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**Abstract**

This special issue follows on from a special call for contributions to the ECER 2016 conference in Dublin on the need to rethink and reconceptualise internationalisation in higher education (HE). The papers in this special issue contribute to a critically reflective interdisciplinary discussion on the phenomena of internationalisation in terms of the evolution of the structures, systems, and functions of HE institutions. They critique the phenomena from social, educational and spatial perspectives, highlighting the complexity of this field and a common concern regarding the effects of predominantly economic drivers for internationalisation. The papers provide insights into some of the drivers and rationales for internationalisation and the ways in which policies and power relationships steer the direction and development of internationalisation at an institutional, programme or personal level. They illustrate the complex and interdependent nature of the positive and less positive dimensions of internationalisation experiences. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)