclude each other in our typology. The observations above provide us with a first subdivision between inter-organisational arrangements based on size and scope as illustrated in Table II. This will form the basis for our final typology.

Composition and the integration of activities

Van Ginkel and Wächter mentioned the possibility of cross-sectoral cooperation in higher education (e.g. university-industry linkages). As we observed before, organisational and sectoral boundaries are frequently crossed in the current higher education environment. The increasingly porous traditional boundaries between organisations, and between sectors, make a rigid distinction between university and industry or business and between public and private less functional (see Middlehurst 2001). We therefore prefer to discuss the nature of integration instead of composition. A generally accepted distinction in the nature of integration is based on the difference between horizontal and vertical integration (e.g. Goedegebuure 1992; Alter & Hage 1993, 1997). Horizontal integration occurs between organisations that produce the same products or services, while vertical integration occurs between organisations that are originally situated in different sectors. Since we take the higher education sector as our

TABLE II
Inter-organisational arrangements classified according to size and scope

Arrangements	Size	Temporal scope	Scope of activities
Thematic/Disciplinary Associations	Numerous	Indefinite	Them./Disciplinary
Institutional Associations	Numerous	Indefinite	Institutional
Project partnerships	Two: bilateral	Short term	Them./Disciplinary
Thematic/Disciplinary Partnerships	Two: bilateral	Indefinite	Them./Disciplinary
Institutional Partnerships	Two: bilateral	Indefinite	Institutional
Project Networks	Limited: multilateral	Short term	Them./Disciplinary
Thematic/Disciplinary Networks	Limited: multilateral	Indefinite	Them./Disciplinary
Institutional Networks	Limited: multilateral	Indefinite	Institutional

point of departure, we shall refer to 'higher education arrangements' and 'cross-sectoral arrangements'.

The organisation of associations, partnerships and networks: the intensity of collaboration

The various associations, partnerships and networks can all be organised in different ways, representing a different level of intensity of cooperation. We shall take Harman's classification of cooperation-coordination-amalgamation as a starting point. In the case of *associations*, organisational structures of the arrangements are rather uniform and independent from the question whether they are cross-sectoral or uni-sectoral and partial or institutional. We have already noted that associations serve as a means of advocacy and are representatives of particular collective interests. The associations are based on open membership for a particular type of institutions, disciplines or themes. They operate rather autonomously and membership participation is based on membership fees for which the members expect the associations to represent them vis-à-vis other actors and to organise various activities (e.g. conferences, journals, workshops). In addition to periodical membership meetings (in which activities are discussed and board members are elected), the main power of the member

institutions is the possibility to withdraw themselves from membership. In these arrangements, interaction is very limited and one can hardly speak of cooperative arrangements. These arrangements are generally organised loosely and are only moderately integrated into institutional policies since they do not have high institutional priority. This does not mean that they do not perform significant roles. Their significance can be very high for a certain discipline, for a certain theme or for the general role of 'the university' in a region. The significance of an association for one particular institution on the other hand, is only moderate. In terms of Harman's continuum, we can say that associations co-ordinate on the basis of a particular collective interest. There is only a low level of delegation of authority and the loss of autonomy is minimal. A further sub-division for the intensity of cooperation is therefore insignificant for the case of associations.

Bilateral partnerships and *multilateral networks* however come in several organisational forms. Harman's continuum of linkages presents a linear transition from loose corporation to amalgamations. The transfer of authority is the central issue in this model. It is valuable that Harman makes a distinction between cooperation (voluntary cooperative agreements) and coordination (formalised consortia and federations). This distinction is also made by Mulford & Rogers (1982). They define coordination as: "*the process whereby two organisations create and/or use existing decision rules that have been established to deal collectively with their shared task environment*". Coordination is then seen as a more formalised way of cooperation. This formalisation can be expressed through decision rules, intermediary agencies, project bureaux etc. The important feature is that a particular new arrangement is established to coordinate the inter-organisational activities.

It is obvious that coordination is likely to have more far-reaching consequences than cooperation. If we take into account Harman's classification, an ultimate next step would be amalgamation. In this case, ownership or autonomy is totally transferred from the original organisations to the new organisation. One could characterise amalgamation as having formal rules, unitary goals, all resources involved and a full transfer of authority and thus loss of autonomy. The cooperation-coordination-amalgamation continuum can be applied to higher education as well as cross-sectoral relations and to bilateral as well as multilateral arrangements.

In both Tables II and III, we use the terms *partnerships* and *networks* in order to distinguish between bilateral and multilateral arrangements. The use of terms like *partnerships*, *networks*, *joint ventures*, *alliances*

TABLE III

A typology of international inter-organisational arrangements in higher education

		<i>Cross-sectoral</i>	<i>Higher Education</i>
Thematic/Disc. Associations	<i>Coordination</i>	cross-sectoral associations	higher education associations
Institutional Associations	<i>Coordination</i>	cross-sectoral associations	higher education associations
Project Partnerships	<i>Cooperation</i>	onetime contracts	cooperative project
	<i>Coordination</i>	joint project agency	joint project agency
	<i>Amalgamation</i>	joint project venture	joint project venture
Thematic/Disc. Partnerships	<i>Cooperation</i>	long term contracts	loose cooperation
	<i>Coordination</i>	vertical partnerships	horizontal partnerships
	<i>Amalgamation</i>	autonomous joint ventures	autonomous joint ventures
Institutional Partnerships	<i>Cooperation</i>	long term contracts	loose cooperation
	<i>Coordination</i>	vertical partnerships	horizontal partnerships
	<i>Amalgamation</i>	vertical merger	horizontal merger
Project Networks	<i>Cooperation</i>	onetime contracts	cooperative project
	<i>Coordination</i>	joint project agency	joint project agency
	<i>Amalgamation</i>	joint project venture	joint project venture
Thematic/Disc. Networks	<i>Cooperation</i>	long term contracts	loose cooperation
	<i>Coordination</i>	vertical alliance	horizontal alliance
	<i>Amalgamation</i>	autonomous joint ventures	autonomous joint ventures
Institutional Networks	<i>Cooperation</i>	long term contracts	loose cooperation
	<i>Coordination</i>	vertical alliance	horizontal alliance
	<i>Amalgamation</i>	vertical merger	horizontal merger

and linkages are often used interchangeably or are distinguished on the basis of different characteristics. We shall use the terms partnership and networks as respectively bilateral and multilateral cooperative arrangements, irrespective of their nature or level of integration. Joint ventures, in our typology, imply a shift in ownership from the parent organisations to the new organisation. Mergers can in this terminology be seen as a particular joint venture where all parts of the parent organisations are integrated and where the parent organisations cease to exist. Alliances will be referred to as a mode of inter-organisational coordination and these can be both horizontal and vertical. Loose vertical cooperation between two or a limited amount of organisation is usually in the shape of contracts,

sometime these are single contracts, in other cases they are not fixed or renegotiated on a regular basis.

SUMMARY AND FURTHER RESEARCH

In this paper, we have attempted to give an insight in the maze of international inter-organisational arrangements in higher education. Developments fuelling the establishment of such linkages have been identified. First, the changes in the production of knowledge, changes in resource dependencies and increased opportunities for interaction through new technologies, demand interaction with other universities and organisations, in activities that previously took place within the organisational boundaries of the university. In addition, universities cross national borders on an increasing scale. Students, scholars and employers demand and value the experience gained through international experiences. Liberalisation of trade markets and new modes of delivery expand opportunities for transnational education and the need for interaction and cooperation. Based on several classifications of cooperation in higher education and using insights from organisational and management studies, we have developed a typology of international inter-organisational cooperation. Ultimately we have presented one multidimensional typology. The critical dimensions in these perspectives were *size*, *scope*, *nature of integration* and *intensity*. Our typology does not say anything about effectiveness of the cooperation. It is a tool for distinguishing different forms of cooperation and thus can provide us with categories that contain units of comparison.

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