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**КАК НОВЫЙ ПРИМЕР ИНТЕРАНЦИОНАЛИЗАЦИИ**

**BRICS NETWORK UNIVERSITY**

**AS A NEW EXAMPLE OF INTERNATIONALIZATION**

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Аннотация

Данная диссертация посвящена анализу проекта Сетевого Университета БРИКС (СУ БРИКС), который начинает свою работу в 2017-2018 гг. Цель этого исследования – доказать, что СУ БРИКС – это новый пример международного университета, который имеет больше плюсов, чем его предшественники, и отвечает на большее количество потребностей современного общества с точки зрения процесса интернационализации международного образования. Центральной проблемой данной работы является потребность современного общества в новом виде международного университета, который бы собрал в себе положительный опыт уже имеющихся международных университетов. Большое внимание уделяется вопросам глобализации и интернационализации международного обучения, анализу систем функционирования СУ БРИКС и роли России в деятельности СУ БРИКС и в международном обучении в целом. Был проведен анализ развития ряда международных университетов, таких как Университет ООН, Университет Арктики, глобальной программы ERASMUS+, которую можно расценивать как особую форму международного университета. Отдельно рассматривалось становление СУ БРИКС и его запуск в 2017-2018 гг. Были также выявлены признаки концепта международного университета. Наконец, были определены положительные стороны нового примера интернационализации международного обучения – СУ БРИКС и описаны предположительные недостатки и препятствия на пути его развития и работы.

Ключевые слова: интернационализация, глобализация, СУ БРИКС, международный университет, международное обучение.

Abstract

This thesis is devoted to the analysis of the project of the BRICS Network University (BRICS NU), which begins its work in 2017-2018. The purpose of this study is to prove that BRICS NU is a new example of internationalization in international education, which has more advantages than its predecessors have, and responds to more needs of modern society. The central problem of this work is the need of modern society in a new kind of international university that would assemble the positive experience of already existing international universities and be up-to-date. Much attention is paid to the issues of globalization and the internationalization of international education, the analysis of the functioning systems of the BRICS NU and the role of Russia in the activities of the BRICS NU and in international education in general. We made an analysis of the development of a number of international universities, such as the UN University, the Arctic University, the global programme ERASMUS +, which can be regarded as a special form of an international university. The establishment of the BRICS NU and its launch in 2017-2018 were analysed separately. The features of the concept of an international university were also revealed. Finally, we determine the positive aspects of the new example of the internationalization of international education and we described alleged shortcomings and obstacles to its development and work.

Keywords: internationalization, globalization, BRICS NU, international university, international education.

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# INTRODUCTION

The world is changing very fast because of uninterrupted desire of humankind to develop. In 1950s, it led to the creation of electronic computers with wide area networking which appeared in laboratories in the USA, the UK and France.[[1]](#footnote-1) Later the idea of open-architecture networking was first introduced in 1972.[[2]](#footnote-2) Nowadays we can say that the Internet, which appeared in 1960s in the USA[[3]](#footnote-3), has revolutionized the computer and communication world like nothing before. The invention of the telegraph, telephone, radio, and computer set the stage for this unprecedented integration of capabilities.[[4]](#footnote-4) It influenced heavily every sphere of social life and became wide – used in different economic and industrial fields. For example, with the advent of the Internet we can use up-date information and communication technology (ICT) in education. For this reason, distance education becomes more and more popular every year, especially, on the level of universities. The latest investigations of Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Harvard University were published in the beginning of 2017. That year there were about 1,7 million students who attended online courses on Harvard or MIT basis.[[5]](#footnote-5)

“Over the next twenty years the demand for higher education is expected to grow exponentially, from the current 99 million[[6]](#footnote-6) students worldwide to 414 million by 2030, with China showing by far the highest increase in recent years followed by Brazil and India. The thirst for knowledge and social mobility in emerging economies will place higher education within the reach of hundreds of millions of citizens around the world.”[[7]](#footnote-7) It shows the importance and popularity of online education, so there are a lot of modern universities which try to keep up-to-date and to give education in more efficient way. Moreover, new network universities have just appeared to provide such a way of spreading of educational material. The idea of online education is the result of internationalization, which also is considered an uninterrupted and integral process of globalization. Even now, we can see that globalization and technological development are completely changing the landscape of higher education.[[8]](#footnote-8)

In our work, we will describe the concept of network universities giving examples such as the UN University, University of the Arctic, BRICS Network University (BRISC NU). In addition, we will describe principles of internationalization in education; its interaction with globalization; possible obstacles for network university development; the role of Russia in BRICS Network University.

Dr. Hans de Wit who is the Director of the Centre for International Higher Education (CIHE) at the Lynch School of Education, Boston College, USA**,** said in his interview to the Pie News: “Communication is much faster but I think the most important is collaborative online international learning”.[[9]](#footnote-9) The topic is very relevant and hot – discussed because of two main reasons. Firstly, the latest generation is called digital one due to their way of perception of information from methodological point of view. The Internet and high technology gadgets make new generations more flexible and we are accustomed to quickly changeable information, therefore it influences to our memory in a bad way. Moreover, new generation students require more interactive methods of teaching them, and network education succeeds in it. Secondly, as we have already mentioned, in the world where information becomes irrelevant with velocity of light, it is necessary to change a lot of aspects of our life, and one of them is the way of giving education.

The subject of the thesis is internationalization of higher education. The object of the study is potential functioning of the BRICS Network University in framework of internationalization of higher education.

The **aim** of the thesis is to define the main benefits and disadvantages of international university on the basis of analysis of BRICS NU activity. It is important because many organizations currently are waiting for the first results of the work process.

To achieve this aim we should follow the certain logical chain and to solve following tasks:

* to describe the concept of globalization in general and in higher education;
* to describe principles of internationalization in general and its principles in higher education;
* to analyse the literature and documents on globalization, internationalization and localization in higher education, the concept of international universities, BRICS;
* to investigate development of BRICS NU, to understand the principles of its future work and to guess future possible development;

To broaden knowledge about these themes, we used various methods such as comparative analysis of different network universities, comparative analysis of BRICS member potential in higher education. In addition, we made literature analysis and analysis of BRICS documents, especially those to establish BRICS NU.

Literature covers the topics of globalization, internationalization and sometimes localization[[10]](#footnote-10), we met enough books and articles and did not feel the lack of information during the research. The first group of books can be dated by 1980-2000; next one is mainly of 2002, 2004, and 2008.[[11]](#footnote-11) The most part of books is devoted to globalization and internationalization processes in the USA and as a result all over the world. It is evident because everybody considers that it was America, which accelerates globalization heavily. Another reason is that American scientists pay more attention to the process of globalization than researchers of other countries do.[[12]](#footnote-12)

In addition, we found quite enough books and articles of recent years, such as “Internationalization and Globalization in Higher Education” by Douglas E. Mitchell and Selin Yildiz Nielsen, 2012; the article “Internationalization of Higher Education: Potential Benefits and Costs” by T. Jibeen, M.A. Khan, 2015; the study of the European Parliament “Internationalization of Higher Education” by Hans de Wit, as well as his other articles, also of R. Sakomoto, D. Chapman, 2011, S. Vivien, 2012.[[13]](#footnote-13)

These works seem more profound than others do; they are up-date and take into account recent events and current situation in the world. We would like to emphasize the works of Hans de Wit who is a Dutch international specialist of higher education and he is distinguished for his leading scholarly work in Internationalization of Higher Education. As we mentioned earlier, currently he is working at the Lynch School of Education of the Boston College, USA. [[14]](#footnote-14) He came to the Lynch School from the Universita Cattolica Sacro Coure in Milan, Italy, where he has served as the Founding Director of the Centre for Higher Education Internationalisation (CHIE). We use several works of him in our research work. Also articles of Jane Knight, Visiting Scholar at Sophia University, Tokyo, Japan (2015).[[15]](#footnote-15)

While working on the thesis we used update materials of the specialized websites of the BRICS, namely of the BRICS NU, the Arctic University, the United Nations University, University of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, Erasmus Programme, the Ural Federal University and the High School of Economics, Top Universities rankings and the others.[[16]](#footnote-16)

In the work, we found quite useful information from different periodicals (Western and Russian) such as The Guardian, BBC and RIA News.[[17]](#footnote-17)

This thesis consists of introduction, three parts, conclusion and references. The first part has two chapters about main principles of internationalization as a part of globalization (chapter 1.1) and about the concept of international university and its examples (chapter 1.2). The second part is about the system of BRICS NU (chapter 2.1) and its influence on globalization (chapter 2.2). The third part is about the role of Russia in BRICS NU (chapter 3.1) and the possible future development and its implementation as a new model of the educational process (chapter 3.1). Every chapter is devoted to solving different aims of the work and has results.

# PART 1. THEORETICAL ASPECTS OF GLOBALIZATION, INTERNATIONALIZATION AND INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

# CHAPTER 1.1 MAIN PRINCIPLES OF INTERNATIONALIZATION AS A PART OF GLOBALIZATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

To start speaking about the phenomenon of international university in general and the BRICS NU as its particular example, we have to clarify understanding of globalization and internationalization in education. These two processes provoked the creation of online education and international universities. It is impossible to study internationalization without globalization; therefore, we should describe both concepts. Globalization devours our world in all spheres of the life. Educational aspect of social life is not an exception. First, we should start with global and international education in global community. The line of next two chapters will follow this scheme: globalization → internationalization (and localization to describe the difference) → higher education in globalization and internationalization → the concept of international universities (network universities). Firstly, we will briefly describe common aspects of globalization, then globalization in higher education. After that, we will speak about internationalization in common and compare it with localization briefly. Finally, the main aspect of the chapter is internationalization of higher education as the result of globalization.

In reality, globalization is a process that is accompanying evolution of human civilization since its dawn. Nowadays, the effects of globalization are being discussing everywhere. It influences on different levels on market participants, officials and academics and they see clearly that integration of national economics and the development of global market is going further with huge steps. We can connect the term of globalization with unification, internationalization, generalization, and regionalization[[18]](#footnote-18). We can see the rapid pace of global development, which is lain in scientific inventions and discoveries, profound technological changes, the rise of India and China (due to BRICS support) and the Rise of Asia in general. All these aspects produced a completely new way of life during last 20 years of global development[[19]](#footnote-19). Information is travelling around the Internet with the light speed; the crisis in the USA affects the ability of farmers in Africa to borrow money for seed.

According to the electronic dictionary “Investopdia Academy” “Globalization represents the global integration of international trade, investment, information technology and cultures. Government policies designed to open economies domestically and internationally to boost development in poorer countries and raise standards of living for their people are what drive globalization.”[[20]](#footnote-20) Globalization has such features as liberalization, free trade, globalization of economic activities, connectivity and “borderless globe”. The processes that run in framework of globalization can be named as complex, multi-dimensional and top-down. Liberalization means the freedom to organize industry, trade either inside one country or abroad, free exchange of capital, goods, service and technologies between countries. Globalization of economics activities is control of state economy and international one through the control of their economic activities. Connectivity provides communication between states without obstacles, sharing of technologies, knowledge and culture. The term “borderless globe” was introduced by Kenichi Ohmae in his book “Borderless world”[[21]](#footnote-21). This term means providing communication and cooperation between states via breaking of national barriers. The composite and multi-dimensional process is based on international exchange in every sphere of life such as political, technological, cultural, and economic, etc. Speaking about the top-down process, we can mark out that the process of globalization goes from developed countries to developing ones. It, mainly, appears in technologies, products and services. It leads to the creation of monoculture, when the culture of developed countries come to the developing states to improve their well-being. Usually it runs from the North to South of the world due to location of both developed (the North) and developing (the South) states. Surely, it provokes either positive or negative results. We can see negative results because globalization becomes more and more aggressive with years and attacks local and ethnic traditions of a community to lead it to the backlash. In this case, local identity, regional identity and ethnic identity take root and get strengthened to protect national government and culture. Thus, globalization goes hand in hand with internationalization, localization and some other concepts as regionalization and multiculturalism.[[22]](#footnote-22)

In case of globalization in higher education, we should start with the point that the world in which today's teenagers go to a university differs completely from the world in which we were taught and brought up. As never before, education must prepare students for a world where the opportunities for success require the ability to adjust to the current environment, to compete and cooperate on a global scale. [[23]](#footnote-23)

Technical complication of inventions that are used in economic, political and scientific fields requires better educated and higher skilled staff. Despite of the fact that at first, such countries as China, India and Post-Soviet states aimed at creating low-skill personnel, later they offered more than 3 million people for global economy market since 1990,[[24]](#footnote-24) so that they could become competitive among developed countries. It is an evident purpose of every state because no one country wants to be an outsider and to do all the unskilled labour for the rest of the world. Moreover, the world economy is not a zero-sum game according which only one its member (country) can become wealthy and prosperous.[[25]](#footnote-25) Therefore, developing states are constantly aiming to dynamic knowledge-based economies. Here we see that in framework of state economy every world country is pursuing the goal to raise its citizens out of poverty and withstand or control growing pressure of globalization broadening economic opportunities for future generations through education expansion.

In every country, the ministry of education must care about the highest quality of educational process and equality of those who get this education. In modern world of rapid globalization, our students can become competitive only in case of being well informed of current reliable political, economic and scientific information. Therefore, the education has to be up-to-date and on the same, equal high level in different countries. At this moment, we face the demand of international system of education that provides the possibility to follow today’s fast pace of globalization and to be appropriate to newly-minted standards and to use high level of educational programmes all over the world. This is an assessment for the whole world educational system and it is considered to be international. Surely, the assessment of such a level is difficult to complete because it faces a big amount of obstacles, e.g. the size of the world, cultural and language diversity, time zones, living standards etc. It provokes almost the same challenges in all countries. For example, widespread internal and international migration created new heterogeneous societies everywhere; teachers have to deal with these new demands as they respond to students and families from differing cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

In addition to challenging schools and universities to adapt to new populations, globalization also raises fundamental questions about whether the knowledge and skills needed by today's graduates are significantly different from those that universities will have to provide in 20 years. To explain this idea we would like to say that we could see the first results of the assessment only in 10-15 years or even in 20 years. It is not convenient, because we will have had a new generation with new features by 2040. It means that the programme developed in nearest future will be old and irrelevant. We should realize the point that there is no one perfect educational system in the world, and we should modernize existing systems as soon as possible and always keep it up-to-date. Internationalization is the next step on the way to solve the problems of relevance in higher education.

Internationalization, as we have already mentioned earlier, is the next step of globalization. We suppose that internationalization is narrower than globalization, because the idea of international university is described in framework of internationalization, which is inseparable with the concept of globalization. Moreover, internationalization has a perspective to find a possible response to worldwide-felt globalization pressures in higher education.[[26]](#footnote-26)

To describe internationalization more fully and to give deep understanding of the difference in several terms we will compare it with localization and globalization. Unfortunately, these terms are used instead of each other very often. Globalization is the common concept that is wider than other two terms. Moreover, it is a strategy and covers both internationalization and localization,[[27]](#footnote-27) while internationalization is the step before localization. Actually, it is possible to continue the list of adjacent terms that follow globalization, but as one of our tasks is understanding of internationalization and it is also a part of the title of the paper, we put a focus on mainly on it.

To clarify localization and to show the difference with internationalization we give the definition by Schäler that says “[Localisation is] the linguistic and cultural adaptation of digital content to the requirements and locale of a foreign market, and the provision of services and technologies for the management of multilingualism across the digital global information flow.”[[28]](#footnote-28) In its turn, internationalization, as it is said in the electronic dictionary “Investopdia Academy” refers to “the designing of a product in such a way that it will meet the needs of users in many countries or can be easily adapted to do so.”[[29]](#footnote-29) In other words, it is the way to change product so that it can be adapted to this or that nation easily. It means that localization goes after internationalization immediately and they create one uninterrupted process. Here we see that it is very difficult to understand where internationalization ends and localization starts, but we will try to do it.

One more definition says that internationalization is the “process of enabling a product at a technical level for localization”.[[30]](#footnote-30) There are a lot of different formulations of these three definitions, therefore we put the results of their analysis and their main characteristics into Table 1 “Comparative analysis of globalization, internationalization and localization”. We developed this Table answering the main three questions: “What is it?”, “Where is it?” and “Who participates?”. Therefore, we took into account the definition (explanation) of the phenomena, area of implementation or in other words the level of spreading (local, global, both) and groups of society that are involved in these processes. In the Table 1, you can see the comparison of these three stages of global development: globalization, internationalization and localization on the example of higher education process.

Table 1. “Comparative analysis of globalization, internationalization and localization”

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Globalization** | **Internationalization** | **Localization** |
| **Definition** | It is the trend of increasing interaction between people on a worldwide scale. There is political, economic and cultural globalization.  Globalization is with emphasis on worldwide conditions that influence perceptions of space, mobility of actions, the nature of communication and orientations to social interaction. | It focuses attention on the intentional actions of individual, groups and social institutions as they actively seek to cross national borders in pursuit of social, economic, political or cultural benefits. | It refers to the transfer, adaptation, and development of related values, knowledge, technology, and behavioural norms from/to the local contexts. |
| **Stage** | Large-scale globalization began in the 1820s. In the late 19th century and early 20th century, the connectivity of the world’s economies and cultures grew very quickly | Internationalization is a matter of integrating transnational elements into the, “purpose, functions or delivery of post-secondary education”. That is, colleges and universities are internationalizing their behaviour when they reshape their purposes to attract international students, to deploy their programmes across national borders, concentrate on internationally advantageous educational programme niches, restructure work roles or compensation systems to recruit, retain or manage employees, etc. | Local networking; adaptation of external technological, economic, social, political, cultural, and learning initiatives to local communities; decentralization to the community or site level; development of indigenous culture; meeting community needs and expectations; local involvement, inter-institutional collaboration, and community support; local relevance and legitimacy; and concern for community-based needs and characteristics and social norms and ethos. |
| **People who are involved into the process** | Scientists, traders, investors, migrants | Entrepreneurs,  translators, proof-readers, software engineers, project managers, testers, publishers, | Local communities involved in educational process, private administrations in educational bodies, etc. |

Speaking about internationalization in higher education, we point out that theoretically it is “integration in intercultural, global, or international dimension into the purpose, delivery or functions of the postsecondary education.”[[31]](#footnote-31) In this part of our paper, we mainly use works by Hans de Wit, who we have mentioned earlier. His contribution to this topic is invaluable.

According to Hans de Wit’s opinion, the first visible steps on the way of internationalization of higher education in Europe was the creation of the ERASMUS programme (European Community Action Scheme for the Mobility of University Students)[[32]](#footnote-32) and the European Association for International Education (EAIE).[[33]](#footnote-33) ERASMUS was founded as an EU students exchange programme in 1987[[34]](#footnote-34) and EAIE was established in 1989 in Amsterdam.[[35]](#footnote-35) We can name that years as the date when the higher education began to become international and it was a crucial point for educational process. Before that, nobody thought about international ranking of universities and Bologna did not have any specific meaning for international education.

In addition, European society did not have any shade of policy for internationalization in general; we even do not speak about policy for the internationalization process in higher education in particular. Bologna Declaration, signed on 19th June 1999, initiated the Bologna process that is controlled every 3 years with ministerial conference.[[36]](#footnote-36) The Bologna Process was created almost ten years later after ERASMUS and EAIE foundation, but it also was the second big step on the way to develop higher education through borders. This process involves collective work of “public authorities, universities, teachers, and students, together with stakeholder associations, employers, quality assurance agencies, international organisations, and institutions, including the European Commission.”

It was a very important step on the way of internationalization of higher education because its main purpose is to unify the grading system of universities from different countries so that to make it possible to recognize students’ qualification equally in different countries. It was a big problem for the EU when citizens of its states could not move from one country to another because of the absence of common standards to evaluate their qualifications. Nowadays it is possible for Russian students to go abroad to study in European countries due to the Bologna process. The second purpose, but not less important is to divide higher education process into three levels: bachelor, master and doctorate programmes.[[37]](#footnote-37)

Modernization of higher education system via internationalization is necessity to keep the level of students’ knowledge appropriate to the demand of future employers and possible job conditions, and the Bologna process supports this modernization. In framework of the Bologna process, they launched European Higher Education Area (EHEA) in 2010, and it became a primary aim for the next 10 years till 2020. The EHEA members are currently 48 countries including the Russian Federation and it means that the Bologna process is implemented in 48 states.[[38]](#footnote-38) It has an unprecedented success in internationalization of higher education that means cross-border cooperation between universities and its almost 20 year experience has drawn attention of states from different parts of the world. Its future possible development will be discussed in the conference in France in 2018.[[39]](#footnote-39) According to Erasmus+[[40]](#footnote-40) Annual Report published on 30th November, 2017, the budget of the programme for year 2016 was € 2.2 billion to support 21 000 projects with 79 000 organizations involved and no less than 725 000 young people from Europe went to other countries with the ERASMUS+ programme that year.[[41]](#footnote-41)

For the period 2007-2013 according to the Report Erasmus – Facts, Figures & Trends it had a budget of EUR 3.1 billion. The budget for Erasmus activities in the 2009 – 2010 academic year totaled EUR 459 million.[[42]](#footnote-42)

Erasmus is part of the EU’s Lifelong Learning Programme. During the academic year 2009 – 2010, 32 countries took part in the Programme – it means 27 European Union Member Countries, Turkey, Norway, Iceland, Croatia and Liechtenstein. The Programme was joined by Switzerland in 2011 and the number of participating countries rose to 33. In total, the Erasmus Programme supported 213 266 student exchanges during the 2009 – 2010 academic year, which represents a year-on-year increase of 7.4 %.[[43]](#footnote-43)

Spain sent the most students abroad with 31 158 students leaving for another country. It overtakes France which was the top sending country in years before. France supported the second highest number of students going abroad, followed by Italy, Poland and Germany.[[44]](#footnote-44)

In terms of the overall student population, the countries with the greatest share of Erasmus students in 2009-2010 include Liechtenstein – 3.32 %, Malta – 1.83 %, Spain – 1.73 %, Austria – 1.66 %, and Finland – 1.53 %. In addition, it is necessary to mention that in 2009- 2010, 257 students with special needs received additional funding.[[45]](#footnote-45)

Comparing with previous years, in 1987 – 1988 just over 3 000 students went abroad to study with an Erasmus grant. Out of the 213 266 Erasmus students, 177 705 student exchanges were supported in 2009 – 2010. This means that on average a student left to study abroad as part of Erasmus every three minutes.[[46]](#footnote-46)

Within the EAIE, they founded the programme “Internationalisation at Home”[[47]](#footnote-47) in 1999[[48]](#footnote-48) to ensure mobility of students.

Another European tool to stimulate internationalization of higher education is the European higher education in the world strategy of 2013, Brussels that we have already mentioned in the introduction. It was published by The European Commission.[[49]](#footnote-49)

Now we can see that Europe was the foremother of international education, and the main processes of high educational institutions (HEIs) are carrying on the territory of European countries. Nowadays the process of globalization allows students from other continents to participate in international education, but it is still difficult for Africa or South America to go to study in Europe. However, we noticed the activity between South and Central American countries and Spain due to obvious reason of common language. The Spanish language is now the official one of more than 20 countries. That is one of the most important feature for cooperation. It is proved by University World News that reported Spain as the dominating one in the list of institutions that play the role in mobility. There are “31 institutions in the top 100 for both sending and receiving students” in Spain. [[50]](#footnote-50) In case of Africa, the activity of its students towards to the European universities is lower than between Spain and Latin America because African countries are less stable in economic aspects.

Taking into the account all aforementioned facts, it becomes clear that globalization has already changed the rules in the sphere of HEIs. In this way, we will speak in this research about internationalization as one of the leading trends of development of educational process. A number of forces have altered the fabric of higher education. The first one is nationalism, which was likely to surrender in front of citizenship of the world. The second – economic gains start to prevail over the political ones. The third – name recognition in the world, expansion become more important and even determine the organizational legitimacy. The forth – identified groups determine culture more than geographical locales do; control of knowledge dissemination and entrepreneurialism prevail over allegiance to any organization. Adaptation has become something the most necessary to survive. For sure, HEIs that participate, fit and welcome global changes are going to survive the best.

# CHAPTER 1.2. WORLD EXPERIENCE OF INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITIES: THE CONCEPT OF INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY

During the last 25 years, the international aspect of the higher education system has become more central on the agenda of national governments and international organisations, HEIs and their different bodies, accreditation agencies and organisations of international students.

Following the data from the Times Higher Education World University Rankings, we can consider the list of the world top 200 the most internationally recognised universities.[[51]](#footnote-51) We are going to analyse activity of The University of the Arctic (UArctic), The United Nations University (UNN) and the EU Programme Erasmus+.

The UArctic is a network of research universities, colleges, institutes, and other structures interested in research and education in as well as about the Northern area. The University forms and ensures collaborative infrastructure and common resources that lets participant institutions to work more effectively for the purpose of their regions and constituents. By means of research, cooperation in education and outreach it forges global partnerships, enhances human capacity in the North, promotes sustainable economies and viable communities.[[52]](#footnote-52)

UArctic is a decentralized organization, with offices, programmes and other functions hosted at member institutions in the Circumpolar North. The daily operations are entrusted to a light and distributed administration. UArctic’s vision is the following – “an empowered North – with shared voices”. Its mission is to empower the people of the Circumpolar North by providing unique educational and research opportunities through collaboration within a powerful network of members.

The UArctic is successful in providing and developing a row of values corresponding to the concept of ideal international university. Among them we can mention that the HEI is attentive to needs and challenges, which some northern countries are facing, in addition it shows ability to reflect the values attributed to culture of the Arctic countries. The university keeps with the pace of the globalized world by providing gender equality, language plurality and cultural diversity.

The UArctic creates and strengthens the basis for joint work of member organizations on the development of northern regions and their infrastructure. Thanks to cooperation in the field of education and research, the HEI is building up human potential in the North, contributing to the formation of strong communities, sustainable economic development, and promoting the creation of global partnerships. The university is taking into consideration the indigenous and traditional knowledge systems, is developing multidisciplinary directions from such fields as natural, social sciences and the arts.

UArctic’s goals are the following: Engaged Membership Network, Educational Access for Northern Students, Expanding Knowledge of the North, and Research Representation in the North. UArctic members gain value by their participation in the organization. They work together on different levels, while paying attention to institutional leadership faculty and international collaboration. In past and present, its students form a community who share pride in their knowledge. UArctic represents its members’ interests internationally by promoting their diverse and shared capacity to serve northern communities and interests. The University of Arctic acquired a proved business model providing the entire infrastructure to support the working process. The Arctic Council, the Standing Committee of Arctic Parliamentarians and other Arctic leadership institutions recognize UArctic and its members as the educational, training and research engine of the North. [[53]](#footnote-53)

The UArctic has a lofty agenda up to 2020. Among the goals is the increase in access to education for students of the Northern countries, so that they could get the best and most modern education and educational resources. The UArctic promotes student mobility between the eight Arctic countries. Students of educational institutions of the North have free access to the best bachelor's programmes and magistracy in the entire Arctic region. Students of educational institutions of the North have the opportunity to participate in field schools and joint programmes of the UArctic. Students of educational institutions in the North can participate in training programmes, courses and field schools organized by the Thematic Networks of the UArctic.

Members of the UArctic combine academic mobility with international scientific cooperation, thereby increasing the level of education conducting research in the North Members of the UArctic are key participants in the research conducted in Arctic region.

The UArctic promotes advanced Arctic research. Members of the UArctic participate in the discussion of important research Arctic issues. The Arctic Council and other organizations address the UArctic and its members Arctic research issues.

The thematic networks of the UArctic unite educational and research programmes corresponding to the strategic needs of Arctic countries. The UArctic is developing methods to integrate research and traditional knowledge by involving representatives of indigenous peoples of the North. The UArctic works with the IASC (International Arctic Science Committee), IASSA (International Association of Social Sciences of the Arctic) and other partners to create strong scientific potential in the North extension of knowledge about the North. The UArctic is a leader in expanding knowledge about the North. The UArctic implements the leading curriculum of the circumpolar sciences. Through networking, members of the University of the Arctic attract students, interested in the study of the North. The UArctic research results available to scientists, politicians and the public.

Members of the UArctic share training and research resources to expand knowledge of the North. The thematic networks of the UArctic introduce the results of their activities to the public.

Cohesive partner network Membership in the UArctic gives significant advantages. Members of the UArctic interact with each other at different levels, attention to teachers, management of institutes and universities, as well as international cooperation. Students and alumni of the UArctic are proud of the knowledge gained during training in the University.

The UArctic represents the interests of its members at the international level for development of their potential and prosperity in the northern regions. The UArctic has a sustainable business model that provides the necessary network support infrastructure.

The Arctic Council, the Standing Committee of Arctic Parliamentarians and other Arctic organizations recognize the University of the Arctic as an educational and research engine of the North. At last, the UArctic members combine student and faculty mobility with research cooperation adding values to learning environments.

The UArctic is a leader in expanding knowledge about the North.   The UArctic’s Circumpolar Studies is the leading curriculum for overall circumpolar understanding. The UArctic members use the network to attract students interested in the North. The UArctic members’ research results are accessible to researchers, policy makers and the public. They share training, instructional and research resources to expand northern knowledge. The UArctic Thematic Networks communicate their efforts to the broader public.[[54]](#footnote-54)

The UArctic members are the key participants in Arctic research. The UArctic maintains the foremost inventory of Arctic research capacity. The UArctic members are involved together in addressing critical Arctic research issues. The Arctic Council and others look to the UArctic and its members as their shared infrastructure to address relevant research needs. The UArctic Thematic Networks link educational and research programmes that identify and respond to the strategic needs of the Arctic states. The UArctic develops new methods to combine academic research and traditional knowledge through participation by and with northern communities. UArctic works with International Arctic Social Sciences Association (IASSA)[[55]](#footnote-55), International Arctic Science Committee (IASC)[[56]](#footnote-56) and other partners to build strong northern-relevant and collaborative research capacity in the North.

Partnership of the UArctic includes the following respectful organizations: Arctic Council, Arctic Council Permanent Participants, Arctic Frontiers, Conference of Parliamentarians of the Arctic Region, Digital Science & Research Solutions Ltd., EU – Polarnet, Government of the Yamal-Nenets Autonomous District, International Arctic Science Committee, International Arctic Social Sciences Association, International Permafrost Association, Northern Forum, Prince Albert II of Monaco Foundation, and Russian Geographic Society.[[57]](#footnote-57)

Another University under consideration is the United Nations University (UNU). It is an international community of scientists engaged in research, postgraduate training, the dissemination of knowledge, contributing to the achievement of the UN's peace and progress goals. Since the United Nations University began its activities in 1975, it has evolved into a global decentralized network of institutions, consisting of the UNU Centre in Tokyo[[58]](#footnote-58), 12 research and training centres / programmes and two liaison offices in the Central UN agencies in New York and the headquarters of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in Paris. The University is a unique, truly international structure entrusted with the task of searching for interdisciplinary solutions to pressing world problems of concern to the United Nations, the peoples of the world and member states.

Due to its unique position, UNU carries out activities on a wide range of issues, including the generation, dissemination and application of knowledge, as well as knowledge management, conducts basic and applied research, prepares forecasts and analyses of normative documents, promotes capacity building (including on-line training). Creates networks of cooperation with UNU organizations and external partners and ensures targeted dissemination of knowledge, and conducts information Gandhian events.

The programme space within which the University operates is determined by three variable factors: the fundamental processes that are rapidly and radically changing our world; participants who implement these changes and simultaneously change themselves under their influence; and topics that are most relevant to the mandate of UNU. Within this programme space, UNU activities are carried out in two broad programme areas: (1) peace and governance; and (2) environment and development, further subdivided into five thematic areas: good governance - from local to global; peace and security; development and poverty reduction; science, technology and society; environment and sustainability.

UNU is funded entirely by voluntary contributions from Governments, institutions, foundations and individual donors. It does not receive funds from the UN budget: fixed assets for current expenses come as income from investments from the Constituent Fund. UNU is managed by a Council of 24 members, whose meetings are held every year.[[59]](#footnote-59)

The Erasmus + programme is a new programme of the European Union aimed at supporting cooperation in the field of education, vocational training, youth and sports for the period from 2014 to 2020.[[60]](#footnote-60)

The new programme is designed to be an effective tool for promoting the development of human and social capital in Europe and beyond. The objectives of the Programme are to create a new quality of cooperation, including use, dissemination and development of previously achieved results. Promotion of new ideas and attraction of new participants from the sphere of labour and civil society creation and development of new forms of cooperation.

The programme has integrated such previous programmes as The Life Long learning Programme, The Youth in Action Programme, The Erasmus Mundus Programme, Alfa, Edulink, Tempus and others. Within the framework of cooperation in the field of higher education, Erasmus + has identified the following main areas:

Key Action 1: Learning Mobility of Individuals – new mobility opportunities for students and teachers.

Key Action 2: Cooperation for innovation and good practice - cooperation for developing university capacity and sharing best practices as well as Jean Monnet Activities – wide opportunities for the development of European studies under the Jean Monnet programme.

Compared with previous EU programmes in the field of education, the geography of Erasmus + has significantly expanded. Erasmus + covers the so-called “Programme countries”, which includes: member countries of the European Union, Norway, Iceland, Macedonia, Liechtenstein, Turkey as well as “partner countries” divided into 13 geographic regions: Region 1: Western Balkans, Region 2: Eastern Partnership countries, Region 3: Southern Mediterranean countries, Region 4: Russian Federation (territory recognized by international law) and others, incl. Central Asia, Latin America, Africa, the Caribbean regions.

The implementation of the Erasmus + programme is managed by the Executive Agency for Education, Culture and Audio-visual (EACEA) in Brussels. In the countries of the Programme, the coordination is carried out by authorized National Agencies and National Contact Points. In the partner countries, the programme is coordinated by the National Offices of the Erasmus + programme.[[61]](#footnote-61)

Universities, by their nature, are global institutions. Typically, they are home to communities of students and scholars from all over the world, and they tackle some of the globe’s most pressing problems through research. Mentioned-above institutions all have a high proportion of international students and staff, collaborate on research with scholars from across the world and have a strong global reputation to match. Research suggests that diverse communities of students improve the teaching and learning experience while opportunities for students to spend time abroad better prepare them to become global citizens.

We agree with Jane Knight who defined the meaning for a HEI to be called an international.[[62]](#footnote-62) The main conclusion is that the term itself is not so important. What is more meaningful is the model or even approach used. The mentioned-above universities correspond to the following kinds of international universities. They are internationalised HEIs with a set of international partnerships, number of international staff and students and multiple collaborative activities. These HEIs have satellite offices in the form of branch campuses, research centres, project offices. Moreover, they are standalone institutions co-founded or co-developed by two or more organizations or partner institutions from another or different countries.

In the globalized world, the universities must be cosmopolitan. It means that they must be able to attract academics and students from around the world. Universities should be engaged in internationally important researches and exchange programmes. All the international universities as well as above-mentioned ones can be ranked according to several criteria. The most important of them is the university research collaborations - sharing of academics, funds, and facilities. In case the university has cooperated with 50 HEIs from the top 500 of the World University Rankings (QS), for sure it will be awarded the highest marks.[[63]](#footnote-63)

International faculties are the main parts of the contemporary higher education world. It is considered to be extremely beneficial to students as long as it means that a given HEI is employing the most talented staff irrespective of their nationality and country of birth. For students it means chances to be exposed to academic professionals who have experience in a variety of systems, thus being able to provide with another approach.

International students in the last years became a fashionable and quite typical picture. Getting education abroad has become an ultimately viable and perspective option. On the other hand, international academics and students add much to HEI at which they work or study, and the benefits they enjoy in return are innumerable. University that is ready to provide a cosmopolitan environment demonstrates itself to be forward thinking and of a high enough standard to attract students from all countries around the world. If 20% of an HEI’s students appeared to be international, University is going to earn full marks.

Unfortunately university must be able not only invite international students but also provide some facilities making their experience in another state more easy. For example, a university is able to provide special spaces for academicians and students worship their religions. The demand is that University can organize minimum one place of worship for at least three major religions – Christianity, Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Sikhism, Hinduism or Taoism.

It is worldwide recognized that different exchange programmes became opportunity for international students to get a benefit from getting education in another country. It is their chance to see the world, know another people and experience completely different way of learning. As far as universities are concerned, in this case exchange students allow them to maintain a diverse and dynamic flow of students of their campuses.

Along with inbound students, a good-ranked university must allow its own students to participate in different exchange programmes, providing outbound exchange students with adequate information and encouragement. The HEI also will get benefits from international graduates who will fare well in a globalized world.

At last, in case if the university is planning to be considered a truly international HEI, it must invite students from different states, providing possibilities to talented students from any country. For sure, both the HEI and the students will gain from meeting with such various students, who are intended to bring differences to their campuses, and better prepare students to live under condition of the globalization process.[[64]](#footnote-64)

Therefore, recently the notion of “international education” is one of the most frequently used and at the same time the least clear in terms of its content. The state of education in the modern world is difficult and it is inconsistent.[[65]](#footnote-65) On the one hand, education has become one of the important spheres of life. In terms of its scale, this sphere of human life is one of the largest and most ramified in the world economy. It is difficult to find another such sphere of life in modern society, which would have grown so rapidly. On the other hand, the education and rapid changes its status are accompanied by problems, which indicate a crisis in education. During the last decades, the process of overcoming the crisis in education is going on. It is aimed at the formation of a new educational system. The search for an answer to the challenges of time is gradually transforming the international education in a gigantic international laboratory with optimal options for its organizational strategy and content. Topics of the international education system are acquiring new elements of objectives of the national and regional systems. The changes that are taking place are inextricably linked with the processes in the socio-political and economic life of various regions of the world and the world community as a whole. International educational space unites national educational systems of different type and level, which are in constant interaction.

The processes of globalization of economic life were actively pushing to the broader development of international relations, to the search for their own global perspective. One manifestation of this is a growing interest in the formation of an international education system. It should play a central role in the global development and only education is able to ensure the acquisition and effective application of new methodological techniques, skills and values, necessary to live in a rapidly changing world.

Significant changes are taking place in recent decades practically in all countries of the world, which are connected first of all with innovative nature of the economy, generating fundamentally new requirements to the development of all structural elements of society. The landmarks of the social processes, the mechanisms of their interaction, new institutes that affect interests and form new motives of various strata of society. The most adequate reflection is the specificity of the modern economic development in the concept of “an economy based on knowledge (knowledge economy)”, in which knowledge is given a decisive role, and the production of knowledge is seen as a source of growth. The main strategic resource for development is people with knowledge, their intellectual capital and growing professional competence of personnel.[[66]](#footnote-66)

The UNESCO International Commission of Education for the 21st Century in 1998 fixed several points underlying the modern international education system, provided by means of high level of empathy and understanding among different cultures. There are also the following requirements pointed out such as interdependence of nations and understanding of global challenges, cultural identities beyond national frontiers, critical thinking skills applied to different cultures and international problems and an valuing of the human condition all over the world.[[67]](#footnote-67)

 The concept of international university in our view should be partly taken from the United States high educational system, which acquired a lot by means of opening its academia to talented youth and academicians from great variety of scientific fields from all over the world. It is clear nowadays that prominent international scientists are able to accelerate educational processes in national HEIs. For successful students’ work the global network must be provided by the University, always keeping in mind that truly up to the mustard education could be acquired more easily by an internationally based research effort.

The ideal international university must be considered to be the most comfortable campus for international students. At the same time, it should be careful of its own, national, students’ interests. It is something among vital issues to be taken into consideration by the new appearing international universities like the BRICS NU.

We used comparative analysis to compare three international universities (The UArctic, The UNU and ERASMUS+), to find common features and to create general understanding of international university. The comparison is in the Table 2 “Comparative analysis of the UArctic, the UN University and Erasmus+ Programme”. We created the Table 2 using the following features: educational tools, members, the number of countries and the parts of the world where students come from. It allows us to see the differences and common aspects between the described international universities and to create the general features that are necessary for the concept of international university.

Table 2 “Comparative analysis of the UArctic, the UN University

and Erasmus+ Programme”

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Name** | **Educational tools** | **Institutes/Members** | **Countries** | **International Students** |
| **The UArctic** | Exchange programmes, scholarships, master programmes for foreign students, online, distant courses | 186 (member institutions in the Circumpolar North) | 19 | From all over the world |
| **The UN University** | Exchange programmes, scholarships, courses | 15 | 13 | From all over the world |
| **Erasmus+ Programme** | Exchange programmes, scholarships, summer schools, grants, courses, bachelor/master programmes with international participation, online, distant courses | 125000 | European countries, Turkey, Russia | 4 mln, mostly European students |

Basing on the results of comparison, we can say that the concept of international university should contain the following features:

* Various educational tools: exchange programmes is the main one; offering scholarships, distant courses and master and/or bachelor programmes with international participation.
* The number of countries to be involved is not less than 10.
* Borderless movement of students around the universities that are included in the particular international university.
* The presence of ranking is not necessary, because international university is supposed to consist of several universities, and it is difficult to give a common ranking grade. Moreover, this figure will not be objective and will not give any useful information.

It shows that the concept of international university is useful and productive, because it allows combining different educational tools, offering various programmes for students. Knowing their purposes, students have possibility to choose the programme in another country in the university that is specializing on particular sphere and is able to give profound knowledge gathered from different universities of several countries. The main disadvantage of the concept of international university is difficulty to control the system and the educational process and to coordinate it in several universities at the same time.

# PART 2. BRICS NETWORK UNIVERSITY IN WORLD EDUCATION SYSTEM

# CHAPTER 2.1 THE HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF BRICS NETWORK UNIVERSITY FUNCTIONING

BRICS Network University is the cooperation of universities from the countries – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. Year by year it conquers more steady position in the world education and science system. The 4th Meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Education in New Delhi, India, approved the Declaration on September 30, 2016. [[68]](#footnote-68) Its Article 5 provided that in China (the current BRICS Chairship country) would be held the 2d General Conference of the BRICS NU. The Ministry of Education of the Chinese Peoples Republic appointed the University of Water Resources and Electric Power (located in Zhengzhou, China) to host this highly significant meeting.

The event took place in July 2017 in the North China University of Water Conservancy and Electric Power. The participants from various member-states universities and experts from partner institutions took part in this meeting. 10 Russian universities from the list of the BRICS Network University members participated as well. At the head of the Russian delegation was Mr. Maxim Khomyakov – the President of the Russian National Coordinating Committee of the BRICS NU, Vice-Rector for International Relations in UrFU.[[69]](#footnote-69)

Before the conference, the BRICS senior officials have discussed educational issues, for instance, within the meeting of the BRICS ministers of education in Beijing. The conference of the BRICS Network University became a remarkable meeting, analysing the function of the BRICS NU in 2016 and 2017. In addition, it planned the work of the university for coming years.[[70]](#footnote-70)

The participants of the event addressed the tasks and goals of the BRICS Network University on the background of the current situation in the sphere of the world higher education. The purpose of the participants consisted in finding out the more effective ways of cooperation in educational process among the BRICS states. It should be something different from the present form of the globalized market of education. There was also analysing of the special traits of the BRICS states various systems of education.[[71]](#footnote-71)

It was an event in St. Petersburg, when the Russian National Research University Higher School of Economics organized the meeting of the BRICS Network University ITG on Economics. The event was hosted on the field of the conference named “Global Business and Innovation in BRICS.” In the conference’s discussion panels of the meeting participated number of BRICS Network University ITG members on BRICS researches.[[72]](#footnote-72)

Around 18 delegates from 10 world Universities – members of BRICS Network University – participated in the event. Among them were Brazilian University of Campinas, Minas Gerais Federal University, Russian St. Petersburg State University, Higher School of Economics and People’s Friendship University, Moscow State Institute of International Affairs, and Russian Federal University from Ural, the Chinese Beijing Normal University and Henan University; at last South Africa was represented by the University of Cape Town.

Official Russian International Target Group members and other delegates discussed the main issues regarding the means of the future development of the BRICS Network University’s master programmes in Economics. They provided results of their hard discussions, demonstrated the common Master’s programmes. The renewed “Road Map” also was approved. It supposed implementation of the prospective programmes, among which were different students and academicians mobility schedules. The delegates came to the conclusion that the agreement on the BRICS mobility must be developed. It must allow setting up norms which can be approved by all members.[[73]](#footnote-73)

There is a common demand of more transparency and clarity. It is needed around this in order to encourage knowledge-sharing, collaboration and development of opportunities for students in all states. A quality higher education system is one that is well connected internationally facilitates the introduction of new ideas, and fosters trade and other links with foreign countries, through the movement of students and researchers across national frontiers. At the same time, students are increasingly choosing countries to study in as much as individual institutions.

There was the ranking of national high educational systems, fulfilled by the University of Melbourne (Melbourne Institute of Applied Economic and Social Research)[[74]](#footnote-74). They researched HEIs from 48 countries with a developed high educational offering. This ranking is supposed to be very useful in considering the system of functioning BRICS University.

The ranking was made relying on 20 diversified measures which are important for making an appropriate high education system. They are sorted according to the following row of criteria:

* collaboration and international networks which protects a system against insularity – connectivity;
* government policy and regulation;
* investment by government and private sector – that is resources;
* participation opportunities and diversity – environment;
* production of an educated workforce which meets labour market needs – output;
* research and its impact;

The other important criterion, which is taken into account, is population size[[75]](#footnote-75).

As far as Great Britain is concerned the country has a mixed picture, particularly for a system which continues to attract such a large proportion of international students. Ranked tenth overall, the UK is held down by a ranking of only 27th on resources, including a low rank of 41st for government expenditure. Against that, the UK is ranked only second to the USA on output. The difference in ranking between output and resources is the greatest for all 48 countries and reflects very high productivity. The UK also does well on international connectivity, ranked sixth as it has the fourth largest percentage of international students. It is ranked 13th on environment, losing points for lack of diversity and being ranked at 19 by the World Economic Forum.

Situation with HE system in Great Britain is useful to take into account because other countries including BRICS member-states are more interested in what is happening in this part of Europe. The four Nordic countries are all in the top seven; four east Asian countries (Hong Kong SAR, Japan, Taiwan and Korea) are clustered together at ranks 18 to 22; Eastern European countries (Ukraine, Czech Republic, Poland, Slovenia) are together in the middle range; and the Latin American countries (Brazil, Mexico, Chile, Argentina) also cluster together. While many countries do not think they can be named the world leader, they do their best to follow the standards of the leaders.

Public funding for higher education as a percentage of GDP is highest not in the BRICS countries but in Denmark, Finland and Norway, but with the addition of private spending, funding is highest in Latin America, the United States, Korea and Canada. The highest investments in development and research are in Sweden, Switzerland and Denmark. The USA has the best results in number of scientific articles, but Sweden is the largest producer of articles per capita. Among the countries, whose studies are the most influential are Denmark, the Netherlands, the United Kingdom, the United States and Switzerland. While the US and the UK have the world's leading institutions in the ranking, the depth of higher education institutions of world class per capita is best in Israel, Denmark, Switzerland and Sweden.

The highest participation rates in HIE are in Slovenia, Finland, the United States, Canada Korea and Greece. In the list of countries with the largest proportion of workers with a higher educational level is one BRICS country – Russia. Other states with the same data are Australia, Canada, Israel, the USA, and Taiwan. Such states like Japan, Singapore, Finland, Denmark, Norway, have the highest ratio of researchers in their economies[[76]](#footnote-76).

International students form the highest proportions of total student numbers are not in BRICS countries but in Austria, Australia, Singapore, Switzerland and Great Britain.  However, China and India, along with United States and Japan rank in the bottom 25% of states in the field of international research cooperation. India and Korea have comparatively the lowest rate of female students, while in eight states there were around 50% of female students. Five states had in their staff about 50% of female with Iran and Japan on the bottom of the list.

Regarding Russia’s performance according to Programme for International Student Assessment (2015) subject areas and a summary for the equity challenges the state might face.[[77]](#footnote-77) In science Russia is not as good as Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) average but it is stable since 2006. In mathematics and reading our country is at level around OECD average that means improvement in comparison with 2006. Concerning equity criteria in boys vs girls, social background and immigrant students Russia is better than OECD average that is stable since 2006.[[78]](#footnote-78) Comparing Russian Federation with the BRICS state Brazil the stark difference becomes evident – in average performance in science, mathematics, reading Brazil is nearer to the min marks while Russian trend is reaching towards the maximum level.[[79]](#footnote-79)

Rivalry among several HEIs on international and regional levels is hard and is going to increase as mobility grows and all societies are more open. We should say that it is highly important for countries and the value of the world system of high education that attention is not lost in harsh competition between some “name” players in high education capable of attracting an upper class.[[80]](#footnote-80)

Starting from December 2013, in cooperation with Interfax – the Russian News Agency – QS launched a new ranking of universities dedicated to institutions in the BRICS countries. The first of its kind, the QS University Rankings: BRICS listed the top 100 universities in the BRICS countries, with a view to extending this following further consultation with universities and the higher education community.[[81]](#footnote-81)

The ranking, which showcases the best universities in BRICS –Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – has been expanded this year to include 300 institutions. It has had little impact on the dominance of Chinese universities in the top 10. As with the previous edition of the ranking, seven of the top 10 universities are based in China.

What is interesting is that Russia this year is following the most represented country in 2018 ranking – China. By contrast, only 12 South Africa universities are included, the highest-ranked of these being the University of Cape Town in 19th place – a fall of five places since last year. As with the top 10, there is little movement in the top 50, with only four universities breaking in since last time. This breakthrough made Russian HEIs – Tomsk Polytechnic University and National Research University – Higher School of Economics. Brazilian institutions distinguished as well – Federal University of Minas Gerais and Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro.

Following the newly released QS BRICS University Rankings, the Chinese Tsinghua University has earned the distinction of being the best university in the BRICS nations in 2018. According to another QS World University Rankings by Region on the top are universities from China and Russian Lomonosov Moscow State University is on the 5th position.[[82]](#footnote-82)

While analysing different educational systems and states one can rely on a variety of resources. As far as Europe is concerned it is useful to fall back on Eurypedia, which offers comprehensive descriptions of 38 European education systems, usually at national level, but sometimes also at regional level. It provides the most detailed picture of latest reforms and education systems in Europe. All information is available in English with some national information available in the language of the country or region wanted. The resource is powered by MediaWiki, which involves education experts and national ministries responsible for education from European countries.

The internationally comparable data on education policies and practices, opportunities and outcomes can be acquired by means of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and its new Education GPS tool.[[83]](#footnote-83) Accessible any time, in real time, the Education GPS provides you with the latest information on how different states are developing equitable and high-quality education systems. Source OECD, being online library, provides with education literature.[[84]](#footnote-84)

The OECD is not the only one organizing international comparisons. There are such studies like the TIMSS & PIRLS. With the release of the new TIMSS-results, a [TIMSS 2015 Encyclopedia](http://timssandpirls.bc.edu/timss2015/encyclopedia/) was published. It pictures how mathematics and science are taught around the world, summarizing key aspects of mathematics and science education. One can find description of the structure of different education systems, the mathematics and science curricula in the primary and lower secondary grades, and overall policies related to mathematics and science instruction. Taken together, the data present a concise yet rich portrait of mathematics and science education globally, and make the resource an indispensable for research and policy in comparative education.[[85]](#footnote-85)

There is another source of data and publications on educational programmes around the world – UNESCO.[[86]](#footnote-86) The Organization is accepted to be the only United Nations agency with a mandate to cover all aspects of education. It has been entrusted to lead the Global Education 2030 Agenda through Sustainable Development Goal 4.[[87]](#footnote-87)

Concerning BRICS Network University there is a number of tools for acquiring corresponding data. The Programme for the Analysis of Educational Systems (The “Programme on the Analysis of Education Systems “PASEC”) was established in 1991 at the Conference of Ministers of Education French-speaking countries in Djibouti. The first study was conducted a year later also in Djibouti. Since then, 13 studies have been conducted in French-speaking countries in Africa, including also panel studies of schoolchildren from the second to the sixth grade. Initially, the research was carried out by various research teams, but now these are small national teams working on an ongoing basis under the leadership of the secretariat in Dakar. Such organization of works provides comparability between the international database, including contextual data on pupils, teachers and schools, and it also lays the groundwork for the creation of national assessment systems.

It is important to emphasize that the task of PASEC is not to compare the results between countries, and identifying those factors that affect the level of achievement of students, on the quality of learning in general. Given the limited resources and resources, which can be invested in the education system, within the PASEC is recognized it is necessary to identify the hierarchy of possible interventions in the education system, which could positively influence the quality of education. Therefore, when describing factors of influence albeit roughly the cost of similar changes are simultaneously estimated. Actually, the academic achievements of students are evaluated according to the results testing. CONFEMEN’s activities are aimed at the institutionalization of programmes national assessment in participating countries. Therefore, regular seminars and meetings are organized with the participation of representatives of national teams to further improve their skills. The evaluation scheme, created on the initiative of the Ministers of Education of the Member States, national educational systems with the prospect of creating an information base for decision-making has not yet been working “automatically”. Therefore, until now special efforts are required to ensure a real account of the results obtained for decision-making.[[88]](#footnote-88)

Another one is the Southern and Eastern Africa Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ). The South African Consortium for Monitoring Educational Quality (SACMEQ) is non-government independent organization, supported by International Institute for Educational Planning International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP)).

This organization works with two main objectives: to expand the possibilities for strategic planning in the field of education for a professional development account in the field of assessment and monitoring of the quality of basic education; collect information for decision-making in the field of educational development planning and improving its quality.

SACMEQ is part of a wider UNESCO activity in the field of assessment aimed at assessing the activities of UNESCO in the field of education. SACMEQ has been developing its history since 1995 as an IIEP project in the field of educational policy. Since then, the number of participating countries represented by their Ministers of Education has reached 15: Botswana, Kenya, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, Swaziland, Tanzania (Mainland), South Africa, Tanzania (Zanzibar), Uganda, Zimbabwe. Today SACMEQ is an intergovernmental agency that is implementing its third project SACMEQ III on the interethnic assessment of the quality of education and school conditions.

SACMEQ has a Scientific Committee, which was organized in 2006 for development of technical aspects of data collection and materials for SACMEQ III.The head of the Committee is the Director, and consists of three national coordinators. The Committee also has consultants and technical advisors for individual research areas, consultants from international experts, as well as IIEP member representatives.

Every two years, SACMEQ holds large-scale meetings of ministers of the participating countries. The SACMEQ project is implemented with the support and financial participation of the Government of the Netherlands and the World Bank. Within the framework of the Dakar process, this project realizes the main goal - to increase all aspects of the quality of education, to ensure the achievement of planned educational results by all schoolchildren, with special attention to reading literacy, mathematics and life skills.[[89]](#footnote-89)

There is such source as Education Policy and Data Centre (EPDC) which collect free tools for better data visualization, policy-oriented analysis and global education data, aimed at improving schools and learning in developing countries.[[90]](#footnote-90)Millennium Indicators resource also suits well to the agenda of BRICS Network University, presenting sources and methodologies, official data, definitions for more than 60 indicators to measure progress towards the Millennium Development Goals. The analyses and data are the product of the work of the Inter-agency and Expert Group (IAEG) on MDG Indicators, coordinated by the United Nations Statistics Division.[[91]](#footnote-91) In collecting worldwide data on education from national statistical reports, statistical annexes of new publications, and other data sources there is such useful resource as World Bank EdStats.[[92]](#footnote-92) Experts can fall back on the World Bank’s World Development Indicators, which provide in different languages country-level detail on a wide variety of areas.[[93]](#footnote-93) Quite helpful could be the International Activities Programme (International Comparisons in Education). It supports a variety of activities to provide statistical data for cross-national comparisons of education. Developing indicators and conducting international surveys and assessments are the most important fields of their activity.[[94]](#footnote-94)

Comparing educational systems is quite popular, but a very difficult task as the contexts can be very different. Tests as PIRLS, TIMMS or PISA do a good job trying to bypass this burden, but still the impact of the context plays a very significant role.[[95]](#footnote-95)

Although the topic of BRICS Network University is rather young, enough primary sources describe future work and development of the university. At present BRICS NU includes 12 Universities from India, South Africa, and Russia, 11 Universities from China and 9 – from Brazil[[96]](#footnote-96).

The BRICS NU is an educational project aimed at developing multilateral joint educational training programmes, as well as joint research projects in 6 priority areas: power engineering; informatics and information security; research of the BRICS countries; ecology and climate change; water resources and neutralization of pollution; economy.

The coordinator of the direction “Energy” is the National Research University “MEI”. Participants of the BRICS NU from the Russian Federation are: Moscow State Institute of International Relations (University) of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation; Moscow State University. M.V. Lomonosov; Moscow Institute of Physics and Technology (State University); National Research Technological University “MISiS”; National Research Tomsk Polytechnic University; National Research University “Higher School of Economics”; National Research University “MEI”; National Research Tomsk State University; Peoples' Friendship University of Russia; St. Petersburg State University; St. Petersburg National Research University of Information Technologies, Mechanics and Optics; Ural Federal University named after the first President of Russia B.N. Yeltsin.[[97]](#footnote-97)

International Governing Board is the main governing body of the BRICS Network University. On the 8th of April 2016 in Ekaterinburg (Russia), university’s regulations were approved. The BRICS Network University International Governing Body has a list of obligations. Among them the most important are approval of the BRICS NU annual Action Plan; consideration of structural changes, as well as in knowledge fields and composition of the University; approval of the ITGs statutes; checking of the Action Plan implementation on the ground of the ITGs and National Coordinating Committees annual reports; proposition of strategies for the BRICS NU. The IT Board being the main strategic body of the University is compounded by delegates from education ministries and from communities of the BRICS NU country-members. There are three members in International Governing Board from each member-state. They are elected to the position in accordance with their own country’s procedures for the term minimum two years.[[98]](#footnote-98)

On July 6, 2013 in Shanghai a group of Russian and Chinese HEIs, including the Russian Higher School of Economics, signed the initiative to create a BRICS League of Universities with the aim to become a platform for expert and academic comparative research, cooperation, and international educational projects. The initiative was supported by the HSE, MGIMO (Moscow Institute of International Relations), the Ural Federal University, and the Far Eastern Federal University. Chinese universities were represented by the Fudan University, Zhejiang Normal University, Tsinghua University, East-China Normal University, and Sichuan University. The ceremony brought together leading universities from Brazil, India, and South Africa as well as representatives from Saint Petersburg State University. The founding conference of the BRICS League of Universities took place in Moscow in spring 2014. The BRICS Centre as part of the HSE was created. It must undertake coordinative and information-analytical functions, audit current and completed HSE projects related to BRICS states as part of the League.[[99]](#footnote-99)

We can see that BRICS NU has all reasons to be found and it faces the present needs of students and their possible future employers, because it covers the main spheres of life that require new well-qualified staff.

However, the structure of the BRICS NU is very complicated due to the large number of universities that are involved (56 universities).[[100]](#footnote-100) We can avoid it because of the huge demand of world population. In addition, we would like to notice that it is one of the biggest obstacle on the way of BRICS UN functioning. Officially, the University has recently started working, but, practically, the educational programmes will appear in next two years in the best case.

# CHAPTER 2.2 HOW BRICS NETWORK UNIVERSITY INFLUENCES GLOBALIZATION

Last year the BRICS states could celebrate the second decade of their international cooperation. BRICS has strengthened their mutual interaction adequately responding to challenges and at the same time stimulating new trends in a globalized world. The process of globalization is determined not only by the production cycle of the globalized economy, but mostly by regional and global powerful states, which play the most important role in influencing international affairs.

Since 2008 when the international financial crisis began, the number of significant world economies started to experience problems in their economics. These trends evoked protectionist measures in all spheres of life, which indirectly touched the education systems, but mostly in trade and investment.[[101]](#footnote-101) It was the first visible step on the way to establish new international university.

Some developing and developed states, including BRICS member-states (South Africa until 2011 managed the crisis out of the organization) took steps to stimulate their suffering local economies and domestic trade, among them are – anti-dumping investigations, corporate welfare, export subsidies, publicity for local brands, favourable financing, as well as government procurement policies favouring local enterprises.[[102]](#footnote-102) It was a good idea to connect absolutely other countries in educational process. In reality, ERASMUS+ covers Europe mostly, so the UN University does. The Arctic University covers Scandinavian countries. However, there are other different cooperation of countries that neither are situated on the territory of Europe nor leading states in the world. It allows BRICS UN to become more unique than the previous examples of international universities.

The last years are marked by trends that are rather hostile to globalization, and they can be found in key powers. First of all we mean Brexit which happened in the Great Britain, the wining in presidential elections of the isolationist Donald Trump in the United Sates and the rising popularity of such aspect as populism all over Western countries. It is accepted by many analytics that the globalization at the present moment is at its main historical turning point from the perspectives of both influences of the dominant powers in the international community and the development cycle of global economy.[[103]](#footnote-103)

BRICS on the one hand is the product of globalization and on the other has a reciprocal relationship with it. Globalization drives the development and expansion of BRICS, which in turn promotes globalization. In the near future, BRICS will become one of the important engines for the next round of globalization and a new type of global governance.

BRICS Network University’s last Conference took place on July 1-3, 2017, in Zhengzhou (China) in the North China University of Water Resources and Electric Power in which took part representatives of the member universities as well as experts from the partner institutions. The representatives of the member-states analysed the major achievements and problems of the BRICS Network University’s activities. They addressed the goals and tasks set before the BRICS NU in the context of the current state of the world’s higher education.

The most important challenge is considered the understanding of the educational cooperation between the BRICS states as an alternative to the existing structure of the global educational market. The experts also presented special characteristics of different educational systems of the BRICS countries. The participants worked on the proposals from the member universities concerning development of joint Master and Doctoral programmes, and designed a plan for approval of the MA and PhD programmes by the thematic groups. It was agreed that 7 such programmes were to be available for enrolment in 2017[[104]](#footnote-104).

The BRICS NU International Governing Board is supposed to discuss the most important aspects of the Network University’s operation. For example, the Board members signed the Regulations of the International Governing Board and the Statute for the BRICS NU International Thematic Groups. The International Governing Board has also thoroughly discussed and approved the 2017 – 2018 Academic year roadmap for the BRICS NU IGB.  The 3d General Conference of the BRICS Network University is going to take place in 2018 in Cape Town, South Africa.[[105]](#footnote-105)

As far as the BRICS Network University operates on the principles of openness, any HEI from any member states is absolutely free to join this network. The BRICS NU designs curriculum for masters and PhD programmes in such internationally urgent spheres as computer science, energy, BRICS studies, economics, ecology and climate change, environment pollution and water resources, etc.[[106]](#footnote-106)

Educational programmes are not the only fields of activity for BRICS Network University. It also focuses on innovation projects and network research. The Network University enables mobility of students, professors and researchers across BRICS member-states to form a research space and integrated education. The problem is that nowadays few HEIs from the BRICS states take positions in the world top 100 universities. The BRICS Network University works hard to upgrade quality of research and education in member states’ HEIs in order to elevate their functioning to world class standards.

BRICS Network University can draw from the best practices of China and Russia. These both countries have rich experience in setting up network universities. As far as Russia is concerned, it is part of the University of Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which in its turn is a network university for China, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan.[[107]](#footnote-107) China’s Beijing Normal University is the top institution behind the BRICS Universities League.[[108]](#footnote-108) It was set up in October 2015. BRICS Universities League is a network of almost 40 leading HEIs from the BRICS states. It aims to strengthen co-operation in research and education among the BRICS.

It is worth mentioning here the Memorandum of Understanding, which was signed between the world famous Federal University of Lavras, Brazil and Agricultural Development Trust, Baramati, India in 2016.[[109]](#footnote-109) The document focuses on some significant issues like combined research on technological factors related to farming, exchange of best practices, ideas and technology as well as exchange between students, professors and even the farmers. The Memorandum also covers some very important topics like the kind of technology that is available and how it can be fully utilized for farming to sustain in the world markets. The signed document helps to focus on the exchange of technology and research, combined research on important projects, development of high quality milk producing cows in the animal husbandry sector and the current changes that are taking place in the farming sector globally, enable the two states to realize, implement and make use of the technology. It is commonly accepted that Brazilian firms in the agricultural sector, first of all, animal husbandry focused Brazil is successful in development of high quality cows, yielding high income from the local cows by developing and increasing the milk yielding capacity from them. Many Brazilian companies participated in the Exhibition which took place in Baramati in 2017. Just due to the growing demands of the business worldwide and globalization, there is urgent necessity that stable farming processes to be implemented. That is why the two states have decided to come together.

Another example of perspective cooperation in terms of globalised world, which is undertaken within BRICS Network University, is the Chinese HEIs. In China, higher education system primarily is focused on the development of technology, science, and culture. Due to the large development needs of the economy, most attention is paid to economic and political sciences, as well as finance, law, architecture, engineering, information, computer technology, and other applied disciplines in the industrial sphere. That is the reason why Chinese HEIs marked at the highest level of by international rankings.[[110]](#footnote-110)

China has become the most popular destination for international students in Asia and has high rate in the world. On the other hand, China sends more students abroad than any other nation, with 700000 of Chinese students studying internationally.[[111]](#footnote-111) Both direction influences has appeared within the contemporary globalised world. More and more teachers from abroad are being attracted to China. The situation has brought to making special quotas. Teachers from Eastern Europe, Russia, and Ukraine are in priority. In Russia, as in China there is a single exam, which one passes upon graduating from school.

Within BRICS India has the most developed network of higher education in the world. Brazil makes a difference – its educational system is not of such high level like Indian and Chinese. Nevertheless, there is one peculiarity – if education in China is payable, in Brazil all education in state universities is completely free. The demand for higher education is small, so the number of applicants often matches the number of seats in a university.

Consequently, each BRICS Network Universities’ participants have their own characteristics according to their native education systems. Each of them can bring benefits to each other in further improving the quality of education. The high education and academic traditions of these countries have a lot to provide not only to each other but also to the education systems of the globalised world. [[112]](#footnote-112) The obstacles that BRICS NU will face is cultural division, difficulties coverage of huge territory and necessity to create common standards for all 56 universities in 5 countries.

# PART 3. THE ANALYSIS OF ACTIVITY OF RUSSIA IN BRICS NETWORK UNIVERSITY

# CHAPTER 3.1 THE ROLE OF RUSSIA IN BRICS NETWORK UNIVERSITY

Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa have a lot to offer to each other’s education system. For several years, they have been working on the creation of a common educational space planning to bring together more than 50 higher education institutions from the five BRICS countries. At last on November 5, 2013 ministers of education of the BRICS countries have signed a “Memorandum of Understanding” establishing a BRICS Network University.

The initiative that was discussed for the first time during a joint ministerial meeting in 2013 in Paris was launched by the Russian University of People’s Friendship. This HEI has already become a member of an international network of universities in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Commonwealth of Independent States. In 2014, the leaders of states of BRICS gave approval to the initiative during the BRICS summit in Fortaleza. Later in July 2015 the initiative was supported in the “Ufa declaration” and it was fixed in the Strategy for Economic Partnership. With the time, the project received separate documentary reinforcements at the ministry level.[[113]](#footnote-113) Nowadays the working languages of the university are Russian, Chinese, and English.

The influence on education systems of the BRICS members is mutual and profitable. Thousands of students from the BRICS countries will be able to study free of charge within exchange programmes of the BRICS Network University[[114]](#footnote-114).The main method of this University work includes organization of double degree programmes, involving high academic mobility. So, a two-year master programme has been proposed in which the first year is held in one’s state of resident and the second in another BRICS country.

Georgiy Toloraya and Roman Chukov mentioned in their common work “BRICS To Be Considered?” that although BRICS has a lot of obstacles inside the organization and many critical points of view from outside, they believe that BRICS will have positive tendency in two directions: the strengthening of unanimous positions in the global governance and deepening of their cooperation in framework uniting in various spheres.[[115]](#footnote-115) It proves that BRICS UN is one of the hugest step on the way of future cooperation and strengthening the positions.

The former minister of education of the Russian Federation Dmitriy Livanov believed that the BRICS Network University would have a positive impact on the Russian education system. The minister noted that “the development of the initiative to establish a BRICS Network University for sure would have a positive impact on the quality of Russian higher education. The organization must strengthen cooperation and communication between the universities of the BRICS countries.” [[116]](#footnote-116) Dmitriy Livanov sees the positive development of BRICS NU, too.

The former Russian Ambassador to the United States Sergey Kislyak described the BRICS as “a phenomenon on the international economic scene” that aims at promoting “cooperation between our countries” and “the stability of these countries in the future” – he was quoted saying on November 12, 2015 at the event “BRICS 2.0 and the Metamorphosis of Globalization,” which took place in the Russian Embassy in Washington, D.C. and brought together investors, high-profile officials and diplomats.[[117]](#footnote-117)

In reality, to understand how Russia can influence the BRICS NU one should take into consideration the variety of education systems of all the countries participating in the association and the fact that the BRICS member-states pursue different strategic aims and values in the ongoing BRICS cooperation. Beside the point, under the existing circumstances of globalization, Russia, along with China, has the strongest motivation for promoting reforms to the international order via BRICS cooperation. If compare the two states, Russia emphasizes more strongly the political significance of BRICS. China in its turn is focusing on economic problems. But these two countries difference in their attitude towards direction and pace to establishing BRICS cooperation mechanisms only enhance the future functioning of the BRICS Network University.[[118]](#footnote-118)

At the same time the education direction of cooperation within the BRICS has been developing in steady pace. In October 30 – November 2, 2017 the Russian People’s Friendship University welcomed in Moscow the participants of the international conference “The BRICS Network University and the International Labour Market.” As the Vice-Rector for International Academic Mobility of the People’s Friendship University Ms Larisa Efremova said – “Russia is making steps to boost its role in the global economy not only through fuel and energy exports, but also by means of promoting Russian higher education system all over the world”.

The mentioned above conference held by People’s Friendship University brought together more than 150 participants from 20 countries. RUDN University is among the key Russian universities among participants in the development of the BRICS Network University initiative.

The first programmes within BRICS Network University started in 2017. It was planned that the system of the BRICS UN would work using the experience of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization University, which was established in 2008 and is already operating as a network of existing universities in the member countries of the SCO. The Ural Federal University (Yekaterinburg, Russia) is the coordinator for the Network University for Russia. This university from the beginning was being seen as the potential location for the headquarters of the BRICS NU[[119]](#footnote-119).

Among the main prerequisites for guarantee that the mentioned academic exchange realizes successfully was an agreement on the necessary legal framework and coming up with a way to coordinate between different practices happening in the BRICS states. Thus, the five sides agreed on the duration of exchange programmes, the recognition of education acquired in foreign institutions and other important aspects. Thanks to Russian initiative and Chinese practical approach the process has been managed using the experience of the Russian HEIs and Shanghai Cooperation Organization University.

There is strong mutual interest between the BRICS countries’ universities. The Russian People’s Friendship University has great interest in cooperation with HEIs in South Africa. First of all it refers to the matter of preparing specialists in medicine, agriculture, and economics, which really helps to realize the purposes and trust and regular dialogue between universities. Such comfortable working conditions allow the BRICS countries to determine fields of common interest and create effective cooperation links.[[120]](#footnote-120)

Russia’s foreign partners can make significant profits from cooperation with Russian HEIs, because traditionally Universities in Russia are very competitive in fundamental science, engineering, and information technologies. The most attractive factors concerning Russia within the BRICS Network University are its education system. From year to year, the Russian universities are acquiring better world recognition, also due to their participation in the main American and European conferences. The Russian academic environment more and more attracts representatives of different cultures, religions, and ethnicities thanks to the process of becoming more open to the international academic community.

# CHAPTER 3.2 THE PROSPECTS OF BRICS NETWORK UNIVERSITY DEVELOPMENT AND ITS IMPLEMENTATION AS A MODEL OF ORGANIZATION THE EDUCATIONAL PROCESS

The BRICS economies established the institute – the BRICS Network University – that until now is considered to be the potential victory for the cause of higher education in five BRICS countries and to the international postgraduate market. The BRICS Network University meets the demographic challenges in BRICS countries, which have the increasing appetite for higher education. It is expanding in good speed, providing a source of international postgraduate students that are nowadays being exploiting by the United States and Great Britain.

It should be kept in mind that both the United States and the United Kingdom universities are highly dependent on the BRICS countries, especially China and India, for their international students. According to the statistic data India in 2024 will become homeland to the largest tertiary-aged population (over 119 million people).[[121]](#footnote-121)

Some experts are pointing out that nowadays two million students are studying as international students, and by 2025 about 15 million students will study out of their countries. The BRICS NU is going to develop trend of the internationalization of higher education, the scope of which has taken on various degrees of interests and areas of focus. Its scale is from traditional study abroad programmes, taking courses at colleges or universities in other countries through internet or face to face arrangements such as branch franchises or campuses. Other activities include academic programmes, research activities, and international partnerships. This all emphasizes advancement of international students’ skills and perspectives, promotion of foreign language programmes and access to cross-cultural understanding.[[122]](#footnote-122)

In discussions at BRICS Summits, for example in Russia, participants highlighted the critical role that education is playing in creating a skilled workforce that meets the needs of industry in the BRICS developing markets. This purpose is supported by the BRICS Development Bank.[[123]](#footnote-123)

It was foreseen from the beginning that there might have started the competition between the BRICS universities. For instance, some might choose to study technology in the country where this area is very well developed – that is in India. There are also possible variants when a research is going to be carried out in cooperation, with the number of participants from all five countries. Such conditions ensure a potential breakthrough in agriculture, computer technologies or ecology.

Of course such kind of academic cooperation does not exclude the possibility of participants from other country/countries. Academicians from Spain, Great Britain, Switzerland and Finland already have taken part in the conference held by the Russian People’s Friendship University. This proves that other countries are paying great attention to what is going on within the BRICS Network University, in its joint scientific research. It is not surprisingly as long as they are interested in attracting talented academicians and scientists. There is no alternative for Western HEIs and the BRICS Network University but to cooperate.

The very important and distinguishing factor is that the BRICS governments and those participating in Shanghai Cooperation Organization Universities provide an opportunity for international students to study free of charge. The only students need is only to pay accommodation and travelling expenses. Moreover these might also be paid by the university or a supporting funding body in the receiving country.[[124]](#footnote-124) It is a sensitive difference to the western universities which establish the branch campuses and these branches are making business and strive for profit that returns to the main campus. That is the branches charge high fees from the students of the developing countries to finance the developed HEIs.

Another perspective provided by the functioning of the BRICS Network University is that international cooperation between member-states includes enhancing and diversifying the learning surroundings for the benefit of local students, the University itself, and the nation as whole. Moreover, it has the potential to change the lives of international students as it helps in producing graduates who are sensitive to other cultures and who are internationally knowledgeable. The student mobility among BRICS NU partners will provide them possibility for transferring to an environment, in which students are able to perceive the links between the domestic atmosphere in which they live, and the world environment.[[125]](#footnote-125)

The work of the BRICS NU boost internationalization of education among member states facilitating in engendering the international characteristics fostered in students that are welcomed in a global economy such as open mindedness and international mindedness, respect and tolerance for others, flexibility of thinking, and second-language competence. This phenomenon also develops ethical commitment to allow students to examine their implicit and explicit beliefs and develop a sense of responsibility and civic engagement.

Devotion to promotion of higher education’s internationalization besides great number of positive aspects and many benefits to higher education, there are some challenges, severe risks, and controversies in this growing and multifaceted phenomenon. As a rule it has been pointed out that too many efforts have primarily favoured Western universities, while avoiding promoting long-term advances for HEIs in such countries as are BRICS member states.

The most significant risks associated with internationalization of higher education for the row of countries they are the following – brain drain, commercialization, and low quality education. As it was pointed out by some experts, many of the mentioned risks relate to the cross-border aspects of internationalization than the campus-based activity. The most significant drivers within high education internationalization process relate to profit, because many universities see international efforts as a mean to gain revenue.[[126]](#footnote-126)

The BRICS NU participants must consider in their activity such negative aspect as loss of national and cultural identity, “brain drain” homogenization of international curriculum, and threats that are inherent in the internationalization of higher education. According to mentioned-above Knight, the loss of cultural identity is accepted the most significant risk factor influencing the process of internationalization. It should be taken into account that there is a risk of creating discrimination among the BRICS societies’ students.[[127]](#footnote-127)

One of the main points of the BRICS NU mission in the globalized world is to resist the negative trends. Internationalization of education by western advanced universities is treated as an “academic colonization” which purpose is to increase their academic influence on developing nations. For instance, the European HEIs now have branch campuses in such developing countries as Qatar, Singapore, and Vietnam. Their colonization means internationalization of programmes, academic staff, curriculum, and the students moving towards developed countries for admission.[[128]](#footnote-128)

The BRICS NU will successfully implement its model of organization the educational process coping with the other issues related to the internationalization of education. It includes licensing, registration, and recognition by the sending or the receiving member states. It matters as far as many countries do not have the rigid systems to register or assess out of country providers making monitoring of their activities difficult. It is also not easy to maintain and standardize the quality of the academic experience of students studying as international ones in other countries. National and international accreditation agencies work in many states ensuring high standing and quality of the programmes, but illegitimate and unrecognized accreditation services do not make objective assessment of the programmes. It is not known whether the existing national level accreditation and quality assurance system address education mobility across countries, cultures and jurisdictions. Employers and students must be aware of these accreditation mills which are often no more than a web address and does not fall under the jurisdiction of national regulatory systems.[[129]](#footnote-129)

The BRICS Network University has the perspective to limit expansion of name recognition and status of western universities and HEIs seek while improving its competitive potency with other industrialized nation’s academic institutions. There is possibility and duty of the BRICS NU to overcome the low standard of the international higher education programmes and decide the problem of quality insurance. BRICS member states must recognize at national and international programmes, qualification, providers, and credits in order to upgrade the quality of education that is acknowledged to be at serious risk.[[130]](#footnote-130)

Here we can add that future co-existence of BRICS NU, ERASMUS+, UArctic and UNU is very complicated. UArctic is the most specific international university, as it is specializing in Arctic researches. In this case, BRICS NU will face the competition only in small part of energetic direction. ERASMUS+ is the most wide spread system. In reality, we even cannot name it as an international university. It is an educational and research system that has a lot of newly established universities (e.g. Rehabilitation Medicine Erasmus University) and even creates its own grants connected with social rehabilitation of disabled people, for example. In this situation, ERASMUS+ is wider that BRICS NU will be, and we do not think that BRICS NU will ever draw the same level with ERASMUS+ in comparison of one period.

# CONCLUSION

In the results of the first part we can notice that globalization is sometimes described as an inevitable effect of the post cold-war world. The end of the cold war made it possible for the process named globalization to spread more and more all over the world. However, more correctly to say that globalization caused the end of cold war. It means that the cold war period and post cold war world are mutually connected. Many experts do not agree with the conclusion that globalization is something specific to the end of the 20th century. In any case, this process embodies a number of competing values. The globalization did not lead to the situation when all states became much weaker as actors. States in the World are still central and with the time become more and more central to the discussion of order. However, identity of states is undergoing significant transformation to the extent that it is possible describe them as globalized states. Nowadays one cannot find any contradiction between rules and norms of a state system and existence of globalized state.

The fact is that today we continue to live in a world, which is globalized politically, economically and culturally. It means that higher educational institutions no longer can allow themselves to consider only inner context and think only within their national bodies of their countries. Nowadays it is clear that the best of international Universities have acknowledged the situation, have significantly increased numbers of international students and corresponding faculties. Their administrative bodies make efforts to be active on international educational arena and become involved with other universities across the world in mutually beneficial exchange and different research projects.

Advanced Universities consider the process of internationalization to be an integrated part of their overall strategy and a cross-sectional task that is managed by the HEI’s administration. They aware of the importance of this process that contributes to further enhancing quality, competitiveness in studying, research, and teaching. Internationalization pushes forward intercultural exchanges, international mindset, and a welcoming culture on the University’s campuses. For sure, this process makes the internationally directed HEIs more visible and attractive in a worldwide agenda.

At the same time, internationalization of different universities and their contribution to local communities continues to play significant role in contributing to their societies while enhancing functions of universities even within the changes in the environment surrounding higher education. The implementation of education that can be recognized internationally and the initiatives for international educational coordination activity with organizational consistency are considered essential when universities continue to work on internationalization based on their strategies. Promoting internationalization steadily is expected through establishing a specific goal including the setting of numerical targets in connection with the initiatives and achieving them in universities, which aim at developing international competitiveness.[[131]](#footnote-131) Therefore, internationalisation is a process that helps universities to increase the quality of their activity – research, service to society, and education. Moreover, it is not anymore a goal in itself.[[132]](#footnote-132)

Such HEIs as United Nations University, the University of the Arctic and the existing European programmes such as ERASMUS+, the EAIE and other European Commission initiatives respond the current requirements of the society and are adopting constantly to the changings of reality within European higher education and beyond it. These programmes ensure permanent increasing attention to internationalization of higher education from both sides the national governments and higher education institutions. Nowadays HEIs successfully correspond to the following demands: to be internationally operative; internationally cooperative; internationally active.

The results of the second part showed that the key priorities of the Network University have already made themselves known. The main emphasis will be put on energy studies, computer science, information security, climate change, water resources, BRICS research, and economics. In fact, each country of this organization is a leader in one of these categories. Cooperating and sharing experience in the fields of teaching methods and specialization, and pairing educational policies will guarantee improvement of education and production of more skilled and globally-minded specialists and experts.

It will be provided by the essence of the BRICS Network University project, which is intended to form a new generation of professionals qualitatively different from other those with other critical thinking skills with high qualifications and the ability to make unconventional decisions in global economics and concerning social problems in globalized world.

There are a number of problems within the BRICS itself, which are deriving from the globalization process, interdependence of the states on the international political arena. They cannot but influence the BRICS Network University. Thus, during the last time BRICS members have adopted different approaches toward several international challenges, threats from the “collective West” and terrorism as well as diverging steps to improving the institutional level of cooperation.

For example, when the Ukraine Crisis has broken out in 2014, BRICS members united to resist American and European sanctions against Russia, but at the same time, they rejected to take a definite side. The current achievements in BRICS cooperation are mostly limited and one can find the same situation in the field of education cooperation. It means that BRICS Network University as one of the BRICS institutions may face problems of efficiency and a lack of experience as well.

It is highly felt that the institutional level of BRICS cooperation up to the moment is at quite a low level. The lack of a regular and firm organizational structure coordinating and supervising the ongoing BRICS institutes activity leads to insufficient institutional checks on the actions of its members. The annual meetings of leaders from BRICS countries are good mechanism for dialogue, which express a consolidated voice and form a consensus on urgent global challenges. It must continue in order to become systematic and lead to working out of the supranational governing body.

The results of the third part explained that the internationalization of higher education within the BRICS Network University is the process in which Russia is fully involved for the last years. It seems to be profitable for all BRICS countries in sustaining and growing scholarship and science by means of dynamic academic exchanges and building social and economic capacity in the BRICS countries as well. Russia boosts and plays important role in the cooperation with the members of the BRICS Network University in establishing powerful mutual associations and networks in order to mobilize ability and aptitude in favour of advanced policies, global research, and transfer of knowledge. Additionally, they are using social media and e-technology in the capacity of influential and important tools for increasing public access to relevant information for aiding talent retention and recruitment.

The value of BRICS NU is that it provides access to higher education in those countries where local HEIs are not able to meet the demands. The positive aspects of cooperation of the five countries include improved academic quality, more internationally oriented staff and students. For these developing countries, revenue generation and brain gain should become potential benefits.

The BRICS Network University has all the potency to become essential actor in creating well-balanced and constructive internationalization strategies. In this regard it must advocate for policy change at the governmental level within BRICS so that it would drive internationalization in directions that could serve long-term academic purposes.

It is important for the BRICS NU stakeholders to examine and take into consideration effects of internationalization and globalization. It means evaluation of the influence of a more internationally open classroom, programme, and institution on students and effects on creation of new knowledge affected by exposure to researchers and scholars from other countries. Moreover, the fact of internationalization of the higher education system should not be a simple paper agreement. It is necessary to create environment that will be favourable to the development of the international process by all means.

As the general results, we can say that globalization has affected almost all sectors of society. Higher education systems all over the world are not exception because they face mobility of ideas and people intensification within the sector. The global interdependence has been accepted in political, economic, and social dynamics. Moreover, academe’s internationalizing function has become more absorbent of interdependence as well. Worldwide, universities respond to challenges presented by globalization in various ways and the BRICS NU is now among them. The way to answer the challenge is the internationalization of the university campuses. In order to be able to benefit from the global trend, the BRICS NU along with many educational institutions will be trying to come into agreements and start cooperation in different areas with international (also from other continents) and regional universities.

The international cooperation between universities have strengthened a lot during the last years. The definition of internationalization of higher education refers to the process of integrating an intercultural or international aspect into the research, teaching, and service functions of this process. All over the world, the main part of HEIs pay greater attention to internationalization. European HEIs still are topping the list in this regard. They are followed by the North American ones, after them in the list is the Middle East, Caribbean and the Latin America. The mission of the BRICS Network University is to break the situation in which the large English-speaking nations provide most services related to international higher education initiatives and control most programmes whereas Latin American, Asian developing countries, which are mainly poor play the role of purchasers due to their inability to meet growing demand.

Internationalization of higher education is the highest point in international affairs among world universities and it is no longer considered to be as the most desirable goal. To the contrary, it is a tool to improve the quality of national education system. The acquisition and translation of different knowledge, mobilization of talent in support of global research and enchantment of the curriculum with international content are regarded as main benefits of internationalization of higher education. Beyond many positive aspect of internationalization of higher education, there are crucial risks within this multifaceted and increasing phenomenon. Among them are academic colonization, difficulty in ensuring quality education, and commercial profit. It is the urgent task and duty of educational policy makers to ensure positive benefits to the HEIs and the corresponding countries.

It should be taken into account that the BRICS countries will try to use the BRICS institutions as the BRICS NU in their national interests. For instance, India is using BRICS institutions as a tool to gain beneficial position in both Western and non-Western world. Brazil and South Africa have relatively small-scale economies and are located far from the rest of the members that is why the two BRICS members are trying to prioritize international cooperation in regions of their presence.

The BRICS stakeholders must not forget about the existing institutions as the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the G20. They overlap with the BRICS cooperation mechanism in geographical scope and function. The participants in these institutions differ in terms of benefit expectancy and influence. It makes them to adopt different strategies and preferences toward cooperation mechanisms, creating competition with the BRICS countries.

The economic growth of BRICS countries will continue to depend on globalization trends – the factor, that ideally must be overcome. For the BRICS countries to play greater role in global governance they must strengthen communication and gradually consolidate cooperation mechanisms. BRICS should strengthen communication through various meetings and forums, improving cooperation efficiency and forming a joint force for development. The BRICS countries should exert a positive influence on the new global governance through the platform of the BRICS Leaders Summit on behalf of the emerging economies and developing countries. In the future, BRICS should also promote a routine dialogue mechanism between BRICS and other international organizations.

BRICS countries should actively reach a strategic consensus on promoting reform in global governance. In global initiatives, Russia and China should work together to amplify the voices of emerging economies and developing countries while upholding the role of international institutions, including the World Trade Organization, International Monetary Fund, and the United Nations. In this way, Russia and China will lead to establishment of a more inclusive global community of interest, responsibility and destiny.

Russia and China can be active in global economic governance, improve their capacity to engage in discourse and help the international community to rationally understand their road of development. Russia and China should advance the world’s recognition of BRICS consensus by valuing the collective strength of the BRICS countries.

In addition, BRICS countries should promote reforms in the international system of educational and financial governance through the cooperation platform of its institutions – the BRICS Network University and NDB. In an age of globalization, international financial power is the most important aspect of international influence. The NDB should learn from the successful experience of the IMF and the World Bank.

Last of all, BRICS should establish the “BRICS Plus N” as a regular mechanism to expand the scale of BRICS cooperation at a proper time. Globalization is currently facing severe challenges, which makes it more urgent for BRICS to expand the number of its friends and build a group of supporters all over the world. For instance, it is perspective to consider inviting Kazakhstan and Indonesia in the capacity of observer states. It can become an opportunity to create a routine mechanism for “BRICS Plus N.” [[133]](#footnote-133)

Enlargement of BRICS scales may include emerging countries in sub-regions around the world. Brazil can represent not only itself but the whole South America, as well as Russia is able to represent Eastern Europe, India – Southern Asia; China – Eastern Asia, and so on, taking into account the potential member state.

The BRICS countries have number of results and achievements to summarize their successful experience in collaboration, designing a blueprint for future development, clarifying the direction for pushing forward BRICS mechanism and expanding practical cooperation in various fields. BRICS and the BRICS NU must strengthen cooperation with emerging and developing countries, establishing an important platform for “South-South Cooperation” with international influence[[134]](#footnote-134).

The most relevant questions for developing economies around the world is to find an alternative to Western economic and financial institutions, which are mostly not responsive to their developmental needs and interests, especially during crisis periods. Ability of global groups like the BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa – contribute to meeting current and future political and economic challenges, is completely in their hand and political will of their leaders.

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