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**Abstract**

This article analyses and discusses the interplay between the social processes of nationalisation, localisation and globalisation in a single European nation state. The view of nationalisation put forward draws on a national case study based on historical and sociological research findings. The second part of the article presents a case study of the nature of globalisation and localisation in an average Finnish university. The article shows that nationalisation of Finnish higher education has created a cultural understanding of higher education institutions important for competition with other nations. As for localisation, on the one hand higher education institutions support their local communities and provinces to gain social and economic benefits. On the other hand, local communities and provinces support their higher education institutions in the hope of benefiting from them. The case studies also suggest that economic globalisation creates new dynamics within higher education institutions both through strategic alliances between higher education and commercial enterprises and through the emergence of alternative new funding sources for research. (HRK / Abstract übernommen)