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**Title**

Why do higher education institutions internationalize? : an investigation of the multilevel determinants of internationalization rationales / Marco Seeber ; Mattia Cattaneo ; Jereon Huisman ; Stefano Paleari

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**Abstract**

In recent decades internationalization has risen to prominence in higher education institutions (HEIs). Scholars have identified several rationales for internationalization. There is however a lack of conceptual understanding and empirical evidence for which rationale(s) for internationalization are chosen by a given HEI and why. The goal of this article is to fill this gap. We develop and test a conceptual framework to predict the salience of a given rationale for a specific HEI. The framework integrates factors at multiple levels, namely competitive and institutional forces in the global and national contexts, the organizational goals and the influence of internal actors. The empirical analysis employs information on more than 400 European HEIs from two large datasets on their organizational characteristics and from a large-scale survey on internationalization of universities. The findings show that the HEIs embedded in a global context more frequently conceive internationalization as an instrumental to prestige. The national contexts do not greatly affect HEIs' rationales, and the amount

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of resources is less important than the competition for resources. Organizational goals as well as the influence of students, faculty members and middle managers on the internationalization process partly predict the prominence of specific rationales. The paper closes discussing the findings and the implication for scholarly research.(HRK / Abstract übernommen) Seeber, Marco, E-Mail: marco.seeber@ugent.be